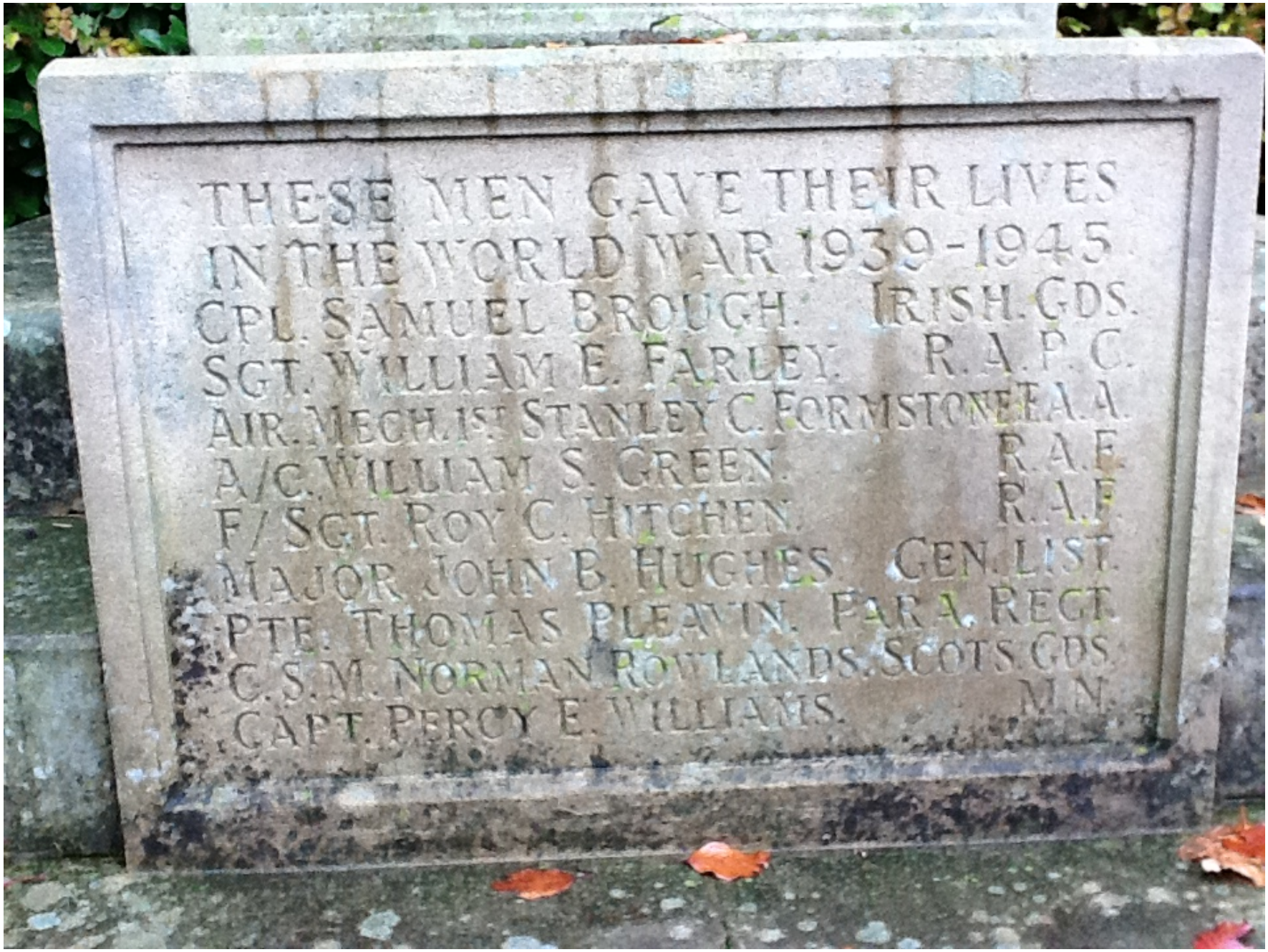
Upton-by-Chester War Memorial
Second World War





The Unveiling

- Memorial originally unveiled in 1921 to commemorate the fallen from WW1
- After WW2 the Parish Council decided to add names of local men who fell in that conflict in line with nationwide practice
- Cost of inserting new stone was £38. In the event, local subscriptions amounted to almost £60.
- New stone unveiled and dedicated in service performed by local ministers on 13th May 1948
- Attended by next of kin, British Legion, councillors, military commanders, Chief of Staff of Western Command and people of the village


THESE MEN GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN THE WORLD WAR 1939-1945
CPL. SAMUEL BROUGH. IRISH. GDS.
SGT. WILLIAM E. FARLEY. R.A.P.C.
AIR. MECH. 1ST STANLEY C. FORMSTONE R.A.A.F.
A/C. WILLIAM S. GREEN. R.A.F.
F/SGT. ROY C. HITCHEN. R.A.F.
MAJOR JOHN B. HUGHES. GEN. LIST.
PTE. THOMAS PLEAVIN. PARA. REGT.
C.S.M. NORMAN ROWLANDS. SCOTS GDS.
CAPT. PERCY E. WILLIAMS. M.N.

The Inscription

THESE MEN GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN THE WORLD WAR 1939-1945

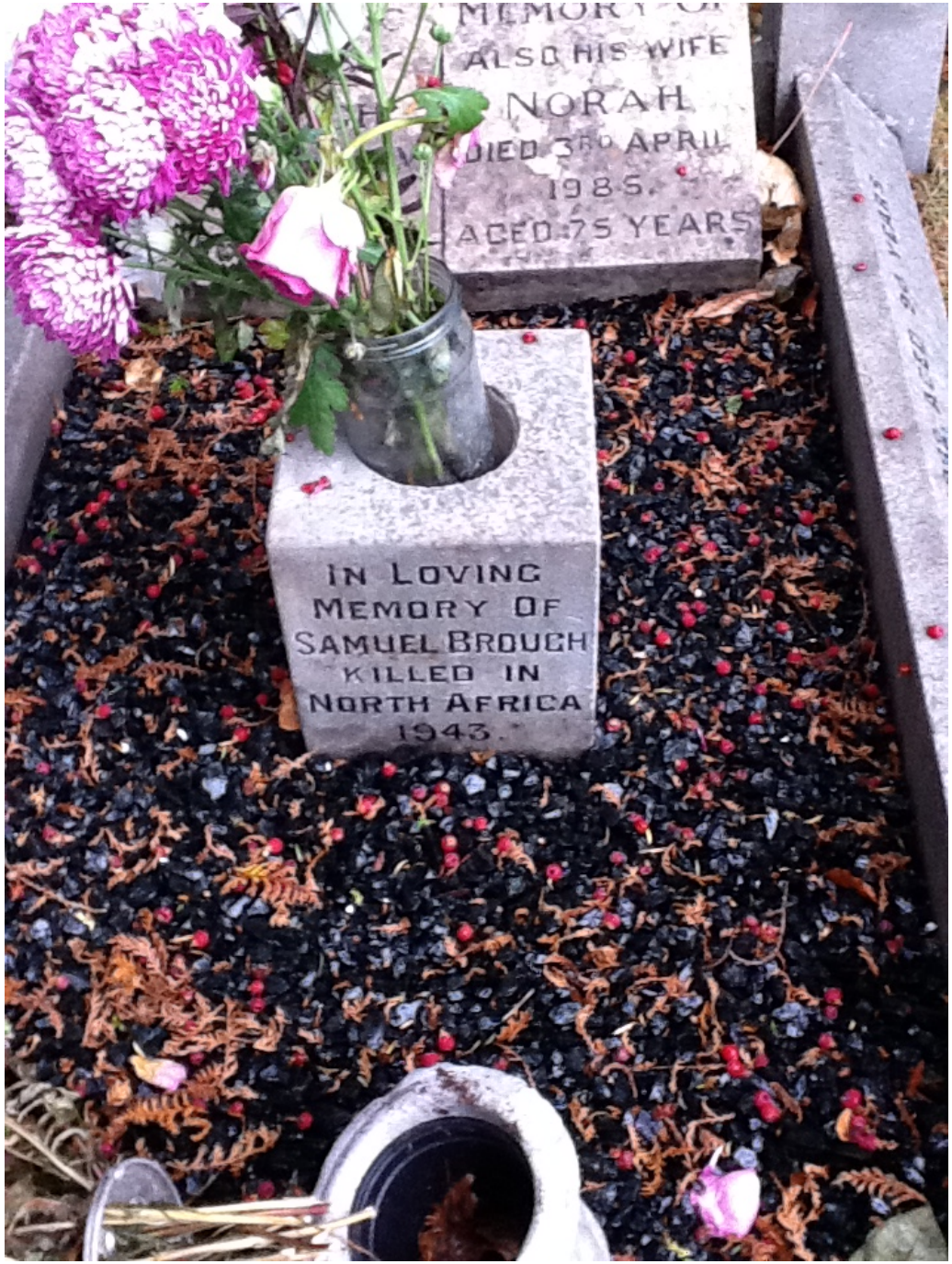
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MAJOR JOHN B.HUGHES, GEN.LIST.
PTE.THOMAS PLEAVIN, PARA.REGT.
C.S.M.NORMAN ROWLANDS, SCOTS.GDS.
CAPT.PERCY E.WILLIAMS, M.N.

These are in alphabetical order by surname whereas the men lost in the First World War are listed by rank

Taking each man in turn …

Samuel Brough
Lance Corporal, Irish Guards

- Born 1912/13
- Son of Henry Baker Brough and Sarah Brough (Nee Harding)
- Married to Norah Brough
- Lived in Brooke Avenue
- Served as a Lance Corporal in the Irish Guards (Foot Guards)
- Killed on 30th April 1943 in North Africa
- Commemorated at Medjez El Bab Memorial in Tunisia
- Also remembered on family tomb at Holy Ascension (father died in 1949 aged 68, mother died in 1982 aged 94 and wife died in 1985 aged 75)

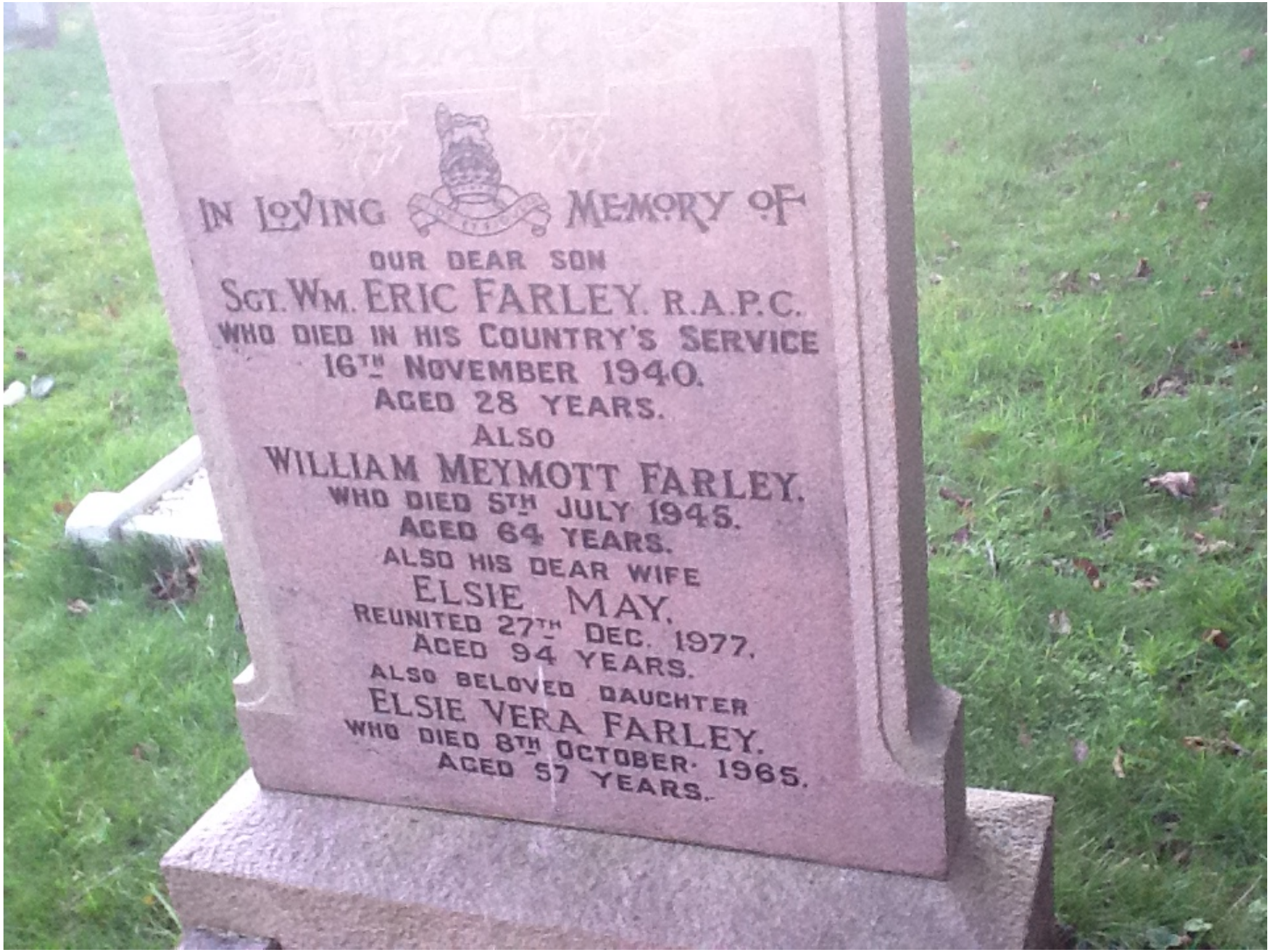

ALSO HIS WIFE
NORAH
1985.
AGED 75 YEARS
IN LOVING
MEMORY OF
SAMUEL BROUGH
KILLED IN
NORTH AFRICA
1943.

Historical context

- War in North Africa ended in Tunisia in May 1943, just after Samuel was killed, with the defeat of the Axis powers by a combined Allied force
- This phase of the War began in November 1942 when Allied forces landed in Morocco and Algeria and Germans stationed in Sicily responded
- Axis forces were defeated at El Alamein and retreated to Tunisia, pursued by the eighth army
- The final offensive took place in North East Tunisia in April 1943
- Medjez El Bab was the limit of the Allied offensive in December 1942 and remained on the front line until the denouement. 2,903 Commonwealth Soldiers are commemorated at the cemetary. Those who were killed between February and May 1943 have no known grave.

William Eric Farley
Sergeant, Royal Army Pay Corps

- Born in 1912
- Son of William Meymott Farley and Elsie May Farley (Nee Horsman)
- Sergeant in Royal Army Pay Corps
- Died 16th November 1940
- Buried at Holy Ascension Church, Upton alongside his father, sister (Elsie Vera) and mother who died in 1945, 1965 and 1977 respectively
- Considering this was clearly a local family, we know relatively little about William Eric Farley, including the circumstances of his death and why he appears to be in a civilian grave


IN LOVING MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR SON
SGT. WM. ERIC FARLEY. R.A.P.C.
WHO DIED IN HIS COUNTRY'S SERVICE
16TH NOVEMBER 1940.
AGED 28 YEARS.
ALSO
WILLIAM MEYMOTT FARLEY.
WHO DIED 5TH JULY 1945.
AGED 64 YEARS.
ALSO HIS DEAR WIFE
ELSIE MAY.
REUNITED 27TH DEC. 1977.
AGED 94 YEARS.
ALSO BELOVED DAUCHTER
ELSIE VERA FARLEY.
WHO DIED 8TH OCTOBER 1965.
AGED 57 YEARS.

Stanley Clifford Formstone
Air Mechanic 1st, Fleet Air Arm

- Born 1919 in Harwarden
- Son of Harold Formstone and Clara Formstone
- Lived at 9 Delvine Drive
- Suffered spinal problems as a child but recovered to become Senior Champion at Chester County Sports Club meeting in 1937
- Air Mechanic 1st in Fleet Air Arm
- Died 7th December 1942
- Commemorated at Lee on Solent Memorial
- Nephew, John Woodhead, has provided some rich and fascinating biographical detail, put together for our benefit

Circumstances of death

- S.S. Ceramic left Liverpool 23rd November 1942 bound for Cape Town and Australia
- 656 passengers and crew were on board, including Stanley Clifford Formstone
- Ship detached from convoy on 2nd or 3rd December
- Sunk off Azores 6th/ 7th December, having been hit by 5 torpedoes from a German U Boat
- Only one passenger survived, Sapper Eric Munday, who was then taken to PoW camp Stalag 8B in Upper Silesia
- News of the loss was first broken by Lord Haw Haw a day later, indicating no survivors
- It was nine months before the fate of the ship was confirmed and three years before details emerged upon Munday's liberation
- More information can be found in a recent book 'S.S. Ceramic – The Untold Story' by Clare Hardy

Another Formstone connection

- History Group recently received email from New Zealander, Robert Urquhart enquiring about Stanley Clifford Shutt, Warrant Officer serving in New Zealand Air Force and R.A.F. in WW2
- Aged 32, final posting was to Coastal Command as wireless operator/ air gunner on Wellington bomber
- On 2nd October 1944, aircraft failed to return from anti-shipping patrol off Dutch coast and crew were presumed dead
- On R.A.F. documentation 'person to be notified in event of casualty' was listed as 'Mrs Formstone, 9 Delvine Drive, Chester'
- Mr Urquhart concludes: '67 years on, I can only wonder if Mrs Formstone was advised of Stanley's fate. I also wonder if there are any living Formstone folk in your area who would have heard of New Zealander Stanley Shutt'

William Stephen Green
Aircraftsman, RAF Volunteer Reserve

- Born 1919/ 1920
- Son of Albert Edward and Mary Anna Green
- Aircraftsman in the RAF Volunteer Reserve
- AC1 cinema operator, presumably at RAF Hawarden, Sealand or Hooton
- Lived at 34 Upton Drive
- Rushed to hospital and died of an intestinal obstruction and intussesception on 15th April 1941
- Buried in civilian grave at Grove Chapel Graveyard at Saughall (Church of Christ)

Roy Challinor Hitchen
Flight Seargeant, RAF Volunteer Reserve



Roy Challinor Hitchen
Flight Seargeant, RAF Volunteer Reserve

- Born 1924 in Whitby
- Son of Cecil William and Constance Hilda Hitchen
- Lived at The Warren, 16 Caughall Road
- Flight Sergeant in R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve
- Killed 18th December 1944
- Commemorated at Leopoldsburg War Cemetary, Limburg, Belguim

Historical context

- In early September 1944 Allied forces returned to Belgium following rapid advances through Northern France
- Heavy fighting followed, most notably around Arnhem and Antwerp where the Allies made further progress
- On 16th December 1944 the German High Command launched the Ardennes counter offensive with the aim of seizing Antwerp and cutting the Allied forces in two
- The attack was halted on 26th December as it failed to even reach Liege and its initial objectives on the Meuse
- It was in this area and this period that Roy lost his life

The Fatal Mission

- Date: 18th December 1944
- Mission: Duisburg (largest inland port in Europe – heavily bombed throughout the war, including on this date)
- Unit No: 51 Squadron
- Aircraft type: Halifax III bomber
- 8 flight crew, ages ranging from 18 to 27
- Reason for loss: took off 0258 hrs, Snaith, nr Goole in Yorkshire. Crashed into woods south of Charleroi, Belgium and all crew killed. Aircraft thought to have crashed when two other aircraft collided nearby, causing an explosion. All The fatal mission originally buried at Les Fosses US Cemetary nr Charleroi and subsequently moved to Leopoldsburg.
- Roy was involved in a previous Halifax crash on 19th September 1944 at Snaith where a fellow crew member lost his life

John Bryan Hughes, Major, General List

- Born 1895
- Son of Harry and Catherine Mary Hughes (Nee Davies) and husband of Jane Hughes
- Major on the General List
- Killed 10th September 1944
- Commemorated at Heliopolis War Cemetary, Egypt (10 miles North East of Cairo)
- General Headquarters of Middle East Command set up in Cairo shortly before outbreak of War and remained there throughout
- Heliopolis Cemetary was opened in October 1941 mainly for the many fatalities from the Western Desert Campaigns passing through the hospitals in the area.
- As the war in North Africa ended in 1943 it's unclear what campaign Major Hughes was involved in or how he met his death. It's possible he remained at General Headquarters in Cairo and/ or was in some way involved in the spitfire missions that continued to patrol the Mediterranean from a North African base.

Thomas Pleavin,
Private, Parachute Regiment

- Born in 1914
- Lived in cottages at top of Heath Rd
- Brothers were Ron and Reg Pleavin. Reg lost both his legs in the War, believed to be at El Alamein.
- Thomas transferred to Airborne service from Royal Artillery, completing his Parachute course in September 1942
- Served with the 3rd Parachute Battalion, and likely to have been active in Tunisia, Sicily and Italy through 1942 and 1943 before taking part in the Battle of Arnhem during Operation Market Garden in September 1944
- Wounded in action during the battle and taken prisoner of war
- Died of wounds 8th January 1945, location unknown
- It's possible that he was part of the forced marches from PoW camps in Poland to Germany as Russian troops advanced in early 1945
- Buried at the Berlin 1939 - 1945 War Cemetary

Historical context

- Objective of Operation Market Garden was to secure the canal and river crossings between Eindhoven and Arnhem to help create a corridor through which ground forces would break into the Rhur and end the War
- Private Pleavin would have been part of the 1st British Airborne Division dropped near Arnhem to seize the road bridge
- There were insufficient aircraft to fly the complete Division so those involved were left exposed
- Heavier than expected resistance was met with because the II SS Panzer Corps was refitting in the area
- The bridge was taken and held for three days and four nights but ground forces were unable to fight through to provide reinforcement
- Of the 10,000 servicemen who landed fewer than 3,000 got out across the river

Norman Rowlands,
Warrant Officer Class II, Scots Guards

- Born 1915
- Son of Joseph Rowlands and Florence Rowlands (nee Packman)
- Family lived in Flag Lane, Upton
- Had a sister called Pam Rowlands. Allard was her married name.
- Had a brother called Les who was also killed in the War. Records on him are lacking or any explanation as to why he doesn't appear on the War Memorial.
- Warrant Officer Class II in Scots Guards
- Died 27th October 1945, for whatever reason almost six months after the end of the war
- Commemorated at Cologne Southern Cemetary

Percy Edgar Williams, Captain, Merchant Navy





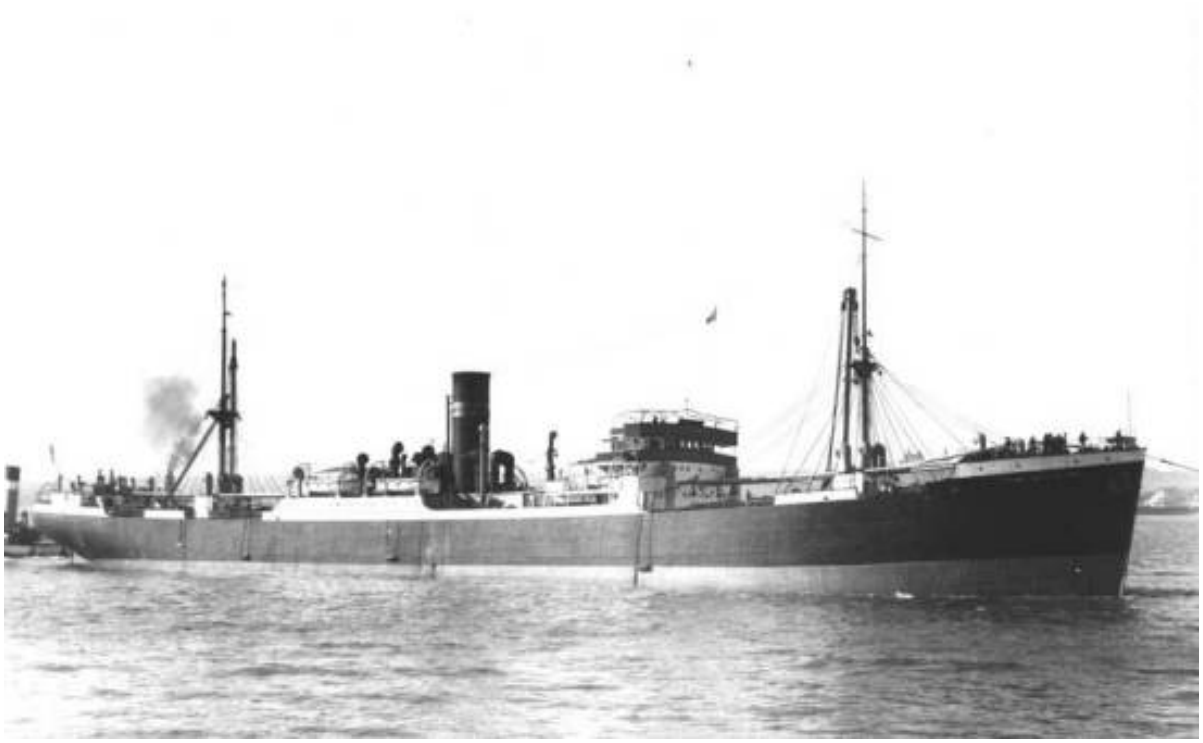
Percy Edgar Williams, Captain/ Master, Merchant Navy

- Born in Bootle on 19th February 1882
- Son of John Augustus Williams and Mary Ellen Williams (nee Cook)
- Daughter and family lived in Kingsmead, Upton
- Followed in father's footsteps to become a Captain having started out in square riggers as a cabin boy
- Progressed through the ranks, gaining his masters certificate for steam ships in 1916
- Sailed worldwide for the Leyland Line, Houston Line and Clan line
- Commanded the SS Hesperides, his favourite ship, from 1932 to 1937
- Captain in Merchant Navy at time of death
- Died at the helm of the SS Clan Macfadyen, east of Trinidad on 27th November 1942
- Commemorated on Tower Hill Memorial, London

The Fatal Mission

- Percy believed the Clan Macfadyen to be an unlucky ship and was reluctant to sail on her. In the event he had no choice.
- It was unescorted and was sunk by a German U-Boat in the early hours of 27th November 1942, 95 miles south east of Trinidad
- Percy, 82 crew and seven gunners were lost
- Three crew members and one gunner survived and were picked up from a raft by the Harvard and landed at Port of Spain on 31st November
- The same U-Boat sank another British ship the following day and in total nine Allied ships in November and December that year
- The U-Boat was subsequently sunk by an American Liberator in the Bay of Biscay. The aircraft itself was later shot down.

The Clan Macfadyen



- Built 1923
- Weight 6,200 tons
- Cargo on final voyage 6,700 tons of sugar and 5 tons of hemp and rum

Other local fatalities

Air Crash in Mill Lane

- Took place on 1st July 1941 whilst aircraft was flying low
- Hit a tree and house in Mill Lane adjoining the mill
- The two pilots were from the Royal Canadian Air Force based at Hawarden
  - Henry Archer Womack, aged 21, an American Volunteer from Tennessee
  - John Melvin Milmine, aged 19, born in Chicago but moved to Ottowa aged 5
- It's thought that the trainee pilot, Milmine, was showing off to a girlfriend who lived in the area
- Both are buried at St Deiniol's Church, Hawarden



Sgt John Hill Rodgers

- Born 1923/ 24
- Son of Harry and Gladys R Rogers
- Sergeant (Air Bomber), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
- Died 4th October 1943 when aircraft (Lancaster ED583) broke up in sky over North Thorseby, Lincolnshire during a test flight
- Military gravestone at Holy Ascension and on memorial at North Thoresby

William Holden Foulds

- Military gravestone at Holy Ascension shows him as having served in Royal Army Service Corps and died at age 40 on 19th January 1944
- Born in West Derby in April 1903
- Son of Robert and Emma Foulds who lived in Formby at time of William's death
- Married Margaret Louisa Wedgewood in West Derby in 1925. She died in 1945 aged 39.

Neil Rowan

- Military gravestone at Holy Ascension shows him as having served as a craftsman in Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and died at age of 19 on 20th August 1960
- Records indicate that he was killed in a motorcycle accident at Fairford, Cirencester

Ranger David N Lanham

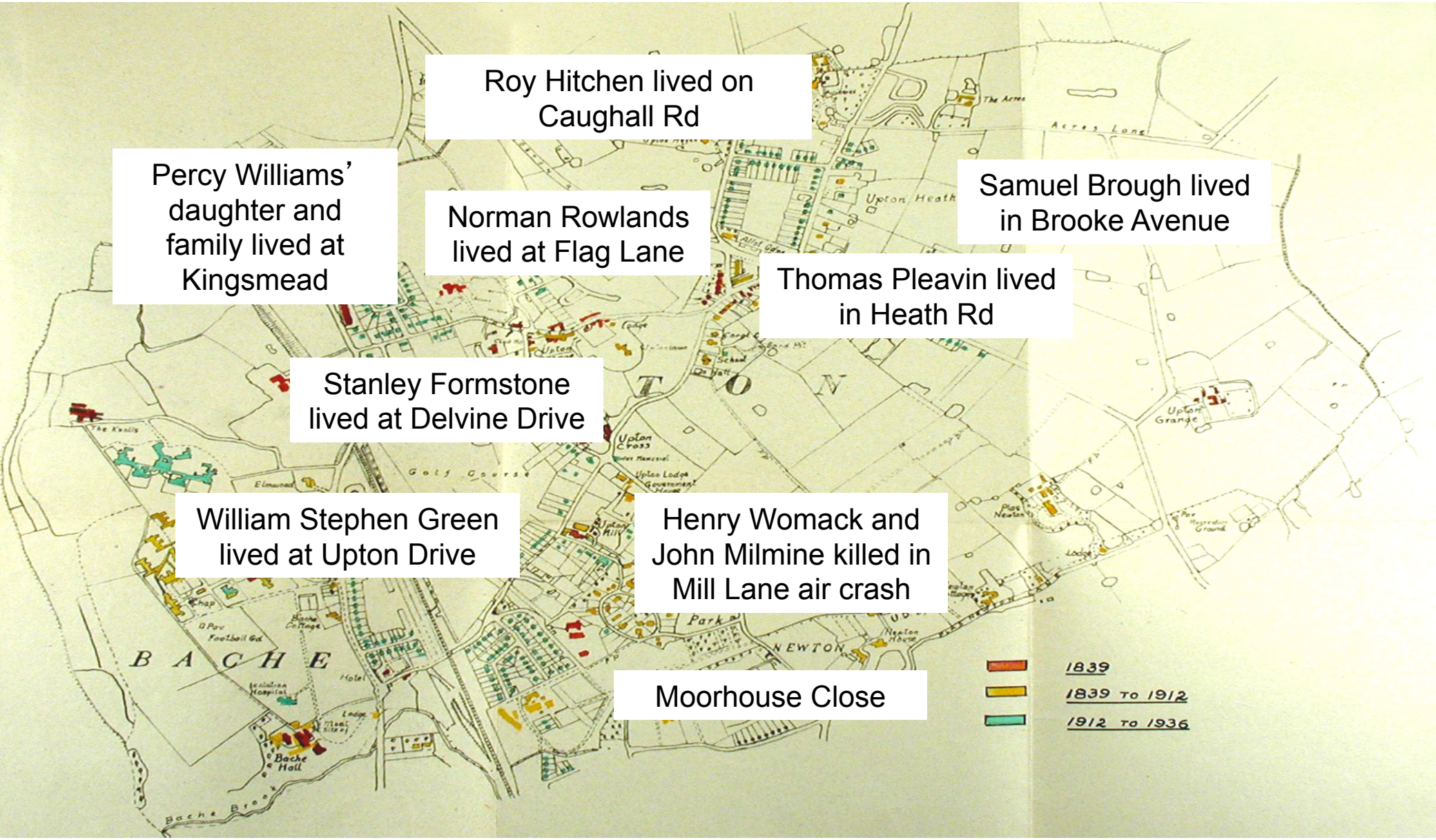
- Military gravestone at Holy Ascension shows him as having served in Royal Irish Rangers and died aged 26 on 10th January 1983
- Believed to have been killed in a road traffic accident in Northern Ireland

Anthony Moorhouse

- Moorhouse Close, off Neston Drive bears plaque that reads ‘Lieutenant Anthony Moorhouse, died heroically during operations in Suez 1956’
- Not a local man (came from Leeds) and not known to have any local connections
- Abducted on 10th December 1956 following a raid to round up Egyptian commandos
- Taken hostage with a view to exchange with Egyptian prisoners
- Died whilst in captivity despite involvement of British Government and UN
- Body repatriated 5th January 1957
- Buried with full military honours at Lawnswood Cemetary, Leeds

Appendices

Upton connections



WW2 Timeline

World events

9 Apr Sep
Germany occupies Denmark and invades Norway

10 may
Germany invades Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg
Churchill replaces Chamberlain

15 May
Holland surrenders

6 Apr
Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece

May 26 BEF evacuation from Dunkirk

27 Apr Germans capture Athens

27 May
Belgium surrenders

1 Sep
Germany invades Poland

22 Jun
Germans invade Russia (Barbarossa)

10 Jun
Italy declares war on Britain and France

25 Nov Germans attack Moscow

3 Sep
Britain France Australia and NZ declare war on Germany

14 June
German army enters Paris

7 Dec Japanese attack Pearl Harbour and declare war on USA

22 jun
France signs Armistice with Germany

10 Jul
Battle of Britain begins

11 dec Germany declares war on USA

15 Feb Singapore falls to japanese

31 Jan Germans surrender at Stalingrad

12 May
Axis forces surrender in North Africa

3 Jul Sbbastapol falls to Germany

10 July allied landings in sicily

23 Oct battle of El Alemein begins

25 July Mussolini overthrown

3 Sep Italy signs armistice

17 Jan soviets capture Warsaw

12 Apr roosevelt dies and truman succeeds him

13 Apr soviets capture Vienna

4 June Rome captured by Allies

23 Apr Soviets enter Berlin

30 Apr Hitler commits suicide

6 June Allied Invasion of Normandy (neptune/ Overlord)

8 May VE Day declared

7 May Germans surrender unconditionally

15 Aug Allied landings in South of France

6 Aug atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima

25 Aug
Allies liberate Paris

14 Aug Japan surrenders

1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945

When they died

16 Nov
William Eric Farley died

17 Dec Stanley Clifford Formstone died

18 Dec
Roy Hitchen died

5 Apr
William Stephen Green died

30 apr
Samuel Brough died

10 sep
Bryan Hughes died

1 Jul H Womack and J Milmine died

27 Nov
Percy Edgar Williams died

4 Oct
John Hill Rogers died

8 Jan
Thomas Pleavin died

27 Oct
Norman Rowlands died

19 Jan
William Foulds died

Reflection

They shall not grow old as we that are left shall grow old; age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.

SAMUEL BROUGH
WILLIAM E.FARLEY
STANLEY C.FORMSTONE
WILLIAM S.GREEN
ROY C.HITCHEN
JOHN B.HUGHES
THOMAS PLEAVIN
NORMAN ROWLANDS
PERCY E.WILLIAMS