

128: Tom Dodimead

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Tom Dodimead

Rank Private

Battalion / Regiment: 54th Supply Coy., Army Service Corps.

Service Number: S/255420

Date of Death: 2 November 1918

Age at Death: 31

Buried / Commemorated at: Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery, Hadra, Al Iskandariyah, Egypt

Additional information given by CWGC: Son of Elizabeth Boyden* (formerly Dodimead), of Hill Top, Staunton Harold, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and the late John Dodimead.

* The name *Royden* has been recorded incorrectly.

Tom Dodimead was born on 29 October 1886 (not 1887 as is recorded in some documents) in West Kirby, the first son of John and Elizabeth Dodimead and his birth was recorded as Tom, not Thomas.

Carpenter John Dodimead married Elizabeth Rowland of West Kirby at St Bridget's Church, West Kirby, on 16 May 1883. John Dodimead had been born in Somerset where his family was in the building and joinery trades but it is not known why John moved from Somerset to West Kirby although this coincided with the period when West Kirby established rail links, both with Birkenhead and Parkgate/Hooton, and a time of population and building expansion in the area:

It is a truism that the railways were ultimately responsible for the elevation of countless fishing villages to Victorian sea side and health spas. Few, however, can have enjoyed quite such attention from the "Age of Steam" as this corner of the Wirral Peninsular.

In 1878 the Seacombe, Hoylake and Deeside Railway established a terminus at West Kirby completing the line through Hoylake from Birkenhead opened in 1866. Many places would settle for one railway: West Kirby soon had another, an extension of the line from Hooton through Parkgate reached here in April 1886. The station was called the 'Joint' recognising its construction by the London and North Western Railway and the Great Western.

Further stations were opened at Kirby Park (1894) and Caldy (1909).

[<http://www.ashtonpark.btck.co.uk/History/HootontoWestKirbyRailway>]

Elizabeth was a daughter of West Kirby stonemason Thomas and Elizabeth Rowland.

John Dodimead, Tom's father, died in October 1888 at the time of Tom's second birthday and after just five years of marriage to Elizabeth. Another son, John, was born in 1889 shortly after John Dodimead's death although he doesn't appear in the household in 1891. John (aged 2), in fact was recorded as a patient in the Liverpool Children's Infirmary in Myrtle Street at the time of the census.

By 1891 Elizabeth had opened a lodging house in West Kirby in Eaton Road, one of the parallel set of roads leading eastwards from Banks Road. Elizabeth's step-mother, Emma Rowlands, already had a lodging house in Beacon Road (now Caldy Road) in

West Kirby and it is quite probable that it was Emma who encouraged Elizabeth to set herself up in this same business:

Elizabeth Dodimead	head	wid	43	Lodging house keeper		Cheshire West Kirby
Annie E.	do	do	6			do Birkenhead
Tom	do	son	4			do West Kirby
Ellen Johnson	visitor	wid	48	Living on her own means		Lancashire Prescott
Mary Duffield	visitor	wid	48	do		do do
Henry	do	do	21	Wholesale Druggists Clerk		do Liverpool
William E. Aspinall	boarder	do	28	Insurance manager	x	Cheshire Birkenhead

1891 census (extract) – Eaton Road, West Kirby

Elizabeth Dodimead	33	widow, lodging house keeper	born West Kirby
Annie E.	6		born Birkenhead
Tom	4		born West Kirby

The household also contained three visitors and a boarder.

On 2 February 1893 Annie Elizabeth Dodimead, Tom’s sister, died aged 8 and Emma Rowlands, Elizabeth’s stepmother, may have died at around the same time. Certainly, by the time of the 1901 census it appears that Elizabeth had moved with her sons Tom and John to the boarding house that her step-mother had kept on Caldly Road:

Elizabeth Dodimead	head	wid	43	Lodging house keeper		do Ramsbottom
Tom	do	son	14			Cheshire West Kirby
John Rowland	Brother	S.	25	Litho Artist		do do
Ellen Walker	Servant	S.	21	General Servant Domestic	at home	do do
John Dodimead	son		12		worker	Derbyshire Derby
Emily M. Blissett	visitor	Wid	86	Living on own means		West Kirby Cheshire
Kate Dinscott	do	S.	45	do		London
Samuel S. Jones	head	M.	53	do		Cheshire Oxton

1901 census (extract) – Caldly Road, Hoylake-cum-West Kirby

Elizabeth Dodimead	43	widow, boarding house keeper	born West Kirby
Tom	14		born West Kirby
John Rowland	25	brother, litho-artist	born West Kirby
Ellen Walker	21	general servant, domestic	born Derby
John Dodimead	12		born West Kirby

The household also contained two visitors (Samuel Jones, the last entry shown above, was the head of the adjacent property). In this census return the enumerator has mis-recorded the name *Dodimead*.

The John Rowland who was living at that time in the household was, in fact, Elizabeth’s half-brother.

On 2 June 1904 Elizabeth Dodimead married Joseph Royden, a farmer from Little Neston, at St Bridget’s Church in West Kirby; this was Joseph’s third marriage.

Joseph Roydon had been first married to barmaid Mary Elizabeth Simcock of Bridge Street, Neston; they married, at Our Lady & St Nicholas & St Anne Church, the Liverpool Parish Church, in mid-1886 and Mary gave birth to their daughter, Annie Elizabeth, in 1888. Annie was baptised at Neston Parish Church on 11 November 1888 when Joseph was recorded as a publican. In the 1891 census, when Joseph, Mary and Annie were living on The Cross, Neston, Joseph (29) was again recorded as being a publican. Mary Elizabeth Royden died and was buried, aged 36, at Neston Parish Church on 7 February 1898.

Joseph married for the second time on 26 April 1899; his bride was Jane Westland Sherratt and the wedding took place at St Bridget's Church, West Kirby. Joseph was now, or shortly afterwards, a farmer in Little Neston. However, Joseph was widowed for the second time in early May 1903 when his wife, Jane, aged 38, died of acute pneumonia. Jane's death followed about three months after she had given birth to a daughter, Dorothy Margarite Royden. Interestingly, one of the mourners at the funeral was a 'Mrs Dodimead'.

In 1911 Joseph and Elizabeth, with some of the children of their previous marriages, were living at Rose Farm in Little Neston:

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 108
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection)

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX		PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards				BIRTHPLACE of every person	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country	INFIRMITY
		Males	Females	State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—	Completed years the present marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one"	Total Children Born Alive	Children still Living	Children who have Died	Personal Occupation	Industry or Service with which worker is connected	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account			
1 Joseph Royden	Head	49		Married				Farmer	190	Employer		Bidstoneshire		
2 Elizabeth Royden	Wife	54		Widow	7	2	2					West Kirbyeshire		
3 Annie Elizabeth Royden	Daughter	22		Single				Farmer's daughter Dairy work	4 1/2	Worker	at home	Bidstoneshire		
4 Dorothy Margarite Royden	Daughter	8		Single								Little Neston, Cheshire		
5 John Dodimead	Stepson	22		Single				Shipping Clerk	0 50	Worker		West Kirbyeshire		

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

I certify that—
(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex columns.
(2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 2 and 3 separately, and have entered their sums with the total number of Persons.
(3) After making the necessary corrections I have corrected all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Initials of Enumerator SKU

Total		
Males	Females	Persons
2	3	5

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Kitchens as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop).

7 Rooms

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature Joseph Royden
Postal Address Rose Farm Little Neston

1911 census (condensed) – Rose farm, Little Neston

Joseph Royden	49	farmer	born Bidston
Elizabeth	54		born West Kirby
Annie Elizabeth	22	farmer's daughter, dairy work	born Neston
Dorothy Margarite	8		born Little Neston
John Dodimead	22	shipping clerk	born West Kirby

John and Elizabeth had been married for 7 years. Although they had no children from this marriage four children had been shown (from previous marriages and so crossed through) with two surviving – both Joseph and Elizabeth had lost one child previously.

Rose Farm has since been demolished but was located in the centre of Little Neston, on Town Lane, on the site presently (2018) occupied by Town Lane Autos and the Bargain Booze shop. The fields of the farm extended westwards, now being covered by the residential developments of Rose Gardens and - to the west of the Burton Road - Coniston Road, Hampton Crescent, Thirlmere Road and towards the Neston Colliery site.

LITTLE NESTON.

AN OTTER'S TRAGIC END.—A fine young otter was killed at Little Neston on Friday afternoon. Mr. Joseph Royden, a Little Neston farmer, was passing through one of his fields between St. Winifride's Church and the Wirral Colliery, when his dog put up the otter at a shallow pit. It tried to escape several times, and boldly faced the dog when the latter interfered with it. Finally, Mr. Royden obtained his gun, and returning to the spot killed the animal with a shot. It was a fine young specimen, weighing about a dozen pounds and measuring over a yard to the tip of the tail. It is now in the hands of Mr. W. Adamson, a Neston taxidermist. It has since transpired that a young otter which had been kept for several months in confinement by Mr. J. B. Glynn, of

Deo House, Moorside, Neston, made its escape at Christmas, and as otters are very rarely seen in this district, it is very probable that this was the animal that met its fate on Friday. It was partially tamed, and would take food from the hand, and after making its escape it returned once to the scene of its captivity, and was given a feed of fish. Having tasted the sweets of freedom, however, it declined to submit again to the trammels of civilisation, and finding the "Call of the Wild" irresistible went out "on its own" again. These facts were, however, not known to Mr. Royden, and it turned on his dog again and again with such fury that it was clearly impossible to take it alive. It is only at intervals of several years that an otter is found in this district of Wirral.

Cheshire Observer – 19 January 1907

Joseph Royden was well-known within the town and, in addition to his activities as a farmer (and involved with local ploughing competitions) he was a church warden and a member of Neston Bowling Club.

It is known that Joseph Royden was still farming at Rose Farm in 1913 but that



Hilltop Farm, Staunton Harold
[Google Street View]

sometime after the family moved, for reasons unknown, to north-west Leicestershire where they settled in the parish of Staunton Harold, about 3 miles north of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The CWGC records that Elizabeth Royden was living at Hill Top, but this probably refers to Hilltop Farm on the Melbourne Road (B587) in Staunton Harold, not far from Staunton Harold Hall.

It is most probable that Joseph and Elizabeth had moved to Staunton Harold by mid-1916 as Tom Dodimead, having returned from

Singapore in July, enlisted at Coalville (not far from Staunton Harold) as a Private in the Army Service Corps. on 28 December 1916.

In the 1939 Register Joseph and Elizabeth are recorded as living at Bentley Cottage, Hungrey Bentley, Alkington, near Ashbourne:

Joseph Royden	born 16 June 1861	dairy farmer, smallholder
Elizabeth	born 9 October 1857	
Annie E	born 1 October 1888	single

Elizabeth died in mid-1943, aged 85 and Joseph died, aged 83, in late 1944. Both died in the Ashbourne district. Annie Elizabeth Royden remained single and she died in mid-1971.

It is known that Tom Dodimead attended Calday Grange Grammar School and that he became a shipping clerk and moved to Singapore. Although it is unknown when he moved to Singapore he seems to have been there at the time of the 1911 UK census and he is recorded as coming back to Britain, arriving in London on 26 July 1916 when he was 29. The vessel he sailed back on was the *Oanfa*, a small trading ship (5808 Net Tonnage) belonging to the China Mutual Steam Navigation Company (CMSNC), one of the companies of Alfred Holt & Co., otherwise recognised as the Blue Funnel Line.

The history of Alfred Holt & Co. may be read at:

http://www.archeosousmarine.net/Pdf/teiresias_alfredholt.pdf

The transit document for this sailing recorded that Tom Dodimead was a shipping clerk and that he travelled 1st Class on the vessel – in fact, there were only five passengers on this freight vessel and it is probable that all accommodation was designated as 1st Class! It is very probable that Tom was actually employed by Alfred Holt & Co. The transit document also notes that he was travelling back to the UK to ‘Join HM Forces’.

Unfortunately, Tom’s military Service Record has not been located and so we have no details of his time in the army although we know that his unit, 921 Company of the 54th Divisional Train of the ASC, arrived in Alexandria in Egypt on 11 March 1918 before moving to Palestine. 921 Company had been formed, from existing companies, in January 1917.

The ASC performed a vital service during the war although, not being directly a part of the front line combat forces, they were much maligned:

The officers and men of the ASC – sometimes referred to in a joking, disparaging way as “Ally Sloper’s Cavalry” – were the unsung heroes of the British Army in the Great War. Soldiers cannot fight without food, equipment and ammunition. They cannot move without horses or vehicles. It was the ASC’s job to provide them. In the Great War, the vast majority of the supply, maintaining a vast army on many fronts, was supplied from Britain. Using horsed and motor vehicles, railways and waterways, the ASC performed prodigious feats of logistics and were one of the great strengths of organisation by which the war was won.

At peak, the ASC numbered an incredible 10,547 officers and 315,334 men.

[The Long, Long Trail]

Palestine was then part of the vast Ottoman Empire which supported Germany. British troops, the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF,) under the command of General Archibald Murray from the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force and the Force in Egypt were in action here against the Turkish forces.

At some stage Tom contracted malaria and was moved to N^o. 21 General Hospital in Alexandria, Egypt where he died on 2 November 1918, aged 32, and was buried at the Hadra Military Cemetery at Alexandria.

Malaria in the First World War was an unexpected adversary. In 1914, the scientific community had access to new knowledge on transmission of malaria parasites and their control, but the military were unprepared, and underestimated the nature, magnitude and dispersion of this enemy.

[Malaria] attacked all combatant armies, with adverse consequences for vast numbers of troops, and devastated large civilian populations as a result of the environmental, civil, and demographic effects of troop dispersions and activities.

By 1916, as more countries became involved, these effects multiplied creating ideal war conditions for the outbreak of several European malaria epidemics. The consequences compromised military planning, logistics, and the battle prospects of combatants, who became increasingly ineffective, as well as affecting huge swathes of civilian populations.

Re-deployment of non-immune troops to replace sick troops in malaria-affected war zones enhanced the problem, as did the inability to effectively treat soldiers suffering from malaria. Only late in the war was it appreciated that preventive measures were possible. In the interim medical doctors struggled against this clinical adversary.

[Malaria's contribution to World War One – the unexpected adversary US National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health (abstracts)]

No. 21 General Hospital was located in the Egyptian Army Barracks at Ras-el-Tin near Alexandria and overlooking the harbour:



Source: <http://www.stamps-auction.com/alexandria-old-postcard-ras-el-tin-barracks-the-palace-for-sale-74764>

Following the ill-fated Gallipoli landings of April 1915 wounded soldiers had been shipped back to northern Egypt for treatment in the existing military hospitals. The accommodation soon proved inadequate - in the first ten days of the Gallipoli campaign 16 000 wounded soldiers were taken to Alexandria - and, by mid-1915 these hospitals had been expanded considerably. N^o. 21 British Hospital, as it was then known, was rapidly expanded to 1000 beds from an initial 120 beds although a considerable amount of development had to be accomplished:

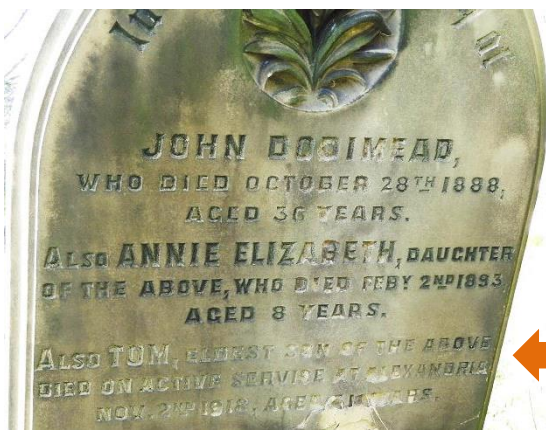
The old Egyptian Army Barracks at Ras-el-Tin, where No. 21 General Hospital succeeded eventually in establishing itself on so commanding a scale, was at first not only entirely destitute of anything that could be called a sanitary installation, but it was in an indescribably filthy condition and, moreover, infested by vermin. The cleansing of this Augean stable and its transformation into a thoroughly good hospital in record

time, was one of the most notable feats performed by the men of the R.A.M.C. The friends of the late Sir Victor Horsley, who was attached to this unit of the Medical Service in Egypt, will be interested to hear that the great surgeon, setting a fine example to the desperately overworked staff, himself insisted on taking a share in the cleansing operations, going down on his knees with the rest in the work of scrubbing the floors.

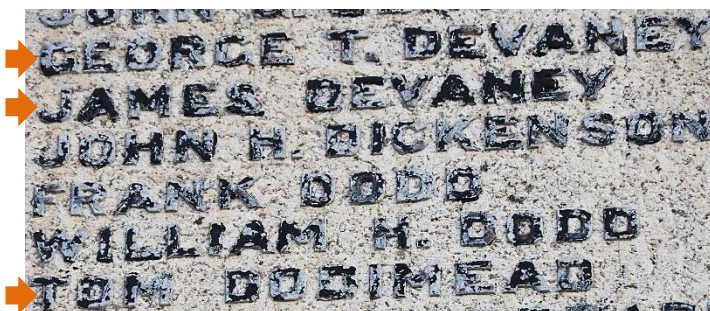
With the RAMC in Egypt 'Sergeant Major, RAMC' 1918 Cassell & Company Ltd

Locally, Tom Dodimead is commemorated on

- the gravestone of his father and sister Annie Elizabeth at St Bridget, West Kirby.
- the Honours Board of Calday Grange Grammar School.
- plaques at St Bridget and St Andrew churches.
- the Hoylake and West Kirby War Memorial on Grange Hill, West Kirby.



On the point of collapse, the Dodimead headstone at St Bridget's Church, West Kirby. The inscription reads:
 JOHN DODIMEAD who Died October 28th 1888, aged 36 years. Also ANNIE ELIZABETH, daughter of the above, who Died Feb^y. 2nd 1893 aged 8 years. Also TOM, eldest son of the above Died on active service at Alexandria, Nov. 2nd 1918 aged 31 years.



The three names of men with a Neston connection on the west-facing aspect of the Hoylake and West Kirby War Memorial.



Tom Dodimead, although only 31 when he died, left £582 when his brother proved the Will in March 1919. Whilst it is impossible to provide a definitive value-equivalent (for 2016) the *economic power* equivalent is around £180 000.

John Dodimead, Tom's brother, had then taken over the running of the Leicestershire farm.

DODIMEAD Tom of Hill Top Farm Staunton Harold Ashby de la Zouch **Leicestershire** private 54 Divisional Train A.S.C. died 2 November 1918 at Alexandria Egypt Administration (with Will) **London** 12 March to John Dodimead farmer. Effects £582 3s. 10d.

England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966 Court, Land, & Probate 2 Nov 1918, Leicestershire, England Civil 12 Mar 1919, London, England

By the time of the 1939 Register (29 September) John Dodimead, Tom's younger brother, had moved back to Wirral and was recorded at Greenheys Nurseries, Thurstaston:

John Dodimead	born 28 March 1889	nursery man
Edith	born 12 September 1887	
Mary E	born 16 February 1921	single nursery worker

One line of the record has been redacted

John Dodimead married Edith Maude Hough at St Peter's Church, Heswall, in late 1919 and, sometime afterwards, they seem to have moved to the area of Stow-on-the-Wold in Gloucestershire where daughter Mary was registered. However, two further children, Thomas Hough (birth registered mid-1926, died early 1929 aged 2) and Dorothy Jean (mid-1928) were registered at Woodchurch on Wirral.

Mary Elizabeth Dodimead married Harold Denis Fox at St Bartholomew's Church, Thurstaston, on 22 December 1950.

Dorothy Jean Dodimead married Robert Henry Rogers at St Bartholomew's Church, Thurstaston, in early 1954.

Edith Maude Dodimead died on Wirral, aged 73, in early 1961.

John Dodimead died in the Holywell district, aged 77, in mid-1966.

(To be retained in duplicate.)
ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS, REGIMENT OR CORPS. Roll No. 191019

M.F. ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and/or British War Medal granted under Army Orders 301 30/3/19 and 7 of 16/7/19 of 19- respectively.

Held by an individual in the Corps in respect of which the roll is submitted.	NAME	In sequence (Units and Corps previously served with for which individual and Regt. No. shown) the highest rank, whether substantial, acting or temporary, received or being held for any period in a theatre of War, unless awarded for services being shown against the name of the regiment or Corps which it is to be inscribed on the medal.	Theatre of war in which served	Clasp awarded (to be left blank)	Record of disposal of decorations			
					(a) Forfeited	(b) Suspended by Post	(c) Taken into Trade	
3/355430 Pto.	DODIMEAD Tom	R.A.S.C. 3/355430 Private.						Died 2.11.18.

I certify that according to the Official Records the individuals named in this ROLL are entitled to the Medal or Medals as detailed above.

Place: WOOLWICH DOCKYARD 27 NOV 1921
Date: MEDAL OFFICE

Signature and rank of Officer: *R. How*
Capt. for Lt. Colonel
R.A.S.C. RECORDS

UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920

British War Medal and Victory Medal Royal Army Service Corps Piece 2025: Royal Army Service Corps

Record No.	Registry No.	Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Date of Authority	To whom Authorised	Amount Authorised		
					Account and Date	£	s.	d.	Account and Date	£			s.	d.	
840030	71958H	Dodimead Tom	R. A. S. C. Pte A/255420	2-11-18. West Kirby 2-19. Alexandria		25	-	5.			10-14-19	Pro. Legatee John	25	-	5
<i>Including War Gratuity £10-10.</i>															

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919 the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid. Tom's brother John, as sole legatee, received a payment of outstanding wages of £14 10s 5d from the army and an unusually large War Gratuity of £10 10s. This, a total value of £25 0s 5d, is equivalent to a *labour value* (wages) of around £3900 in 2016.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.

British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
DODIMEAD, Tom.	A.S.C.	Pte.	5/255420.
Medal	Itoll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	R.A.S.C./101. B.106	19096.	
BRITISH	- - -	- - -	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

DODIMEAD, TOM, Private, No. 255420, Royal Army Service Corps, eldest s. of the late John Dodimead, of West Kirby, by his wife, E. (now wife of J. Royden, of Hill Top Farm, Stanton Harold), dau. of the late Thomas Rowland; b. West Kirby, co. Chester, 29 Oct. 1887; educ. Caldy Grange Grammar School; was engaged in business in Singapore; enlisted in the Army Service Corps 28 Dec. 1916; served with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Palestine from 11 March, 1918, and died at Alexandria 2 Nov. following, of malaria, contracted while on active service. Buried in Hadra Military Cemetery, Alexandria; *unm.*

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1919

Such, such is Death: no triumph: no defeat:
Only an empty pail, a slate rubbed clean,
A merciful putting away of what has been.

And this we know: Death is not Life, effete,
Life crushed, the broken pail. We who have seen
So marvellous things know well the end not yet.

Victor and vanquished are a-one in death:
Coward and brave: friend, foe. Ghosts do not say,
"Come, what was your record when you drew breath?"

But a big blot has hid each yesterday
So poor, so manifestly incomplete.

And your bright Promise, withered long and sped,
Is touched, stirs, rises, opens and grows sweet
And blossoms and is you, when you are dead.

Such, Such is Death

Charles Hamilton Sorley

(1895 – 1915)

(Sorley was killed in action
during the Battle of Loos)

