

The thirteen men of Bridge
who died in the
Great War 1914-18.

Compiled by Mark Jopling 2012.

The inscription on the Bridge War Memorial reads:

To the glory of God
and in honourable memory
of the men of this parish
who fell in the Great War
1914-18.

“We lie in other lands
so that
you may live in peace.”

D.K. Anderson MC. Captain The Buffs. Lieut. Col. M.G. Corps.

C.K. Anderson Lieut. R.W.Kent Regt.

F. Butler Pte. M.G.Corps.

H.Dutnall L.Cpl. R.W.Kent Regt.

C.S.Ford Pte. Gren. Guards.

F.J.Ford Sergt. The Buffs.

A.H.Foster Pte. Canadian Inf.

W.C.Harvey Pte. E.Surrey Regt.

F.C.Jones Pte. The Buffs.

A.J.Mann L.Cpl. E.Surrey Regt.

W.J.Mann Pte. Northd. Fus.

C.E.Perkins Chief P.O. HMS Aboukir.

C.H.Peirce L.Cpl. The Buffs.

The Sources.

There are four main sources available on the internet for tracing “The Fallen”:

1. The Commonwealth War Graves commission [CWGC] which takes immaculate care of all British and Commonwealth cemeteries and memorials overseas and holds all the records.
2. Soldiers Died in the Great War [SD] first published in book form by the War Office in 1921.
3. Roll of Honour [RH] which is in the process of being compiled by the Ministry of Defence and the British Legion. They hope, in the end, to have dealt with the men and women on every headstone and Memorial in the UK.
4. Faded Genes [FG] A group of enthusiasts are compiling this and intend to cover every town and village in Kent. They have done several, some in incredible detail, tracing a person’s family back to their Great-Great-Grandparents, but they have not reached Bridge.

Other important and available sources are the Census Records. These began in 1801 as mere headcounts for purposes of recruitment and taxation in the Napoleonic Wars. Since then, they have been held every year ending with 1 (except 1941 when the information might have been useful to the enemy), but is only from 1841 that people’s names, approximate ages and occupations have been recorded. For people of the right age to have been caught up in the Great War the relevant ones are 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911.

Also very useful are parish registers, particularly those for Christenings and Weddings, but these require a visit to a library or archive office. Very limited information can be found on line in the birth, marriage and death records.

Occasionally, a person’s Army or Naval Records may have survived the bombing of London in the Second World War.

1. D.K. Anderson MC Capt. The Buffs. Lieut. Col. M.G. Corps.

There is immediate confusion with this man in the military sources. They all agree on his name being Donald Knox Anderson and on his award of the MC [Military Cross], but CWGC says he was Lieutenant Colonel of The Buffs [East Kent Regiment] and attached to the Staff HQ of the 61st Division with no mention of the Machine-Gun Corps at all. RH agrees with the inscription on the Memorial that he was Lieutenant Colonel of the Machine-Gun Corps and formerly Captain in The Buffs, whilst SD has two entries for this name, obviously not realising they are the same man. One says he was Temporary Lieutenant Colonel of The Buffs and served in the Divisional Machine-Gun Office, and the other says he was a Temporary Lieutenant in the Machine-Gun Corps. Perhaps the evidence of another source, relevant in this case, a publication called Officers Died in the Great War will settle the matter. Here he is recorded as Temporary Lieutenant Colonel of The Buffs and also a Divisional Machine-Gun officer.

A Lieutenant Colonel would usually be the commander of a Battalion, but, if he was only “Temporary”, he probably did not actually do this job and served instead at the Divisional Staff HQ as a Machine-Gun Officer. Something else all the sources do agree on is the date of his death, 3rd December 1917, and CWGC adds that he is named on the Cambrai Memorial at Louveral which means he has no known grave. This date and place put his death firmly in the British offensive known as the Battle of Cambrai from 20th November to 7th December 1917. It was a combined artillery, infantry and tank offensive on part of the formidable German Hindenberg Line, but the early success and territorial gains were cancelled out by German counter-attacks.

Turning to the 1891 census, we find George Knox Anderson, 36, Cement manufacturer, and his wife Mary, 28, living in Rochester with their four children Stuart Knox, 9, Phyllis, 6, Donald Knox, 4, and Colin Knox, 2, all born in Rochester. [The middle name Knox is not part of a double-barrelled surname, but the name, it seems, given to all male Andersons in this family.] There can be no doubt that the two Knox Andersons on the memorial were brothers.

In 1901, the parents were living at Hollywood House, Frindsbury, Rochester, but only Colin, 12, was with them. Eldest brother Stuart, 17, was away at Rugby School, Phyllis was at a Ladies’ School in Folkestone, but of Donald I can find no trace. He would, almost certainly, have been away at a public school.

In 1911, Donald was 24, unmarried, 2nd Lieutenant in The Buffs, a visitor to Rev. Augustus Aylward and his wife at Enderby Vicarage, Leicestershire. He was, therefore, a career soldier who would have joined up very soon after leaving school which would have been about 1905 or 1906. Younger brother Colin had also joined up, but older brother Stuart was an Anglican clergyman living in Bristol.

A final piece of evidence about Donald comes from the Marriage Records. On 28th November 1914 a Donald Knox Anderson, giving his age as 28, married 19 year-old Mary Annabella Sandilands at St. Jude Church in South Kensington.

The reason why Donald and Colin are commemorated on the Bridge Memorial will become clear when we look at the next man on that Memorial, Colin Knox Anderson. Donald would, presumably, also be commemorated wherever his wife Mary was living at the time of his death, which is not known. Since he was 24 in the 1911 census, he would have been about 30 when he was killed.

2. C.K. Anderson Lieut. R.W. Kent Regt.

CWGC names him as Colin Knox Anderson, Lieutenant in the Queen's Own [Royal West Kent Regiment] 3rd Battalion, but attached to "A" Company of the 1st. Battalion. He died on 23rd August 1914, aged 26, and is buried in Hautrage Military Cemetery very near Mons in Belgium. [The Battle of Mons on 23rd August was the first major encounter of the war for British and Germans as the Allies tried to halt the invasion of Belgium.] It also adds that he was the son of George Knox Anderson and Mrs. Anderson of Bridge Hill House, Bridge, and was educated at Malvern College. SD only adds that he was Killed in Action, and RH, for some reason, gives the date of his death as the 22nd August.

I have written to the archivist at Malvern College who informs me that Colin was a pupil at that school from 1903 to 1908 and was soon after commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd. Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment. He was killed in action at Mons in August 1914 and is included in the Roll of Honour in Malvern College Chapel. The archivist assures me that his brother Donald did not attend Malvern College.

We have already named Colin in the census of 1891 and that of 1901, and in 1911 he was 23, unmarried, 2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment a Visitor at his old school, Malvern College.

As we have seen with Donald, there was no apparent reason why either brother should be commemorated in Bridge until the vital piece of information given by CWGC. In 1911 their parents were still living in Hollywood House, Frindsbury, Rochester, but by 1914 they are named as Colin's next-of-kin and had moved to Bridge Hill House. They had been married 27 years and all four of their children were alive and well. The parents would naturally want to have their two sons commemorated in the place where they lived themselves.

3. F. Butler Pte. M.G. Corps

CWGC names him as Frank Butler No.72588 Corporal 18th Battalion Machine-Gun Corps. Died 5th May 1918, aged 34, buried in Niederzwehren Cemetery. Son of John and Annie Butler, husband of Emily S. Butler of Nursery Cottage, Brogdale Rd., Faversham. Born Newnham.

SD and RH agree that he was a Corporal [despite the Memorial giving his rank as Private], he enlisted in Canterbury and was formerly No. 1831 in the Kent Cyclist Battalion.

The Marriage Records have a Frank Butler marrying Emily Sarah Croucher in Faversham in July 1904.

Niederzwehren Cemetery in central Germany was started in 1915 for Commonwealth, French, and Russian Prisoners of War and enemy civilians. Frank, therefore, died in German hands. After the war, in 1922 CWGC began moving all Commonwealth dead in Germany from smaller cemeteries and concentrating them in four big ones of which this was one. The French and Russians were also gathered together elsewhere. 1,500 Commonwealth soldiers were brought in to make a final total of 1,796 graves and memorials.

In the 1891 census, we find John Butler, 40, Agricultural Waggoner, born in Newnham, living in Stuppington Farm, Norton, near Faversham with his wife Annie, 37, and seven children: Henry, 15, Agricultural Labourer; James, 11, Scholar; Frederick, 9, Scholar; Frank, 6, Scholar; Ellen, 4; Albert, 2; and Charles, 1 month all born in Norton.

In 1901, Frank was still at home on Stuppington Farm aged 16 and a Carter on the Farm. His older brothers Henry and James had left home and there is no mention of little Charles, but a new youngest brother is there called George, aged 8.

In 1911, Frank's father, who was now a widower, aged 60 was still a Farm Labourer, living at the same Stuppington Farm with his daughter Ellen and her husband and two little girls. Meanwhile, Frank, 27, and his wife Emily Sarah, 27, born in Lenham Heath, were living at Fir Tree Cottages, Pedding, near Wingham. Frank was a Groom/Gardener and their two boys were Dennis Robert, 4, and Noel William, 2, both born in Newnham, near Faversham.

Two big questions remain: why is Frank commemorated on the Bridge Memorial, and why is he also to be found on the Nackington Memorial? He apparently has no connection with either parish unless, perhaps, he and his family moved into one of them when he took a new job between 1911 and his enlistment. According to CWGC, as we have seen, his wife Emily's address is given as Brogdale Rd., Faversham which is hard to reconcile with Frank working in Bridge or Nackington unless she moved there with the boys after the war and after Frank's death. If, however, he did have a job in one of them, the two parishes did have a common border to the east of Renville Farm and, if he lived on that border, it might have been difficult to decide to which parish he belonged.

4. H. Dutnall L. Cpl. R.W. Kent Regt.

CWGC says he was Henry Dutnall No. 19274 Lance Corporal in 11th Battalion Queen's Own [Royal West Kent Regiment]. He died on 26th July 1917 and is commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial to the Missing.

SD adds that he was born in Sittingbourne, enlisted in Canterbury and was Killed in Action. It also says he was formerly No. 2480 Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles. RH agrees and adds that the Mounted Rifles were a Yeomanry Regiment.

Henry is one of only two of the thirteen men whose Army Service Record has survived. This tells us that he was unmarried and living in Ash when he enlisted on 1st May 1915 for the duration of the war. He was 22, a Chauffeur and had been born in Borden, Sittingbourne. He joined a Territorial Force, the Mounted Rifles as a motor cyclist Despatch Rider. He was transferred to 2/1st Battalion Kent Cyclist Battalion No. 2445 on 8th March 1916, presumably still as a Despatch Rider, and one week later, on the 15th, he was promoted to Lance Corporal. Until the 3rd January 1917 all his service had been "at home" in England, but on that day he was sent to France and on 9th February he was posted as Lance Corporal in the 11th Battalion the Royal West Kent Regiment.

His next of kin were given as his father Charles Dutnall of Ash and, in due course, his wife Helene Dutnall with an address in Surbiton, Surrey. This address seems odd, but perhaps, when he went off to war, she moved in with relatives and this might also explain why, after his death, she had two different addresses in Portsmouth to the second of which his medal, plaque and scroll were sent. A curious letter to the Infantry Record Office is preserved in his Record. It was sent by his wife Helene on 2nd September 1917 to say that her father-in-law had told her that Henry was dead, and asking for confirmation of this and for information about pensions. It seems very odd that she had not been told of his death herself. Henry's body had not been recovered, but the Record confirms that he was Killed in Action. The place and date of his death indicate that he was killed during the truly dreadful British offensive known as the 3rd Battle of Ypres or the Battle of Passchendaele, or "The Battle of the Mud."

In the 1901 census Henry and his father Charles were living with Charles' mother in Oad St., Borden. She was Julia Dutnall, a widow of 71, born in Andover, and Charles, 36, and himself a widower, born in Borden, gave his occupation as Farmer. Henry was 7, born in Borden. To find out about Henry's mother, I checked the 1891 census and found Charles Dutnall, 26, Farm Labourer with his wife Catherine, 30, both born in Borden, living in Borden with his parents Henry, 67, Farmer, and Julia, 60. The Birth Records reveal that Henry was born in April 1893, but the Death Records show that Catherine died in that same April 1893. It is very likely that she died giving birth to her first and only child.

In the 1911 census Henry Dutnall, 17, a Chauffeur, and his father Charles, 46, a Farm Bailiff, were Boarders with Postman William Kemp and his wife in Guilton, Ash. The fact that he was a chauffeur before the war explains how he could become a motor cyclist Despatch Rider.

A final piece of evidence on Henry comes from the Marriage Records. In December 1916, at which time he was serving with the Kent Cyclist Battalion in England, Henry married Helene Tunnicliffe in Thanet only a few days before he was sent to France.

The big question still remains, why is he commemorated in Bridge? Since he was living in Ash in 1911 and was still there when he enlisted in 1915, and since his father was also in Ash at both these dates, there seems to be no logical reason why Bridge can claim him. Perhaps the explanation is that his father Charles got a new job and moved to Bridge soon after the war, but this would not explain the fact that Henry is commemorated on the Memorial in Ash as well. Given that he was 17 in the 1911 census, he would have been about 23 when he was killed.

5. C. S. Ford Pte. Gren. Guards.

CWGC has a Cecil Stanley Ford Private 13676 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards. He died on 20th October 1914 and is commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial to the Missing.

SD agrees and adds that he was born in Bridge, enlisted in Canterbury and was Killed in Action. It also gives his rank correctly as Guardsman, not Private. RH adds nothing new.

The fact that he was killed in the Ypres Salient and the very early date of his death means that he fell in what was to be named the First Battle of Ypres. The German Schlieffen Plan was to deliver a massive right hook through Belgium and on to Paris, but the British and French were able to halt their advance on the River Marne in September 1914 and then to hang on to the last corner of Belgium at Ypres in mid-October, preventing German capture of the vital Channel Ports.

Cecil makes his first appearance in a census in 1891. Here we find William Ford, 37, a Carpenter, born in Bishopsbourne and his wife Jane, 37, born in Barham living at the Carpenter's shop, High St., Bridge. With them are their nine children, all born in Bridge: Amelia, 13; Ethel, 12; Edith, 10; Florence, 8; Louisa, 7; Herbert, 6, all six of them Scholars [ie at school]; Frederick, 3; Cecil, 2; Arthur, 8 months. Incidentally, this Frederick may well be the next man on the Memorial, F. J. Ford.

In 1901 the father, William, was still working as a Carpenter in High St., Bridge, but at a different premises. The five girls had left home leaving Herbert R., Frederick J., Cecil Stanley and Arthur S. with three more children, Anna D., 9, Lewis, 7, and Alice M., 6, all born in Bridge.

By 1911, Herbert and our Cecil had left home, but the other five were still with their parents now living at Park Villas, Union Rd., Bridge: Frederick, 24, Gardener; Arthur, 21, Groom; Annie, 19; Lewis, 18, Gardener; Alice, 16. William and Jane had been married 34 years and all their 12 children were alive and well. William was now a Carpenter and Builder.

In 1911 Cecil is nowhere to be found, but we can deduce that he had enlisted as a career soldier and had been posted somewhere. The fact that he was killed as early as October 1914 means he must have been a regular soldier in the Grenadier Guards when the war began because the army Britain sent over in August, The British Expeditionary Force [BEF], were all professional soldiers. He would have been about 25 when he was killed.

6. F.J. Ford Sergt. The Buffs.

CWGC has four F.J. Fords, but none of them a Sergeant and none in The Buffs. It does, however, have an F. Ford G/5774 Lance Sergeant in the 8th Battalion The Buffs. He died on 21st August 1916, aged 30, and is buried in La Neuville British Cemetery at Corbie.

SD agrees and adds the crucial information that he was born in Bridge which makes it certain that this is the man. It also says he was living, at the time of his enlistment, in Brede, Sussex, enlisted in Rye and Died of Wounds. This last phrase fits in with him being buried at Corbie since the cemetery lay behind the British lines near Albert on the Somme battlefield. The date of his death means he was mortally wounded in the second month of the Battle of the Somme. SD is the source that gives us his name simply as Fred.

Inexplicably, RH says bluntly of this man “No Trace” and makes an unconvincing suggestion as to his identity.

It is virtually impossible to escape the conclusion that this Fred Ford was the brother of the previous man, Cecil Stanley Ford. In the census of 1891, as we have seen, Cecil Stanley, 2, and Frederick, 3, both born in Bridge, were living in High St., Bridge with their parents and 7 siblings. In 1901, still living at home in High St., Bridge, Frederick J., aged 13, gave his occupation as Gardener. This is the only mention in a census or in the military sources of a middle name beginning with “J”, apart from the inscription on the Memorial. The Baptismal Register for St. Peter’s, Bridge, reveals that it stands for James.

By 1911 the family had moved to Park Villas, Union Rd., Bridge and Frederick was still a Gardener giving his age as 24. We do not know when he enlisted, but if he signed up in Sussex, he must have moved there for a new job sometime after 1911.

7. A.H. Foster Pte. Canadian Inf.

CWGC has eight A.H. Fosters, but they were all in British Regiments. It does, however, record an Arthur Harold Foster Private 784937 in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry [East Ontario Regiment] who died on 30th October 1917, aged 36, and is commemorated on the Ypres [Menin Gate] Memorial to the Missing.

SD does not mention him at all, perhaps because he was not in the British Army, and RH says bluntly, "No Trace" adding that, "There is no record of this man on the Canadian Virtual War Memorial." This is quite wrong. This memorial is "Virtual" because it does not exist in reality, but only on the internet, and it definitely does record Arthur Harold Foster died 30th October 1917. It is certainly odd, however, that the real Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge, which claims to name every Canadian serviceman lost in the Great War, with or without their own graves, has seven Fosters on it, but no A.H. Foster.

The date and place given by CWGC show that Arthur was killed in the latter stages of the dreadful Third Battle of Ypres or the Battle of Passchendaele which ended on 10th November after the Canadians had captured the ruins of the village and part of Passchendaele Ridge.

If Arthur was 36 when he died, he would have been born in 1881 or 82. The most likely candidate in the census of 1891 is an Arthur H. Foster, aged 9, born in Ripple, Dover. Living in Ripple Vale was the family of William Foster, 53, a Farmer, born in Ashford and his wife Emma, 51, born in Horsted, Sussex. Their five children were Emmaline, unmarried, 27, born in Ringmer, Sussex; Douglas E., unmarried, 23; Bertha C, 13; Ethel J., 11; Arthur H., 9, these last four all born in Ripple.

By 1901 William, 62, had retired and was "Living on own means", but the family were still in Ripple Vale Cottages. There were three siblings, Hilda, unmarried 32; Ethel J., 21; Arthur H., 19.

In 1911 William, 73, "Retired Farmer" and Emma, 71 had moved to The Grove, Barham. They had been married 48 years and had 6 of their 7 children still alive. With them were Ethel Jane, 31, unmarried, and Arthur Harold, 29, unmarried. This must mean that Arthur emigrated to Canada sometime after 1911. Presumably, a man who had no occupation at the age of 19 or at 29 and who was also unmarried would take the opportunity of making a new life broad.

The answer to the question why he is commemorated in Bridge is pure conjecture. It is possible, but unlikely, that he suddenly moved there himself before he emigrated. It is more likely that his parents moved there after 1911, despite their advanced ages. This is borne out by the Death Records of both parents. William died in Bridge in October 1915, aged 77, and Emma died in Bridge too, in September 1920, aged 80. Had they stayed in Barham, Arthur would appear on the Barham Memorial, but he does not.

8. W.C. Harvey Pte. E. Surrey Regt.

CWGC records William Charles Harvey Private 21379 1st Battalion East Surrey Regiment. He died on 25th September 1916 and was buried in Bray-sur-Somme Military Cemetery. Son of Mr. H. and Mrs. I. Harvey of High St., Bridge.

SD agrees and adds born in Royston, Hertfordshire, enlisted Canterbury, Died of Wounds. This is entirely consistent with him being buried at Bray-sur-Somme. He would have been badly wounded on or before 25th September in the midst of the British offensive, the Battle of the Somme, and taken back behind the lines to a Field Hospital near Albert, but he did not survive. RH says nothing new, but does make an odd mistake in assigning his death to 1915, not 1916.

The census of 1901 for Royston, Herts. records Harry Harvey, 34, Stableman/Groom, born in Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, and his wife Isabell, 26, born in Sharnbrook, Bedfordshire. With them is their son William C., 3, born in Royston.

By 1911 the three Harveys were Servants living with retired Race Horse Trainer Richard George Sherrard and his two Race Horse Trading sons in Riverside House, Bridge. Henry Harvey, 46, was a Groom, his wife, 37, was the House Keeper and William Charles, 14, was an Errand Boy. William Charles was their only child and his connection with Bridge is clear. Seeing that he was 14 in the 1911 census, he would have been about 19 when he died.

9. F.C. Jones Pte. The Buffs.

In CWGC he is named as Frederick Charles Jones Private G/1377 in 2nd. Battalion The Buffs. He died on 12th May 1915, aged 24 and is commemorated on the Ypres [Menin Gate] Memorial to the Missing. Son of Mr. C.E. and Mrs. Mary Jones of Rosedale Villa, Bridge.

SD adds born and resided in Bridge, enlisted Ramsgate and was Killed in Action. RH agrees. From this it can be deduced that Frederick was killed in the 2nd Battle of Ypres which lasted from 22nd April to 25th May 1915. The Germans launched a full-scale attack to try to eliminate the Ypres Salient, capture the city and thrust southwards into France to seize the Channel Ports. They introduced two terrible new weapons in this offensive: poison gas and flame-throwers. The Salient was certainly squeezed in, but it did not break.

Frederick is the only other man out of the thirteen (along with Henry Dutnall) whose Service Record has survived. From it we learn that he was Single and a Gardener, living in Bridge when he enlisted in Ramsgate, aged 23 years and 1 month. He signed up for 3 years with the Colours as Private 1377 in The Buffs on 3rd September 1914. After training, he was posted to France on 24th April 1915 and was killed in action less than 3 weeks later on 12th May that year. His next-of-kin are named as his parents and his brothers all of Rosedale Villa, and his married sister Rose Lillian Harris of Holloway, London. His plaque and scroll were sent to his parents after the war, but his 1914-15 Star was sent to Miss Eva Hooker of Orchard Villa, Sturry. A scrap of a letter from her in which she acknowledges receipt of it survives too. It is tempting to assume that she was his sweetheart.

A good deal of this can be confirmed in the census documents. In 1901, in High St., Bridge, we find Charles E. Jones, 43, Retired Army Boot Contractor, born in Maidstone and his wife Mary, 45, born in Canterbury. Their five children were Rose L., 19, and Albert E., 12, both born in Canterbury; Frederick C., 9, George A., 6, and Arthur H., 2, all three born in Bridge.

By 1911, their father Charles Edward said he was living by Private Means and mother Mary declared that they had been married for 30 years and five of their seven children were alive and well. Rose Lillian was 29 and still at home unmarried; Albert Edward, 22, was a Dairyman; our Frederick Charles, 19, was an Assistant Gardener; George Alfred, 16, was an Apprentice Outfitter; Arthur Henry, 12, was at School. Their address was Rosedale Villa, Bridge, and it is possible, on the ground, to work out that this is the same house in which they were living in 1901.

10. A.J. Mann L. Cpl. E. Surrey Regt.

CWGC has Arthur John Mann Lance Corporal 18384 'B' Company 13th Battalion East Surrey Regiment. He died on 23rd. March 1918, aged 22, and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial to the Missing. Son of Mrs. Emma Elizabeth Mann of 3, Brewery Lane, Bridge.

RH agrees and adds born in Bridge, enlisted in Kingston-on-Thames. SD says this too only adding that he was Killed in Action.

This evidence means that he went "missing presumed dead", and subsequently was confirmed as having been killed, in the huge offensive launched by the Germans in March 1918 along a broad section of the Western Front in a desperate attempt to win the war before the Americans could arrive in France in overwhelming numbers.

As he was 22 when he was killed, the first census in which he will appear is that of 1901. Here we find Emma Mann, 41, widow, Charwoman, born in Kearsney, Kent with her three sons Walter, 14, Post and Telegraph Boy; Charles, 11, both born Aldeburgh, Suffolk; Arthur 5, born in Bridge. They were living at 2, Brewery Lane, Bridge. One is immediately struck by the eldest boy's name, Walter, because W.C. Mann is the next name on the Memorial. The two might well be brothers.

By 1911, Emma and two of her boys had moved to No.3, Brewhouse Lane, which was the older version of this street name. Emma's second name is given as Elizabeth and she gave her birthplace as Ewell, Kent. Charles, now 21, was a Farm Labourer and Arthur John, 15, was an Apprentice Baker.

There can be no doubt that this is the correct Arthur John Mann and proves that he was born and brought up in Bridge. His enlistment in Kingston-upon-Thames is something of a puzzle unless, at some point after 1911 he had a job there, although Farm Labourers would not usually get work so far from home.

11. W.J. Mann Pte. Northd. Fus.

CWGC says he was Walter James Mann Private 1150 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers. He died on 15th October 1914, aged 27, and was buried in the Royal Irish Rifles Graveyard at Laventie, to the west of Lille. Son of Emma Elizabeth Mann of 3, Brewery Lane, Bridge and the late Seth Mann. This clearly shows that the two soldiers, Arthur and Walter Mann, were brothers and gives us their father's name.

SD and RH add that he was born in Aldborough, Yorkshire, which is obviously wrong, and he enlisted in Canterbury. Only SD specifies that he was Killed in Action.

His very early death proves that he was a career soldier, not a wartime volunteer, because the army that Britain sent over in August 1914 were all professional soldiers. The German invasion of Belgium and northern France went sweeping past Lille and Walter would have fallen near there. The reason he enlisted in the Northumberland Fusiliers is not clear, but often a man joining up and expressing no particular preference for a specific Regiment would be assigned to one that, for whatever reason, was under-strength at the time.

To check Walter's first appearance in a census, we go back to 1891. Living in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, were Seth Mann, 34, born in Aldeburgh and his wife Emma E., 31, born in Ewell, Kent. Seth's occupation is difficult to decipher because the page is faded and not very clearly written, but it could be Nautical Pilot. This would be entirely possible, given that Aldeburgh has a large harbour in the broad estuary of the River Alde. Their three children, all born in Aldeburgh, were Nellie M., 6; Walter J., 4; and Charles, 2.

When we dealt with Arthur in the census of 1901 (see previous entry) Walter was 14 and working as a Post Office and Telegraph Boy, but, by then Emma was a widow. The Death Records reveal that Seth Mann died in Bridge in April 1900 aged 44. So he had taken the family to Bridge sometime in the 1890's, but why a man working in his own home town as a Pilot should move to a land-locked Kent village is a mystery.

Walter is no longer at home in 1911 and the assumption that he must have been a career soldier to have been killed so early in the war is borne out when we find him in the census as Walter James Mann, 23, born in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, in the barracks of the 1st Battalion the Northumberland Fusiliers.

12. C.E. Perkins Chief P.O. HMS "Aboukir."

In CWGC he is named as Charles Edward Perkins SS/105825 Royal Navy Stoker 1st Class on HMS Aboukir. He died on 22nd September 1914, aged 24, and is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Son of Alfred and Mary Perkins of Derringstone Hill, Barham.

RH agrees with the Bridge Memorial that he was a Chief Petty Officer.

SD does not include him at all because he was a naval man, not a soldier.

The Naval Memorial at Chatham bears the names of over 8,300 seamen who died at sea in the Great War. The massive Memorial bears the inscription:

“In honour of the Navy and to the abiding memory of these ranks and ratings of this port who laid down their lives in the defence of the empire and have no other grave than the sea.”

Identical obelisks feature as Memorials in the other two manning ports of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth and Plymouth, and also act, like Chatham, as landmarks for shipping.

The register of the men named on the Chatham Memorial, kept in the Naval Chapel in the Garrison Church at Brompton Barracks, clearly states that he was a Stoker 1st Class.

In the first census where Charles would be included, 1901, his family appears living in Derringstone Street, Barham. His father, Alfred, was 42, an Engineer's Labourer, born in Northamptonshire, and his mother Mary was 39, a Laundress, born in Yorkshire. They had, in fact, lived all their married life in Derringstone. All six of their children had been born in Barham (presumably Derringstone): Henry, 20, a Brickmaker; Maude, 16, a Laundress; Alan, 14, a Gardener's Helper; our Charles, 10, at School; George, 7, at School; and baby Herbert, 2.

Their mother, Mary, died and was buried in St. John's, with her name entered in the Register as Minnie Perkins, in March 1909 aged 49. In 1911, Albert, aged 52, was a widower working as a Fitter's Labourer and still living in Derringstone. Only Herbert, aged 12 and at School, was still at home.

Charles, meanwhile, had joined the navy. He is listed as a Stoker, one of a small army of them, aboard HMS Lord Nelson in the Home Fleet. [HMS Lord Nelson was the last Royal Navy pre-Dreadnought battleship. She was launched in 1906 and completed in 1908. In 1914 she was the flagship of the Channel Fleet, but Charles was aboard HMS Aboukir by then.]

Given his complete credentials as a Barham man, it is no surprise that he is named on the Barham Memorial, but it makes it odd that he is included in Bridge as well unless, at some point after 1901, he had a job there until he enlisted. The earliest age for active service was 18 and he would have reached that age in about 1908. It seems he started as a Stoker and had reached 1st Class between then and the outbreak of war. It is possible that RH and the Bridge Memorial Committee were better informed than CWGC and knew that he had been promoted to Chief Petty Officer at the very beginning of the war.

The story of his death is dramatic. 3 British Armoured Cruisers, HMS Aboukir, HMS Hogue and HMS Cressy were sunk on 22nd September 1914 by a single U-Boat, U9, in the North Sea. The Admiralty were not expecting any enemy vessels in the area and the ships were not taking any precautions like zig-zagging. U9 fired one torpedo and hit HMS Aboukir amidships. She sank in 30 minutes. The other 2, assuming she had hit a mine, stopped to pick up survivors. HMS Hogue was hit by 2 torpedoes and sank in 15 minutes. HMS Cressy, realising what was happening, got under way. U9 fired 2 more and one hit. The strike was not fatal, but U9 fired the last of her 6 torpedoes to make sure. HMS Cressy sank in 15 minutes. U9's commander, Lieutenant Otto Weddigen was an overnight war-hero in Germany. [He was killed in action in another U-Boat in 1915.] In all, 837 seamen were rescued by nearby merchantmen and trawlers, but 1,459 men were lost including Chief Petty Officer Perkins.

13. C.H. Peirce L. Cpl. The Buffs.

CWGC only gives the initials C.H. and the same unusual spelling of the surname. He is recorded here as Private, not Lance Corporal, 5502 8th Battalion The Buffs. He died on 12th February 1916 and is buried in Menin Road South Military Cemetery in the Ypres Salient.

SD and RH agree, except in one respect: SD agrees with CWGC that he was a Private, but RH agrees with the Bridge Memorial that he was a Lance Corporal. Both give his full name as Charles Henry Peirce and add born Bishopsbourne, resided Bridge and enlisted Canterbury. SD states specifically Killed in Action.

Neither side was undertaking a major offensive at that time, but there were plenty of ways a man could be killed in the attrition of trench-warfare: shells, snipers, trench raids by both sides, wiring parties and patrols crawling around at night in No-Man's-Land, localised attacks by either side to gain more advantageous positions for their trenches.

In the census of 1891, at Crows Camp, Bishopsbourne, lived Anthony C. Peirce, 39, Farm Labourer, born Littlebourne and his wife Rosey, 37, born Bridge. With them were their seven children, all born in Bridge: Albert W., 15; Charlotte L., 12, Scholar; Frederick W., 9, Scholar; Rose H., 7, Scholar; George H., 5; Alfred J.W., 3; Charles H., 4 months.

By 1901, the family had moved to one of the four Bricknoggin Cottages beside the ford in Bridge, Three siblings had left home, but two more had been added, all born in Bridge: Frederick, 20, General Labourer; George H., 15, General Labourer; Alfred J., 13; our Charles H., 10; Martha M., 7; Robert A., 3.

By 1911, their mother, Rose, had died and Anthony Cornelius, 58, a widower, still a Farm Labourer had moved to 4, Primrose Alley, Bridge. With him were Alfred, 23, Farm Labourer; Charles, 20, Farm Labourer, but recorded as born in Bishopsbourne, not Bridge; Robert, 14, Farm Labourer.

Given that he was 20 in the 1911 census, we would have been about 25 when he was killed.