

Introduction by Alec Morgan

This exercise that I set myself has been a very emotional, nostalgic and intensely interesting one. Having suffered from a coronary attack in November 1991 and waiting about six months for surgery I thought that, being somewhat 'hors de combat', with great respect for the Olney men who lost their lives in World War Two, I would endeavour to obtain a photograph of each man. Additionally, I would write up such information that I could, with the help of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, who have been most helpful, and illustrate the name that is listed in the Roll of Honour which resides in the Lady Chapel of the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, and on the War Memorial in the Market Place, in our dear Olney. Almost all the young men who so tragically did not return were personally known to me, either by School days, local Sport, or being just 'Olneyites'. I served five years in the Army, graduating from the School OTC at Bedford Modern, thence to the LDV/Home Guard here in Olney, finally joining the Royal Corps of Signals, serving on the Continent (1944/45), in the Far East (1945/47) and with the Territorial Army Signals for a further six years. I had returned to Olney on demobilisation in 1947, Thanks be to God. I wrote with the greatest respect to relatives of the men, to the best of my knowledge and I am very pleased and humble to say that I have the complete set of photographs, numbering nineteen. Without exception all the good people were most co-operative, helpful and friendly so I would imagine that my efforts have been appreciated. I received, quite unsolicited a very generous donation from Mr John Hanson, I tender my grateful thanks. Mr Philip Cowley has provided the very handsome and entirely suitable album and Mr Tony Lamming, without charge did the necessary photocopying. I thank these gentlemen. Likewise my very humble thanks to the relatives who have been wonderful. I do appreciate Mona's and the family's interest, support, encouragement and practical help. I am also indebted to my Uncle, the late Mr A R Leeson whose war-time annual lists gave me so much information of all the serving men and women, with their locations, in the years 1939/45.

Through the generosity of the good Olney people we received at Christmas, ten shillings from the Town with a further five shillings from the then British Legion. I am intensely interested in the Services of the Crown and having been Honorary Secretary of the Olney & District Branch of the Royal British Legion for nearly 25 years, I am thus grateful, for the support and interest of the Branch Committee.

With the hoped for approval of the Minister and Parochial Council I would like to see the album installed, dedicated and I am sure enhance the Lady Chapel of our beautiful Church. All who wish to recall those young men who did not return to dear Olney will, I think sample the same emotion that I have experienced in compiling the album.

This is a small tribute to the men's Supreme Sacrifice.

"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today" from the Second British Division Memorial in Kohima of the India Burma border. "They shall not grow 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." The Ode to the Fallen ... "May they rest in peace"



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