



“They shall grow not old, as we that are left 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...”



Dear Parents, Guardians and Pupils,

Two years ago today, I wrote a special newsletter to commemorate 100 years since the end of World War One. Circumstances are, of course, somewhat different now. COVID-19 has forced us to change our Remembrance Day planning this year. Today, Reverend Steve Bennett delivered a wonderful Virtual Service which we shared with the school community before observing the traditional two minute silence at 11am.

Ninety three members of the St Edmund's community were killed in the First and Second World Wars. These were devastating losses for such a small school to bear. For example, on Speech Day 1917, the Headmaster had the terrible duty of announcing that of the 260 Old Boys who had served during the war, 29 had been killed and 54 wounded. The names of all St Edmund's pupils who died in the two world wars are recorded on our war memorials in Chapel.

**Second World War Memorial**

**Altar piece made by pupils**



At this point every year, I am always reminded that those fallen pupils and staff sat in the same pews in chapel as our current pupils, admired the same wonderful views of the Cathedral, studied in the same room, and, to quote John McCrae, “lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow” on St Thomas Hill, just like the rest of us. I am sure they loved this place, as we do. I would urge pupils and parents to use the excellent Commonwealth War Graves website, to find out more about former St Edmund's pupils who fought in the World War Wars: <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/>

I thought it might be appropriate to share three of those stories with you in this newsletter. Once again, I am grateful to Jock Asbury-Bailey and his excellent History of the School “Foundation on a Hill”.

## Benjamin Geary

**Benjamin Handley Geary attended St Edmund's from 1904-1910. He went on to study at Keble College Oxford.**

On 20th and 21st April 1915 the 1st Battalion was in action on Hill 60 near Ypres in Belgium. Second Lieutenant Geary led his men across exposed open ground swept by fierce enemy fire to join survivors of the Bedfordshire Regiment in a crater at the top of the hill. Geary's subsequent actions earned him the Victoria Cross. The citation reads:

For most conspicuous bravery and determination on "Hill 60," near Ypres, on April 20th and 21st, 1915, when he held the left crater with his platoon, some men of the Bedfordshire Regiment and a few reinforcements who came up during the evening and night. The crater was first exposed to very heavy artillery fire which broke down the defences, and afterwards throughout the night to repeated bomb attacks which filled it with dead and wounded. Each attack was, however, repulsed mainly owing to the splendid personal gallantry and example of Second Lieutenant Geary. At one time he used a rifle with great effect, at another threw hand grenades, and exposed himself with entire disregard to danger in order to see by the light of flares where the enemy were coming on. In the intervals between the attacks he spent his whole time arranging for the ammunition supply and for reinforcements. He was severely wounded just before daylight on 21st April."

## Charles Marsh

Charles Marsh attended St Edmunds from 1900 to 1910 and earned a scholarship to Wadham College Oxford. During the First World War he fought as a Lieutenant in the East Kent regiment, "the Buffs".

The Battalion took part in the Battle of Loos. On 13th October 1915, the 6th Battalion suffered heavy casualties and Lieutenant Marsh was killed.

These accounts describe what happened when the Buffs attacked the infamous Hoherenzollern redoubt – a heavily defended strongpoint.

They paint a terrifying picture:

**An artist's impression of Geary during the battle at Hill 60**



**Memorial in the School Chapel**



**Lieutenant Charles Marsh**



**Lieutenant C. W. B. Marsh**

6th East Kent Regt. (The Buffs). Aged 24 years. He formerly held an appointment in the Colonial Civil Service



**A trench near Loos in September 1915**



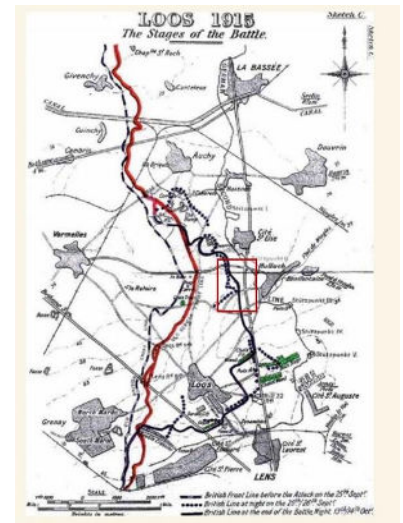
"A whistle blasted, and over the bridge of death we climbed and shouted. I got clear of our barbed wire and commenced to advance, rifle and bayonet fixed in one hand and spade in the other, under a terrific machine-gun fire, bullets whizzing past me in thousands..."

"...the 6/Buffs were shattered by fire from a previously unseen (and therefore not shelled) trench. This battalion lost over 400 men in a few minutes, barely advancing 100 yards before halting."

More than 61,000 British casualties were sustained in this battle. 50,000 of them were in the main fighting area between Loos and Givenchy and the remainder in the subsidiary attacks. Of these, 7,766 men died.

Based on the known location of the Buffs during the assault on 13th October 1915, it is likely Lieutenant Marsh died in the area enclosed by the red rectangle in the map opposite.

**The Battle of Loos, 1915**



## Robert Llewellyn Jephson-Jones, G.C

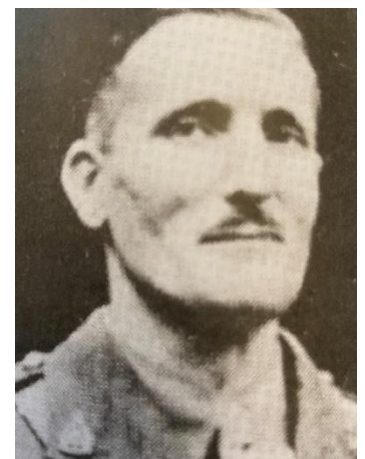
**Captain Jephson-Jones**

Robert Llewellyn Jephson-Jones was a pupil at St Edmunds from 1914-19.

Captain Jephson-Jones was living in Malta at the outbreak of the Second World War. When Malta became a prime target for enemy air forces in June 1940 there were no expert Royal Engineer Bomb Disposal units and the task of attending to unexploded bombs and mines dropped on the island fell to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. Between mid-June and mid-November when bomb disposal was taken over by the Royal Engineers, Captain Jephson-Jones and Lieutenant Eastman, with incredible courage, dealt with 275 unexploded bombs in what was known as "the most bombed place on Earth".

Both men were awarded the George Cross for this work.

There are so many stories like these.



**An unexploded bomb in Malta**





At St Edmund's we remember the sacrifice made by our former pupils and honour their memory.



My thanks go to Reverend Steve Bennett for leading our act of remembrance this year, the External Relations and IT team for their technical support with the virtual service and to the staff and pupils for observing the event and two minute silence with appropriate respect.

I have included the names of those St Edmund's pupils who lost their lives in the wars on the following pages.

Kind regards,

Edward O'Connor

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## Names of members of our School whose lives were lost in the First World War 1914 – 1918

Frances Bacon  
Christopher Berkeley  
Edward Bree  
Eric Burges  
William Carthew  
John Clarke  
Norman Coutts  
William Darby  
Francis Davenport  
George Elliott  
Maurice Fletcher  
Michael Frayling  
Archibold Glenn  
John Hancock  
Reginald Hope  
Thomas Hudson  
Harold Jones  
Ivor Jones  
Geoffrey Jones  
Thomas Lawrence  
Charles Marsh  
Wakefield Meade  
Andrew Montgomery  
Cyril Morgan  
Arthur Murray  
Robert Murray  
William Osbourne

Leslie Osbourne  
Henry Perry  
Denys Puttock  
Harold Ravenhil  
Edward Rawson  
John Roberts  
Hugh Robinson  
James Roe  
Robert Spicer  
Hervey Swallow  
Robert Taylor  
Reginald Thomson  
Mendel Thwaite  
Humphrey Tuckwell  
Lewen Tugwell  
Audrey Vaucour  
Edwin Venning  
Cyril Wallace  
Charles Wallington  
Arthur Walker  
Gilbert White  
Theodore Williams  
Francis Williams  
Gordon Wiliams  
David Wilson  
Geoffrey Wix  
Robert Wright



## Names of members of our School whose lives were lost in the Second World War 1939 – 1945

Peter Atkinson  
Oliver Bingham  
Francis Box  
Stanford Bunn  
John Coates  
Henry Cooper  
Arthur Dearden  
Digby Dent  
Anthony Erye  
Peter Edinger  
John Finch  
Alfred Forder  
Edwin Gardner  
Albert Gibson-Taylor  
Gwilym Griffiths  
John Hare  
Merrick Haslegrave  
Paul Hirst  
Francis Hooke  
Jock Humphreys  
Bernard Howlett

Derek Icton  
Thomas Lancaster  
David Loder  
Bernard Matson  
Frank Minster  
Alec Mourilyn  
Harold Mourilyn  
Richard Owtram  
Robert Pinhey  
Benjamin Rothwell  
Douglas Ridley  
Richard Rimmer  
Ian Rutherford  
Lionel Saben  
Paul Screeton  
E.M. Swift  
Ronald Tomlinson  
John Topham  
John Watt  
Wilfred Sola