



HENFIELD PARISH

DETAILS OF SERVICEMEN WHO ARE BURIED IN THE NEW
CEMETERY (War Graves Commission)

*For the Rolls of Honour for WW1 and WW2
please see the document "Rolls of Honour"*

Servicemen buried in the Cemetery:

GEORGE BANFIELD R.N. DIED 1 NOVEMBER 1914 RANK HELD: STOKER FIRST CLASS

George Banfield was a member of the ship's company of HMS *Good Hope*, flagship of the West Indies Squadron. The ship was ordered round Cape Horn to the South Pacific to protect British trade in South America. On 1st November 1914 the *Good Hope* prepared to engage in battle with the German East Asian Squadron commanded by Vice Admiral Graf von Spee. At 19.57 hours the ship received a direct hit to her magazine and was lost with all hands. Although commemorated in Henfield Cemetery on his brother's memorial, George Banfield lies with his companions somewhere in the South Pacific.

WILLIAM BANFIELD R.N. BORN 7 NOVEMBER 1890 DIED 31 JANUARY 1919 RANK HELD: STOKER FIRST CLASS

"Bill" Banfield trained as a stoker for coal-fired Lion-class battle cruisers, serving on HMS *Invincible*, HMS *Lion*, HMS *Princess Royal*, HMS *Hindustan* and returning to the *Princess Royal* on 25 April 1918. He was present at most of the major sea battles of the First World War and on the night of 23 April 1918 he took part in the blockade of Zeebrugge, during which his conduct resulted in a nomination for the Victoria Cross.

MARK BROWNING BORN 19 FEBRUARY 1913 - DIED 11 APRIL 1944 RANK HELD: CORPORAL

Mark Browning was born in Henfield and after schooling worked as a kiln supervisor at Henfield Brickworks. Called up in June 1940 he joined the 5th Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment. All his service was within the UK and he was training for the D-Day landings when he was badly injured in a road traffic accident. Knocked down by a car as he walked back to camp near Southampton, he died of his injuries four days later in Netley Hospital.

SIMON BURGESS BORN 9 JANUARY 1896 - DIED 5 MARCH 1943 RANK HELD: PRIVATE

Simon Burgess was born in Northampton and volunteered for service soon after the outbreak of war, enlisting in the 4th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment and serving in UK until 1915 when he was sent overseas. He served in Egypt and in the Palestine Campaign during which he was wounded in April 1917. He returned to UK for demobilisation in May 1919. With the outbreak of the Second World War he again volunteered, enlisting in the Royal Sussex Regiment, serving in the UK. His home was in Henfield at the time of his death, from natural causes, in March 1943.

MICHAEL JAMES MEATYARD R.A.F. BORN 6 JULY 1923 - DIED 7 MAY 1943 RANK HELD: PILOT OFFICER

Michael was a member of the Air Training Corps. Applying for entry to the RAF Volunteer Reserve on 10 June 1941, he was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and completed his navigation training in March 1943. While based at RAF Station North Luffington, Rutland, he volunteered for an additional training flight as a supernumerary crew member of a Wellington Bomber. The aircraft took off shortly before 22.00 hrs on 6 May 1943 on a night-time cross-country navigational training flight and at approximately 0015 hrs, 7 May 1943 crashed in low cloud into high ground at Greenlow Farm, near St John's Chapel, County Durham. Cause unknown. All on board lost their lives.

LEON NEWMAN R.M. BORN MAY 1918 – DIED 9 NOVEMBER 1941 RANK HELD: MARINE

Leon Newman joined the Royal Marines on 15 February 1940, training as a member of the Mobile Naval Base Defence Organisation II. Whilst taking part in a raid on German-occupied Norway in April 1940 he was wounded. Complications resulted in peritonitis and he failed to recover, dying at Aldingbourne Hospital on 9 November 1940.

WALTER RAYMENT R.A.F. DIED 6 OCTOBER 1940 RANK HELD: SERGEANT (AIR GUNNER)

Walter Rayment was accepted for aircrew training as a Wireless Operator/ Air Gunner. On passing out he was posted to 61 Squadron, based at RAF Hemswell, South Yorkshire. Promoted to Sergeant he became operational on 13 July 1940. On 5 October 1940 he was detailed to take part in a five-aircraft sortie in a Hampden aircraft 2920. Weather conditions for this operation were extremely bad with a gale blowing, icing and low cloud as well as rain. The aircraft had to be diverted on returning, as mud had made the aerodrome unserviceable. The aircraft crashed on the Yorkshire Moors near Leeming in the early hours of the morning. All four of the crew were killed.

JAMES REEVES NATIONAL RESERVES BORN 1865 - DIED 1916

James Reeves was born in Henfield and three of his four children also served in the Armed Forces. James served in the National Reserve from April 1915 to April 1916. Those serving in the National Reserve supported the war effort by guarding railways and other vulnerable locations in Britain, usually being attached to an Army battalion. Records are unclear as to whether he died on active service. One of his sons (see William Reeves, below), who is believed to have died as a result of gassing, is buried close to his father.

WILLIAM REEVES BORN HENFIELD 1896 - DIED HENFIELD 1919 RANK HELD: GUNNER

William Reeves was the son of James Reeves, a local builder, and Ruth Manvill Reeves. He enlisted 6th July 1914 aged 18 years and was sent to France on the 5th October 1915 where he served as a Gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery. He was discharged on the 9th October 1919 and died at home on the 16th December 1919 aged 23. Records show that he was badly gassed whilst on active service and it is thought this was the cause of death. Two postcards showing his funeral procession can be seen in Henfield Museum. William was accorded a military funeral with firing party which was attended by 20 soldiers from the Royal Sussex Regiment.

EDWARD FRANCIS WAKEFORD DIED 23 FEBRUARY 1915 RANK HELD: CAPTAIN

The funeral service of the late Captain Wakeford, of His Majesties Territorial Forces, took place on 26th February 1915, with full military honours. Capt Wakeford of the 6th (Cyclist) Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment was the only son of the Rev. William Wakeford, formerly Vicar of Henfield, and served as a Training Officer. The number of villagers lining the route of the cortege told of the esteem and affection in which he was held, and the number of service personnel attending confirmed his popularity.

DENNIS WENHAM BORN 9 MARCH 1911 - DIED 9 APRIL 1947 RANK HELD: GUNNER

Dennis Wenham enlisted into the Royal Artillery on 12 December 1938. On completing his basic training with the 4/2nd Regiment, RA he was posted to the 1/6th Anti-Aircraft Regiment on 7 April 1939. After gun training he was selected for posting to the Far East with the 9th Heavy Regiment (Malaya), transferring to the heavy Battery in August 1939. (This unit was redesignated as the 9th Coast Regiment RA from 14 December 1940). He was reported as being a prisoner of war of the Japanese on 16th February 1942. Whilst a POW, Dennis was forced to work on the infamous Burma Railway. Although he survived this ordeal, his nephew confirms that he died on 9th April 1947 of beri-beri (caused by thiamine deficiency), as a result of his experiences as a POW.

JAMES WING ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY DIED 4 DECEMBER 1918 RANK HELD: GUNNER

Owing to the fact that 60% of the personnel records of soldiers in the First World War were lost due to enemy air action during the Battle of Britain 1940, the cause of Gunner Wing's death is not known with certainty. However it is confirmed that he served in the Royal Garrison Artillery; this unit manned the heavy coastal defence guns and, later in the war, the newly-formed anti-aircraft batteries that were sited in southern and eastern England to protect London from zeppelin attacks and later the "gotha" bombers. It was been suggested that James Wing may have died as a result of the influenza epidemic of 1918/19 that killed millions around the world.

