

172: Walcot Harmood Banner

This entry is supplemental to HomeTown Heroes; this man was not known to be a casualty of WW1 until after the main work was published in October 2018

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Walcot Harmood-Banner

Rank: Captain

Battalion / Regiment: 3rd Battalion, attached 1st Battalion, South Wales Borderers

Service Number: Date of Death: 29 August 1915 Age at Death: 33

Buried / Commemorated at: Cambrin Churchyard Extension, 8 Rue du Château, 62149 Cambrin, France

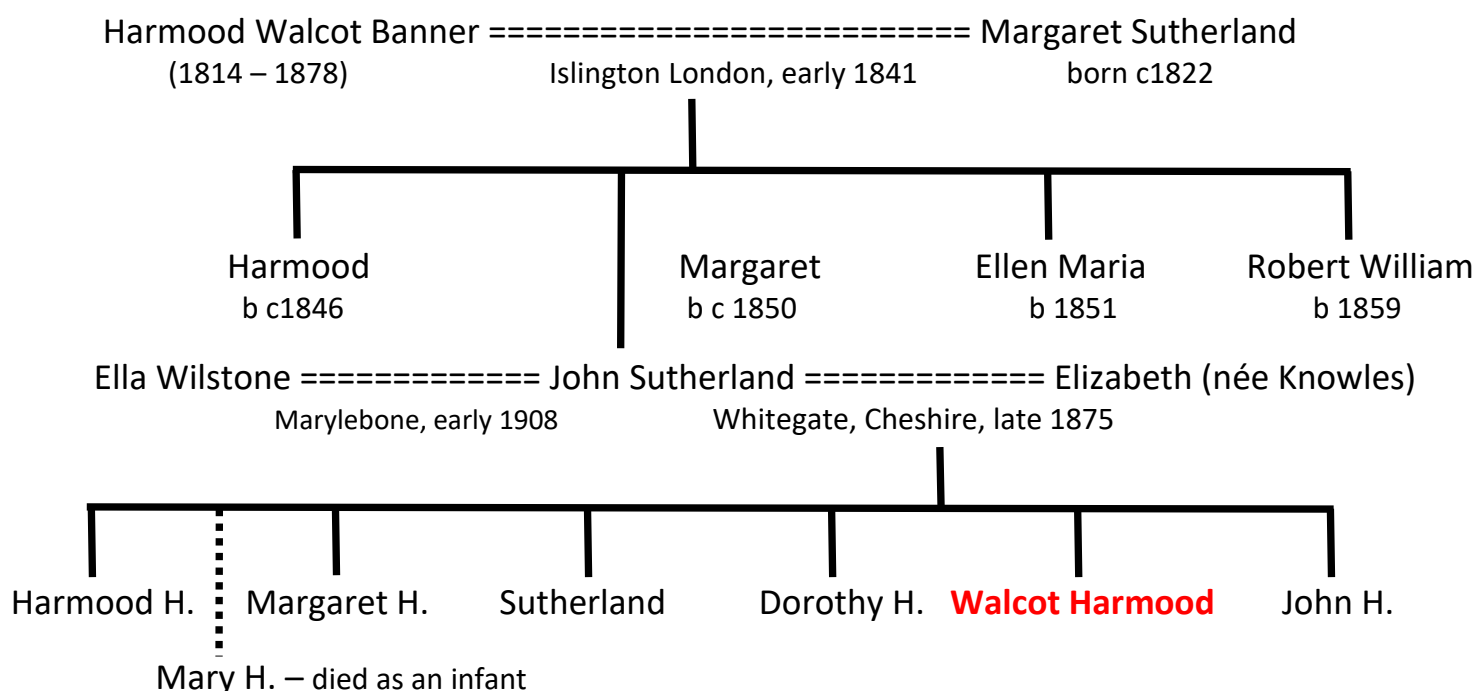
Additional information given by CWGC: Son of Sir J. S. Harmood-Banner, M.P., of Aston Hall, Preston Brook

The family surname is irregular and is recorded variously as Banner, Harmood Banner (unhyphenated) and Harmood-Banner. The hyphenated form is more prevalent in later times. When the surname was used as Banner, Harmood was commonly used as a first name¹. Within this account the family will be referred to as Harmood Banner (unless otherwise recorded) as this is the form used on the family's cross in the Neston parish churchyard; a note on the usage of double surnames is included at the end of this work.

Harmood was adopted as part of the family name following the marriage of a daughter of Royal Navy Captain Harry Harmood (1739 - 1809) into the Banner family.

The main account here commences with John Sutherland Harmood Banner.

Walcot, who was born on 3 (or 4) August 1882 in Puddington (shown as Liverpool in the 1891 census), was a son of John Sutherland Harmood Banner (8 September 1847 – 24 February 1927) and his wife Elizabeth. John Sutherland, born in the Toxteth Park area of Liverpool, was the second son of accountant Harmood Walcot Banner and his wife Margaret; an outline family tree shows the general relationships:



¹ It is understood that John Sutherland Banner obtained a Royal Licence to change the name formally to Harmood Banner in 1876 (*The Times* – 22 August 1876)

John Sutherland Harmood Banner, the second son of Harmood Walcot Banner, was born in 1847, 6½ years after the marriage of his parents. Although the 1851 census records his birth to have been in the West Derby district of Liverpool, an affluent area to the north-east of the city centre, the record of his baptism on 25 October 1847 at the Liverpool Parish Church (Our Lady and Saint Nicholas) notes that the family then lived at Seacombe and that his father was an accountant.

John's entry in Wikipedia notes that he was educated at Radley College and that:

He entered the family accountancy firm of Harmood Banner & Son in Liverpool [in 1865], becoming a partner in 1870. In 1883 he assumed the position of deputy chairman of Pearson and Knowles, a coal and iron conglomerate based in Warrington. For the next 20 years he specialised in accounting work acting as a financial advisor and auditor of a number of major companies.

He was elected MP for Liverpool Everton in a by-election in 1905, sitting until 1924. He was a JP and deputy lieutenant for Cheshire and was appointed High Sheriff of Cheshire for 1902. He also served as Lord Mayor of the City of Liverpool for 1912, was knighted in July 1913 and created a baronet in 1924.

In later life he served on the boards of a number of companies and on several government committees. He retired in 1925 and died on 24 February 1927 at his home, Ingmire Hall, in Sedbergh, Yorkshire. He was buried in Toxteth Park Cemetery in Liverpool.

John married Elizabeth Knowles (born Wigan on 29 March 1851), the daughter and coheir of Thomas Knowles MP of Wigan, in late 1875 at St Mary's Church, Whitegate, a small village between Northwich and Little Budworth.

Wikipedia gives the following entry for Thomas Knowles (30 May 1824 - 3 December 1883):

Thomas Knowles was an English businessman and Conservative politician who sat in the House of Commons from 1874 to 1883.

Knowles was born at Ince-in-Makerfield, the son of a colliery underlooker. According to his obituary, he began work at the age of nine, working up to fifteen hours a day for wages of half-a-crown a week, from which his father allowed him threepence a week pocket money. He spent two of the three pence on night school fees and rose through the ranks; collier, then underlooker, then (in 1847) colliery manager at Ince Colliery. In 1854, he became a partner in the colliery (then employing 200); when in 1873 the colliery (together with an associated ironworks at Warrington) became a limited liability company, Knowles became its chairman.

Knowles was in business in Lancashire with interests in coal mining, cotton spinning and bleaching. He was chairman of Pearson and Knowles Coal and Iron Company and served for two years as chairman of the Mining Association of Great Britain. He was also a director of the London and North Western Railway, and of the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Company. He was a J.P. for Lancashire and Cheshire. In 1864 and 1865, he was Mayor of Wigan.

At the 1874 general election Knowles was elected Member of Parliament for Wigan. He held the seat until his death at the age of 59 in 1883

The marriage between the two wealthy families generated business interests and John Sutherland Harmood Banner became the deputy chairman of Pearson & Knowles in 1883.

The marriage produced seven children, all with the central name of Harmood, of which Walcot was the sixth child and third son. The children were:

Harmood Harmood - birth registered in Liverpool in late 1876. On the death of his father in early 1927 he became the 2nd Baronet of Liverpool. Educated at New College, Oxford, (he gained an MA in Law in 1896) Harmood was, in May 1901, a Lieutenant in the 4th Battalion South Wales Borderers stationed at Taung, north of Kimberley, in South Africa; the Boer War had commenced on 11 October 1899. Harmood's return to Neston on 26 March 1902 was accompanied by local celebration:

Harmood married Frances Cordelia Duberly (1880 - early 1975, a daughter of George Duberly J P of Plawsworth, Chester-le-Street) at either St George's Church, Hanover Square or St Peter's, Eaton Square, London (reports of the venue vary), in mid-1907; Walcot was the best man.

HOME FROM THE WAR.

NESTON OFFICER'S WELCOME.

Neston on Wednesday evening gave an enthusiastic welcome home to Captain Harmood Banner, eldest son of Mr. J. S. Harmood Banner, of Ashfield Hall, High Sheriff of the county. Captain Banner belonged to the 4th South Wales Borderers, but was attached to the 3rd, and during the last fourteen months he has seen continuous active service under Lord Methuen. His regiment greatly distinguished itself, several of the officers gaining the Distinguished Service Medal, and Captain Harmood Banner received his full share of the hard knocks and hardships of the campaign. The Borderers landed at Southampton on Monday, and on Tuesday they arrived at their headquarters at Brecon amid a scene of great enthusiasm, and met with a tremendous reception. The colours were formally returned to the Priory Church, at a special service, after which the medals were presented in a field adjoining the churchyard. Captain Harmood Banner's medal has three bars, viz., Orange Free State, Transvaal, and Cape Colony. At a public dinner at the Market Hall, which followed, Lord Glanusk, proposed the toast "Welcome Home to the 3rd Battalion South Wales Borderers."

When it became known that Captain Banner would arrive at Neston on Wednesday evening, Messrs. J. G. Lee and J. Birch, two well-known

tradesmen, quickly organised a reception, in which some thousands of persons took part. The train steamed into Neston Station (Joint Railway) at 8.8, amid a great fusillade of fog-signals, and the returned warrior was received on the platform by the members of his family and several hundreds of Nestonians, who loudly cheered on seeing Captain Harmood Banner alight. A number of torch-bearers were in waiting, together with a brass band. On entering the open carriage that was in waiting, Captain Banner acknowledged the hearty welcome, and the carriage was immediately taken possession of by the throng and drawn by scores of willing arms down Station-road, and through the principal thoroughfares of the town, the band meanwhile striking up patriotic songs, "The boys of the Old Brigade," etc. The streets were lined with on-lookers. Arches, bearing appropriate words of welcome to the homecoming wanderer, spanned the main entrances to the park and grounds at Ashfield, while the Hall itself glittered with fairy lights and various illuminations, and the members of the household thronged the lighted windows, all eager to welcome the principal figure in the procession. A number of rockets sped skywards as the procession came to a halt at the Hall, and Captain Banner, in a few appropriate words, again expressed his thanks for the warm reception. The whole of the visitors, without exception, were afterwards hospitably entertained at the Hall.

The Chester Courant and Advertiser for North Wales
- 2 April 1902

Lady Frances Harmood
Harmood Banner in 1920

In the 1911 census, when they were living at Knockin Hall, Oswestry, Harmood described himself as a Captain, Special Reserve and they had a daughter, Elizabeth Harmood, aged 2.

It seems that they had a further three children: Frances Cordelia H (born early 1913) ; Harmood W (born mid-1916) ; George Knowles (born 9 November 1918 in Ormskirk – he inherited the title and became the 3rd Baronet of Liverpool in 1950. He married Rosemary Jane Treston, in 1947, and was survived by her and two daughters. The title became extinct with him in 1990).

Little detail is known of Harmood although it is believed that he achieved the rank of Major in the South Wales Borderers, became a J P in 1917, was High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire in 1920, and that he died, aged 73, in Radnorshire in mid-1950.

Mary Harmood – known within the family as ‘baby Sissie’, Mary was born on 19 December 1877 and died on 2 December 1878 when the family lived in Liverpool. She is commemorated on the large upright sandstone Celtic cross which marks the grave of John Sutherland Harmood Banner in Toxteth Park Cemetery.

Margaret Harmood – born in Liverpool on 20 December 1878 and baptised at the Liverpool Parish Church (Our Lady and Saint Nicholas) on 26 January 1878. Margaret (27, of Ashfield Hall, Neston) married Richard Johnson Houghton (29, of *Westwood*, Thornton Hough – the name is sometimes hyphenated) at Neston on Tuesday 1 May 1906.

The newspaper report of the wedding of Margaret Harmood Banner noted that the groomsmen included:

(brothers of the bridegroom), Jack Harmood-Banner, Robin Harmood-Banner, Walcot Harmood-Banner and Harmood Harmood-Banner (brothers of the bride), Gordon Lockett, R. K.

Whilst there is no mention of a brother named Sutherland Banner, a Robin Harmood Banner is named. Subsequent to this date, no other record has been found for ‘Robin’.

At the time of the 1911 census Margaret (32, born Heswall) and Richard (34, born Ashwell, Cheshire, living on private means) were living at The Lodge, Malpas. Married for 5 years they had two children, Richard John (4, born Newbold, Cheshire) and Gordon Terence (7½ months, born Malpas) ²

Margaret cared for the sick and wounded during the Great War but she died, following an accident, on 27 May 1919 when she was living at The Lodge, Malpas and when her husband was a Major in the army serving in Egypt. In her will she left £4120 4s 6d.

Margaret’s Inquest was held at Malpas and the report of this in the *Lancashire Daily Post* on Thursday 29 May 1919 stated that she had died from septicaemia having

....caught her right hand on some jagged iron while feeding her animals last month. The wound healed but she had local pain, which gradually grew worse. A doctor was called in, but the poison spread, and death occurred. A verdict of “accidental death” was returned.

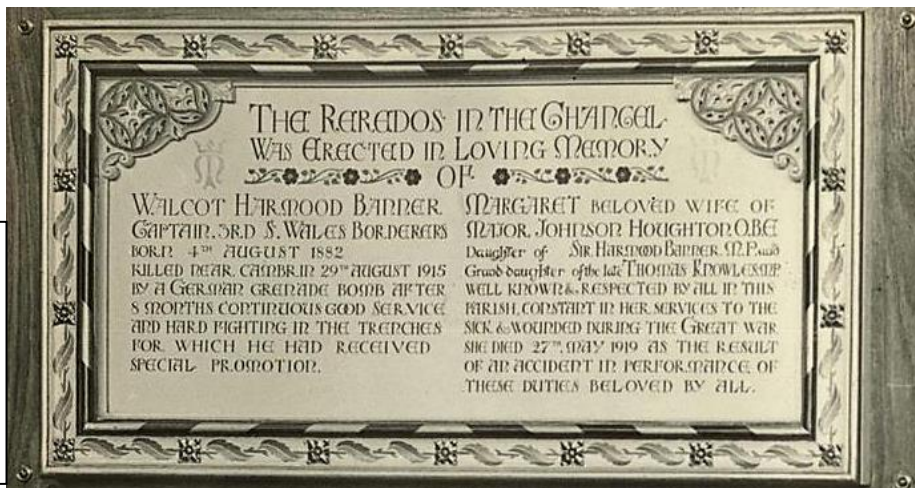
A plaque in the chancel of St Mary’s Church, Ince-in Makerfield, Lancashire commemorates both Margaret and Walcot. The plaque was unveiled on 9 July 1920 by their father, Sir John Sutherland Harmood Banner MP.

² Recorded also in the household were four friends and nine servants

At Probate, Margaret's Effects were quoted as £4120 4s 6d.

Plaque in the chancel in St Mary's Church, Ince-in-Makerfield, Lancashire.

[Source: © Rev David Long - <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/27486>]



Right side of plaque

Margaret beloved wife of Major Johnson Houghton OBE, daughter of Sir Harmood Banner MP and Granddaughter of the late Thomas Knowles MP. Well known & respected by all in this parish, constant in her services to the sick & wounded during the Great War. She died 27th May 1919 as the result of an accident in performance of these duties. Beloved by all.

Sutherland – was born in Liverpool on 2 March 1880. At the time of the 1881 census, when John and Elizabeth Banner were recorded at 12, Canning Street, Liverpool, with 1-month old daughter Dorothy, three other young children of John and Elizabeth were recorded in the home of Margaret Banner at Pool Bank, Bebington. This Margaret Banner (aged 55) was the widowed mother of John Sutherland Harmood Banner and the children recorded (all shown as ‘granddaughter’) are:

Harmood Banner, aged 4, born Liverpool - John Sutherland Harmood Banner's son, described previously.

Margaret Banner, aged 2, born Liverpool - John Sutherland Harmood Banner's daughter, described previously

Sutherland Banner, aged 1, born Liverpool.

Sutherland attended St Peter's Radley College, Oxfordshire, leaving there in 1898 when, on 23 November of that year, he enlisted with the Wiltshire Regiment (3rd Battalion) Militia and then, in April 1900, the 5th Dragoon Guards in April 1900 – although it seems that he left that unit in December 1900. He then served briefly (he was discharged on 20 June 1901) with the South African Constabulary – the Second Boer War was then taking place. Sutherland was involved in a business which, in late 1906/early 1907 was failing. Although no details are known of this business it is interesting that the *Courant* was anxious to distance the affair from Sutherland's father:

MR. SUTHERLAND HARMOOD-BANNER'S AFFAIRS.

RECEIVING ORDER GRANTED.

The following notice appears among the receiving orders in Friday night's "London Gazette":—

Banner, Sutherland Harmood, Ashfield Hall, Neston, Cheshire. Date of receiving order Nov. 14th, 1906.

Note.—Mr. Sutherland Harmood-Banner must not be confused with his father, Mr. John Sutherland Harmood-Banner, M.P., head of the well-known firm of chartered accountants.

MR. S. H. BANNER'S AFFAIRS—In the Board of Trade office, Victoria-street, Liverpool, on Tuesday, there was held an adjourned first meeting of the creditors of Sutherland Harmood Banner, of Ashfield-hall, Neston. The Official Receiver (Mr. F. Gittins) presided, and what he described as a very fair proposal indeed was unanimously accepted. Application will subsequently be made to the court to fix a day to consider this proposal, and the Official Receiver will make his report concerning it.

Cheshire Observer - 12 January 1907

The Chester Courant and Advertiser for North Wales - 21 November 1906

It is clear that there was conflict between Sutherland and the rest of his immediate family and this was intensified in mid-1909 when the Chancery Division of the High Court heard the case of Knowles, Banner v Banner. This was an application by the trustee of Thomas Knowles *raising a question as to the effect of an appointment made by the will of Mrs Elizabeth Harmood Banner, daughter of Thomas Knowles, under a special power given to her by the will of Thomas Knowles to appoint in favour of her children*³. When Elizabeth died in 1903 she left four surviving sons, Harmood, Sutherland, Walcot and John. John died in late 1908 so that, at the time of the Chancery hearing in July 1909 there were three surviving sons, two surviving daughters (Margaret, who had married, and Dorothy, then single) and her husband Sir John Sutherland Harmood Banner who, in early 1908, had remarried.

It was stated that Elizabeth had left *...a considerable fortune derived from Thomas Knowles, including shares in the Pearson and Knowles Iron and Coal Company...[and that]...she died leaving four sons each of whom had a life interest in a fourth share of her estate. In November, 1906 Sutherland Harmood Banner, one of the sons, was in pecuniary difficulties, and had a receiving order made against him; but no adjudication followed, because in February, 1907, a scheme of arrangement was carried through. The question was whether, in these circumstances, his life interest in the income of his quarter of the appointed funds had been forfeited, or whether he was entitled to receive the income or any part of it.* Interestingly, not only were Sutherland's father and two surviving brothers represented in the case, but counsel also represented Sutherland's sisters – none of the family wanted Sutherland to get this inheritance and the Court agreed that this should be the verdict!

Sutherland re-enlisted with the 5th Dragoon Guards Cavalry Division as a Private (N^o 9861) on 31 May 1915 in Chester and joined them, at Dunbar, on 4 June; aged 35 years 2 months he was then living at Aston Hall, was recorded as having no 'trade or calling' and was 5ft 8½ins tall. Posted to the N^o 6 (Scottish) Cavalry Depot he was discharged on 3 September 1915 as medically unfit although it was noted that he was still fit for War Office work.

After hearing arguments of counsel, his Lordship held that on the construction of the will the making of the receiving order and the consequent payment of a portion of the income to the person entitled under the receiving order during that period operated as a forfeiture of Mr. Sutherland Harmood Banner's interest in the income of his fourth share, and he made a declaration accordingly.

Mr. Thompson said the question then arose to whom that share of income became payable. John, the son who died, had executed a voluntary settlement of the fourth share, which he took absolutely under his mother's will, which was designed to place him in the same position as that occupied by his three brothers.

After considerable legal argument his Lordship held that the true effect of the settlement was to leave outside the settlement this particular interest in income which had accrued to John by virtue of the financial misfortune which had overtaken his brother. The share of income of Sutherland's quarter, therefore, went in thirds to the sons, Harmood, Walter, and to the legal personal representative of John, all costs of the summons to come out of the capital.

Concluding paragraphs of the Court of Chancery hearing – *The Observer* – Saturday 17 July 1909. Walcot's name has been misrepresented as *Walter*.

³ Thomas had died in late 1883 and Elizabeth, Sutherland's mother, had died in March 1903

Sutherland never served overseas although his military service still entitled him to be awarded a Silver War Badge (this was sent to him on 16 November 1916) which he could wear in public to indicate that he had served but been discharged from future service.

On his application for a military pension on 12 October 1916 it was recorded that he was of good character and it was noted that he had a *stricture of the urethra since 1902 but on re-enlisting in the Spring of this year* [this referred to May 1915] *the effect of riding made the condition much worse* [and that] *considerable bleeding occurred after coming down on the pommel of the saddle. Not the result of but aggravated by ordinary military service. Permanent. Prevents ¼.*

Although the Pension Board awarded Sutherland 4s 8d for the period from 4 September 1915 to 29 February 1916 and 5s from 1 March 1916 to 3 March 1917 a final note on his record, dated 20 February 1917 recorded

Report of Med Bd. 20-2-17. Not lessened by military ser.

Parents do not wish him to have money as he spends it in drink.

*Earnings nil.*⁴

*Report of Med Bd. 20-2-17.
not lessened by military ser.
Parents do not wish him to
have money as he spends
it in drink.
Earnings nil.*

Clearly, Sutherlands problems with alcohol (see entry on 1911 census return) had continued.

Sutherland Harmood Banner married Emma Rene Victoria Toole Pullar in Westhampnett, a village and civil parish in the district of Chichester in West Sussex, in July/September 1917; Emma had been born in Walthamstow, a daughter of James Benjamin Pullar (a Civil Service clerk) who was living in west London (but had been born in Birkenhead) and wife Emma. At the time of the wedding Sutherland would have been aged 37 and Emma just 20. No record of children has been found.

Sutherland died in Fulham, aged 48, on 23 September 1928; his address, in the Probate record, was given as 2 Gunterstone Road, West Kensington; his Effects were just £190 4s 3d – this is equivalent to a labour value of around £33000 in 2020.

In late 1937 his widow, Emma, married Eric D Miller in Fulham. It is not known when Emma died.



⁴ The Medical Board record for early 1917 notes that Sutherland's address was then c/o Dr. W A D King, 1, Bishops Place, Paignton, Devon

Dorothy – born in Liverpool on 5 March 1881 and baptised at Liverpool Parish Church (Our Lady and Saint Nicholas) on 10 April 1881⁵ she married, in late 1912 at St George's, Hanover Square, London, John Randle Minshull-Ford. Born in the house which is now the Pant-yr-Ochain Pub and Restaurant at Flash, near Wrexham, John Minshull-Ford was educated at Twyford School. He was commissioned into the Royal Welch Fusiliers in 1900 and served in WWI as Commander of the 1st Battalion of his regiment in the British Expeditionary Force. Wounded at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in March 1915 he continued his war service as a Brigade Commander in the Home Forces and then in France from 1916. After the War he was briefly a Brigade Commander in the British Army of the Rhine and then served as Commanding Officer of 1st Battalion the South Staffordshire Regiment from 1925. He was appointed Commander of the 5th Infantry Brigade at Aldershot Command in 1930 and General Officer Commanding 44th (Home Counties) Infantry Division in 1934 before retiring in 1938. He was, briefly, Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey in 1940 just before the German Occupation. He died, with the rank of Major-General, on 1 April 1948 [adapted from Wikipedia].

Dorothy and John had a son and a daughter:

Francis Charles Minshull-Ford was born in mid-1914 near Wrexham and, in late-1940, he married Pamela Hoare in Wrexham. Francis was educated at Eton College and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst before becoming a regular officer in the Royal Welch Fusiliers with whom he served as a Captain, with 2 RWF in Hong Kong in the late 1930s. During their tour of duty (believed to be 1937), the Battalion was deployed to the International Settlement, Shanghai, China, to defend that location whilst the Japanese invaded the rest of the city. Francis died, as a Major, of polio in 1954 whilst serving on operations in Kenya.

Anne Daphne Mametz Minshull-Ford was born mid-1918 when the couple lived in the Whitchurch district). On 5 May 1941 she married Robert Samuel Best, the 8th Baron Wynford, MBE DL. Dorothy and John then lived at *The White Cottage*, Windlesham, Surrey.

Dorothy died, aged 72, in NW Surrey, in mid-1953.

Walcot Harmood – the subject of this account.

John Harmood – born in Puddington on 21 November 1884, he was baptised at Burton Parish Church on 1 March 1885 and died 23 November 1908 aged 24. He was recorded at Eton School in September 1898 and, although little is known of him, it is clear that he had not been well for some time.

His funeral took place in Neston Parish Church on 26 November.

John Harmood. Banner	Ashfield Hall Neston	November 26 th 1908	24 Years	S. P. Turner
No. 1231				

⁵ Her father was recorded as an accountant of 12, Canning Street, Liverpool

THE LATE MR. JOHN HARMOOD BANNER

THE FUNERAL.

The funeral of the late Mr. John Harmood-Banner took place on Thursday at Neston Parish Churchyard, in the presence of a large gathering. The service was conducted by the Rev. Canon Turner, assisted by the Rev. H. J. Graham (curate), and the coffin was borne into the church by servants of the estate. The choir rendered the hymns "Thy will be done" and "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and at the conclusion of the service the Dead March in "Saul" was played on the organ. The interior of the grave was beautifully lined with ivy and flowers.

The chief mourners were Mr. J. S. Harmood Banner, M.P. (father), Mrs. J. S. Harmood Banner, Captain and Mrs. Harmood Banner (brother and sister-in-law), Mr. and Mrs. R. Johnson-Houghton (brother-in-law and sister), Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Walcot Harmood Banner (brothers), Miss D. Harmood Banner (sister), Mr. C. Selby (uncle), Mr. Walford Selby (cousin), Mrs. Carruthers Johnstone (aunt), Mr. Carruthers Johnstone (cousin), Sir William and Lady Savory (cousins).

The Chester Courant and Advertiser for North Wales - 2 December 1908 [extract]

THE LATE MR. JOHN HARMOOD BANNER

THE FUNERAL.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. John Harmood-Banner, youngest son of Mr. J. S. Harmood-Banner, M.P., of Ashfield Hall, Neston. He had been an invalid for some years, and recently had stayed in Scotland for the benefit of his health. He afterwards went to stay with his sister, Mrs. Johnson-Houghton, at Newbold, Saughton, where he passed away on Monday, at the early age of 24 years. Great sympathy is felt for Mr. Harmood-Banner and family in their bereavement.

The funeral took place on Thursday at Neston Parish Churchyard, in the presence of a large gathering. The service was conducted by the Rev. Canon Turner, assisted by the Rev. H. J. Graham (curate), and the coffin was borne into the church by servants of the estate. The choir rendered the hymns "Thy will be done" and "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and at the conclusion of the service the Dead March in "Saul" was played on the organ. The interior of the grave was beautifully lined with ivy and flower.

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Cheshire Observer - 28 November 1908 [extract]

As noted above, Walcot Harmood

Banner was born in early August 1882 at a time when the family was living at Puddington Hall.

At the time of the 1881 census, a year before Walcot was born, the family was at 12 Canning

Street, Liverpool, close to the present-day Anglican Cathedral (whose foundation stone was not laid until 1904):

Margaret	Head	33	1	Accountant	do
John Banner	Head	33	1	Accountant	Wigan: Lane:
Eliz. Banner	Wife	29			Liverpool
Dorothy do	Daughter	1m			Birkenhead: Chesh.
Hannah Vaughan	Visitor	40		Accountant	Liverpool
Martha Davies	Serv	51		Book	do
Eliz. Hall	do	28		Housemaid	do
Margaret Griffiths	do	17		do (under)	do
Elizabeth Jarvis	do	24		do (Kitchen)	Barrow: Westmor

1881 census (extract) – 12, Canning Street, Liverpool

John Banner	33	accountant	born Liverpool
Eliz.	29		born Wigan, Lancs.
Dorothy	1 month		born Liverpool
Hannah Vaughan	40	visitor – accountant	born Birkenhead

There were also four servants present in the house

The older three children of John and Elizabeth, Harmood (4, born Liverpool), Margaret (2, born Liverpool) and Sutherland (1, born Liverpool), were with John's widowed mother, Margaret Banner, at Pool Bank, Bebington.

It must have been shortly after the 1881 census that the family moved to Puddington Hall where both Walcot and his younger brother, John, were born. Both sons were baptised locally, Walcot being baptised at a private ceremony on 3 August 1882.



12 Canning Street
[Google Maps]

Augst.	John	Harmood	Puddington	J. Banner
3200	Walcot	Sutherland - Banner	Hall	Accountant
No. 715	Elizabeta			

Missing from the family at this time was Sutherland - aged 11 he was a scholar at Dunchurch Hall School, Rugby, Warwickshire – this school, now closed, prepared pupils for entry to Public Schools.

The family lived at Puddington Hall; it was, originally, the shooting lodge of Puddington New Hall which had been destroyed by fire on 11 December 1867 – the New Hall was not rebuilt but the lodge was extended and converted into a substantial country house. It is not known whether Puddington Hall was leased, or owned by, the Banner family ⁶ but they were still living there at the time of the 1891 census.

Hall	1	John S. H. Banner	43	Accountant	X	Liverpool
		Elizabeth H	39		X	Ince
		Harmood H	14			Liverpool
		Margaret H	12			do
		Dorothy H	10			do
		Walcot H	8			do
		John H	6			Puddington

1891 census (extract) – Hall, Puddington

John S H Banner	43	accountant	born Liverpool
Elizabeth H	39		born Ince *
Harmood H	14		born Liverpool
Margaret H	12		born Liverpool
Dorothy H	10		born Liverpool
Walcot H	8		born Liverpool **
John H	6		born Puddington

In addition, there were two visitors and 9 servants in the household.

* This is Ince-in-Makerfield, near Wigan.
 **This is believed to be incorrect – his birth was registered in Wirral and he was baptised, very shortly after his birth, at either Burton Parish Church or privately at Puddington Hall.

⁶ Originally called Stanley Lodge, this lodge was replaced in 1904 by the sandstone house renamed Puddington Hall. In the 1970s this was divided into Puddington Hall and West Hall

It is not known how long the family resided in Puddington, although they were still there in 1896 ⁷, but had moved to Ashfield Hall in Neston by the time of the 1901 census.

59	Ashfield Hall	1	John S. H. Banner	Head	En.	5'3	Chartered Accountant	Employer	Liverpool, Lancs.	✓
			Elizabeth H.	Wife	En.	4'8	Living on own means		Wigan	✓
			Margaret H.	Daughter	S.	22	Poultry Reared	Employer at Home	Liverpool	✓
			Dorothy H.	Daughter	S.	20			do	✓
			John H.	Son	S.	16	School Boy		Burton, Cheshire	✓
			Margaret G. Johnston	Sister	wid.	5'1			Rock Ferry, do	✓
			William Perkins	Servant	S.	31	Butler "Domestic"		Hinckley, Staffs.	✓
			Joseph Hancox	do	S.	24	Footman	do	Sutton Coalfields, Warwick	✓
			Charles Smithurst	do	S.	19	do	do	Ashleworth, Somerset	✓
			Mary E. Larratt	do	S.	5'5	Maid "Lady's"	do	Horton, London	✓
			Alice Newby	do	S.	4'8	do	do	Liverpool, Lancs.	✓
			Elizabeth Ball	do	S.	4'8	do	do	do	✓
			Fernanda Brand	do	S.	5'1	Cook	do	Alford, Cheshire	✓
			Susan Robinson	do	S.	23	Kitchenmaid	do	Aldehot, Hants	✓
			Filhi Owen	do	S.	18	Scullerymaid	do	Wimsey, Shropshire	✓
			Mary Williams	do	S.	38	Housemaid	do	Swansea, Wales	✓
			Sarah Coathup	do	S.	28	do	do	Burton, Cheshire	✓
60	do	X	Mary Johnston	do	S.	23	Laundry Maid	do	Pumpher, Scotland	✓
			Ada Parry	do	S.	23	do	do	Wexley	✓
			George Abbery	do	S.	24	Under Gardener	do	Pittville, Devonshire	✓
			Robert Larratt	do	S.	20	do	do	Wimbor, Berks	✓

1901 census (extract) – Ashfield Hall, Leighton Road, Neston

John S H Banner	53	chartered accountant	born Liverpool
Elizabeth H	48	living on own means	born Wigan
Margaret H	22	poultry rearer	born Liverpool
Dorothy H	20		born Liverpool
John H	16		born Burton
Margaret G Johnston	51	sister, widow	born Rock Ferry

Also in the household were 15 servants, all unmarried, only one of whom (Sarah Coathup, 28, housemaid) had been born locally.

The locations of Harmood and Sutherland Banner have not been found but Walcot (aged 18, born Puddington) was a scholar at Winchester College, Hampshire.

Elizabeth Harmood Banner, the wife of John Sutherland Harmood Banner and the mother of the children outlined above, died after an extended illness in London on 21 March 1903 just a week before her 52nd birthday and she was buried at Neston Parish Church on 25 March:

Elizabeth Harmood Banner	Ashfield Hall Neston	March 25 th 1903	52 years	E.P. Banner
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Cheshire Observer - 29 July 1905

THE LATE MRS. E. HARMOOD-BANNER.
—Mrs. Elizabeth Harmood-Banner, of Ashfield Hall, Neston, who died on the 21st March last at the Hotel Metropole, Northumberland-avenue, London, wife of Mr. John Sutherland Harmood-Banner, M.P., left estate valued at £10,168 16s. 6d. gross and at £6,428. 9s. 8d. nett, and probate of her will, dated 5th March, 1899, has been granted to her husband. She bequeathed her jewellery, watches, lace and other personal ornaments in equal shares to her daughters, Margaret and Dorothy, her plate to her husband for life, with remainder to her sons, and £200 each to her servants, Elizabeth Ball, Alice Newby and William Perrin, if in her employ at the time of her decease, and she left the residue of her estate to her husband, but in the event of his predeceasing her she disposed of trust estate which under those circumstances she had power of disposal over.

⁷ Kelly's Directory of Cheshire (1896) notes that, for Ness, 'Lady Williams-Bulkeley is the chief landowner, and John Sutherland Harmood Banner esq of Puddington Hall, Chester, is lord of the manor and occupier of the Hall'.

John Sutherland Harmood Banner won, as a Conservative, the seat of Everton at a by-election on 22 February 1905 after the resignation due to ill health of the incumbent Conservative MP Sir John Archibald Willox. He seems to be still living at Ashfield Hall on 20 January 1910 when Parliament returned that year⁸.

He had remarried in early 1908 in Marylebone, London, to widow Ella Wilstone. Ella was the daughter of John Ernest Herbert Linford of Thorpe, Norfolk, although nothing is known of him or Ella's history and previous marriage (she was born in SW Ireland). At the time of the marriage John would have been aged 60 and Ella was 26.

By the time of the 1911 census (see following page) the couple were living at Aston Hall near Preston Brook, Cheshire; they leased the house from the trustees.

At the time of the 1911 census, of the children of John Sutherland Harmood Banner and Elizabeth, Harmood (34) was with his wife (Frances Cordelia, 29) and daughter (Elizabeth Harmood, 2) at Knockin Hall, Oswestry. Margaret, as noted previously, was living with husband Richard Johnson Houghton and their two children at *The Lodge*, Malpas, a substantial property of at least 17 rooms.



The Harmood Banner grave immediately behind the Neston Parish Church. John Sutherland Banner's first wife, Elizabeth (died March 1903) and their 4th son (and last child), John (died, aged November 1908, aged 24) are buried here.



Ella Harmood-Banner on her presentation at The Court, 7 February 1913: presented by the Countess of Derby
© V&A Picture Library



Aston Hall [Source: Cheshire Archives & Local Studies]

⁸ He was described as *John Sutherland Harmood-Banner of Ashfield Hall, Neston Brook, near Warrington, Chartered Accountant and Director of Iron, Colliery, and Electric Cable Companies*. This confusion over the address suggests that the move of the family from Neston to Aston Hall (near *Preston Brook* and in the vicinity of Warrington) was happening around this time.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 74 18
(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.
			State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of —	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)	Children born alive to previous Marriage. (If no children born alive to previous Marriage write "None" in Column 8.)	Children who have died.	Personal Occupation.	Industry or Service with which worker is connected.	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account.	Whether Working at Home.			
John Sutherland Harwood Banner, Head	State whether "Head" or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."	63	Married	3	none	—	Chartered Accountant	—	Employer	—	Liverpool Lancashire	058	—
Ella Harwood Banner, Wife	—	29	Married	3	—	—	Wife	—	—	—	Kerry	022	—
Margaret Carruthers Johnston, Sister	—	61	Widow	3	—	—	Private means	31	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
Margaret Carruthers Johnston, Maid	—	64	Single	—	—	—	Maid	010	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
William Thomas, Butler	—	41	Single	—	—	—	Butler	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
Geraint Cox, Footman	—	20	Single	—	—	—	Footman	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
White Seston, Housemaid	—	30	Single	—	—	—	Housemaid	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
Mary Powell, Servant	—	35	Single	—	—	—	Housemaid	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
John George Atkin, Servant	—	24	Single	—	—	—	Kitchen Maid	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
Betty Keeney, Servant	—	20	Single	—	—	—	House Maid	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—
Rose Davies, Servant	—	18	Single	—	—	—	Scullery Maid	—	—	—	Rock Ferry	074	—

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)			(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)		
I certify that— (1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper columns. (2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sum with the total number of persons. (3) After making the necessary enquiries, I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous. Initials of Enumerator <u>J.H.</u>			Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop. <u>32</u>		
I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief. Signature <u>J. Harwood Banner</u> Postal Address <u>Aston Hall, Preston Brook, Cheshire</u>					

1911 census – Aston Hall, Aston-by-Sutton, near Preston Brook, Cheshire

John Sutherland Harwood Banner	63	chartered accountant	born Liverpool
Ella	29		born Kerry
Margaret Carruthers Johnston	61	sister, widow, private means	born Rock Ferry

Seven servants are also recorded.

Although John Banner recorded that he had been married for three years – and there had been no children of this marriage – he noted also that he had been married previously for 27 years and, of seven children born, five had survived. One of those who died is known to be John Harwood Banner who died on 23 November 1908 aged 24 and, it is presumed, the other child was Mary Harwood Banner who was born in late 1877, and died in late 1878, in Liverpool.

In 1911 Sutherland (32, unmarried, born Liverpool), was a patient at the 'Inebriates Home', Plas yn Dinas, Dinas Mawddwy, Merionethshire. On the census this is described as an 'Inebriates House for Gentlemen of the Upper Classes only'; of the eight patients six were described as 'private gentleman'. Additionally, of the eleven non-patients in the property, one was a butler and two were footmen. Dinas Mawddwy is a small town which lies within Snowdonia National Park and inland of Barmouth. Unlike the prison-like reformatories for compulsorily committed 'habitual inebriates', private establishments offering residential treatment were luxurious establishments.

PLAS-YN-DINAS,

Dinas Mawddwy, Merionethshire, Wales.

Licensed under the Inebriates Acts, 1879-1898.

RESIDENT PROPRIETOR AND LICENSEE: DR. W. F. WALKER, J.P.

The HOME is devoted to the care of Gentlemen of the Upper Classes only, suffering from Inebriety, Neuritis, Nervous Debility, Neurasthenia, and the Abuse of Drugs. The Plas is a handsomely furnished modern residence, replete with every convenience, containing fine reception-rooms, hall and billiard-rooms, twenty-four large and airy bedrooms, and seven bath-rooms.

SPORTS.—Well-preserved Shooting over 22,000 acres, containing large grouse moors, pheasant coverts, and enclosed rabbit warren. Fishing: Twenty-four miles of fishing in the river Dovey and tributaries. Private Golf Links, Lawn Tennis, Croquet, Bowls, etc.

References can be made to—Dr. GEORGE SAVAGE, 3, Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.; Dr. FENNELL, 34, Cavendish Square, London, W.; and many other leading medical men.

For prospectus, terms, etc., apply to Dr. WALKER, J.P., Plas-yn-Dinas, Dinas Mawddwy, Merionethshire, Wales.

Advertisement for the Plas-yn-Dinas Home, a recurring advert from the *British Journal of Inebriety* (1910 – 1914)

Dorothy (30, spinster, born Liverpool) and Walcot (28, articled clerk [chartered accountant], born Puddington) were, in 1911, both at 73, Eaton Place, London with six domestic servants. This is believed to be the London residence of their father, John Sutherland Harmood Banner.

Walcot Harmood Banner was educated at Dunchurch Hall School ⁹ and Winchester College. At Winchester, which he entered in 1896 when he was just 14, he was recorded as being a House Prefect in 1901 and is recorded as being a keen fisherman, polo player and an excellent shot. In 1901 he left Winchester to enter his father's accountancy company, Harmood-Banner and Son, in Liverpool where he was employed until he entered the army on the outbreak of war.



Dunchurch Hall School [source: <https://tuckdb.org/items/6821>]

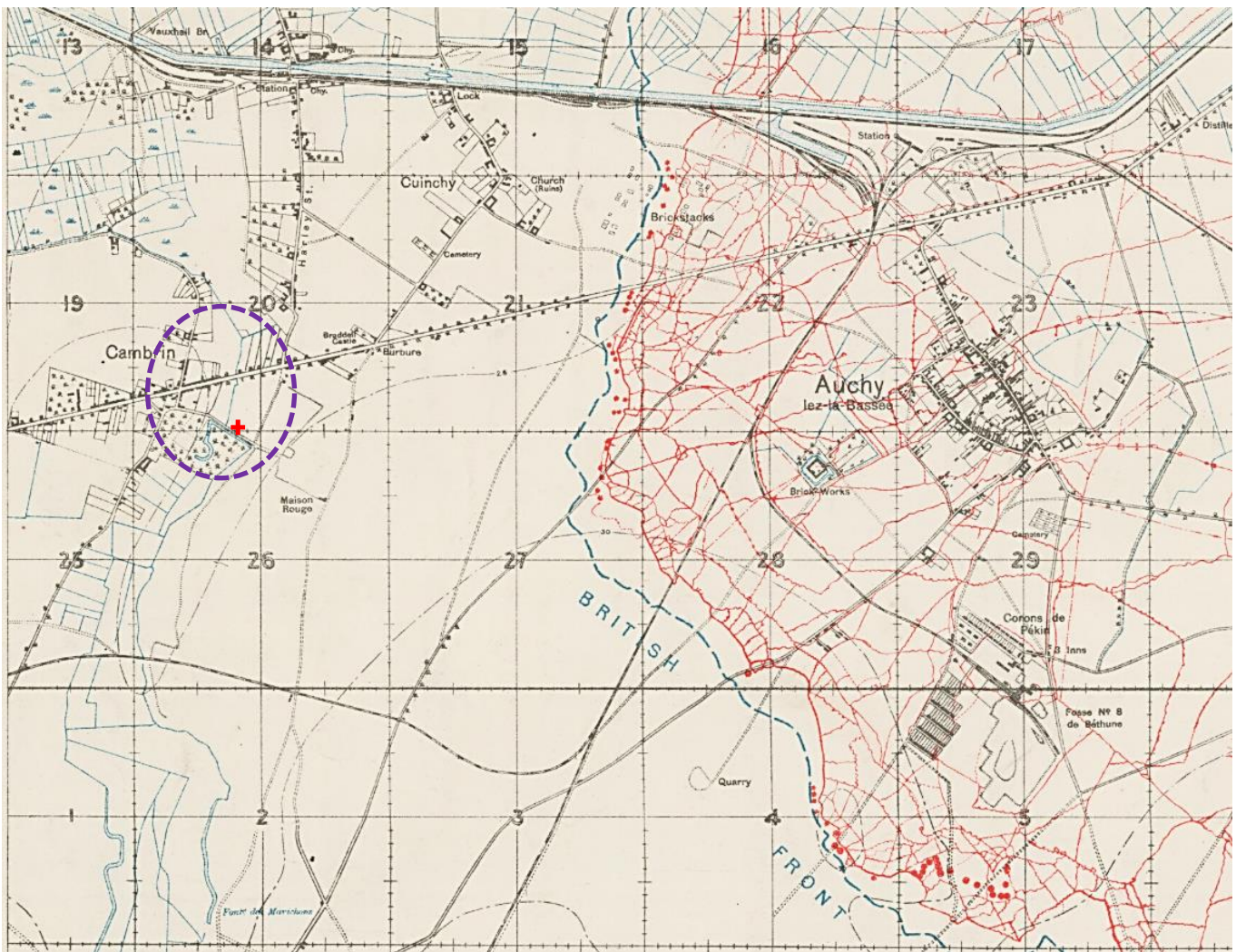
Walcot enlisted as a Second Lieutenant with the South Wales Borderers on 5 August 1914, the day following Britain's entry to the war, and was sent to France on 26 January 1915. Unfortunately, Walcot's Service Record has not been found so details of his military career are sparse. Some references state that Walcot joined the 1st Battalion whilst others name the 3rd Battalion; it is probable that he joined initially the 1st Battalion which, on the outbreak of war, was stationed at Brecon before moving to Pembroke Dock. This was a training unit which remained in Britain throughout the war so it is clear that Walcot was, probably by late 1914, transferred to the 3rd Battalion which may then have been attached to the 1st Battalion.

Following a short period of leave which commenced on 27 July 1915 he returned to his unit and, in early August 1915, was promoted to Captain (initially Temporary Captain) and was placed in command of a company in the 3rd Battalion. It was a very short time later he was killed in action near Cambrin, on 29 August and was buried in the cemetery there. At one time the village of Cambrin housed brigade headquarters but until the end of the First World War it was only about 800 metres from the front line trenches and appears always to have been in the hands of the Allies. Many of those buried at Cambrin died in the Battle of Loos, the biggest British attack in 1915, but this did not commence until 25 September, a month after Walcot had died. Indeed, Walcot was the only Allied soldier to die in the vicinity of Cambrin on that date and it seems that he was killed instantaneously by a grenade bomb - probably fired from the enemy lines to the east rather than having been hand-thrown - which landed close to him in a British trench.

The Battalion War Diary entry for 29 August 1915 notes:

CAMBRIN – The day was calm and bombing in the evening was slight. In the evening, slight shelling. Capt. W H Banner 3SWB killed – No other casualties.

⁹ Dunchurch Hall School, a preparatory school founded in 1868 which prepared pupils for entry to a Public School, stood in 25 acres of gardens and playing fields in the Warwickshire village of Dunchurch on the outskirts of Rugby. Walcot's older brother, Sutherland, was recorded at the school, aged 11, at the 1891 census.

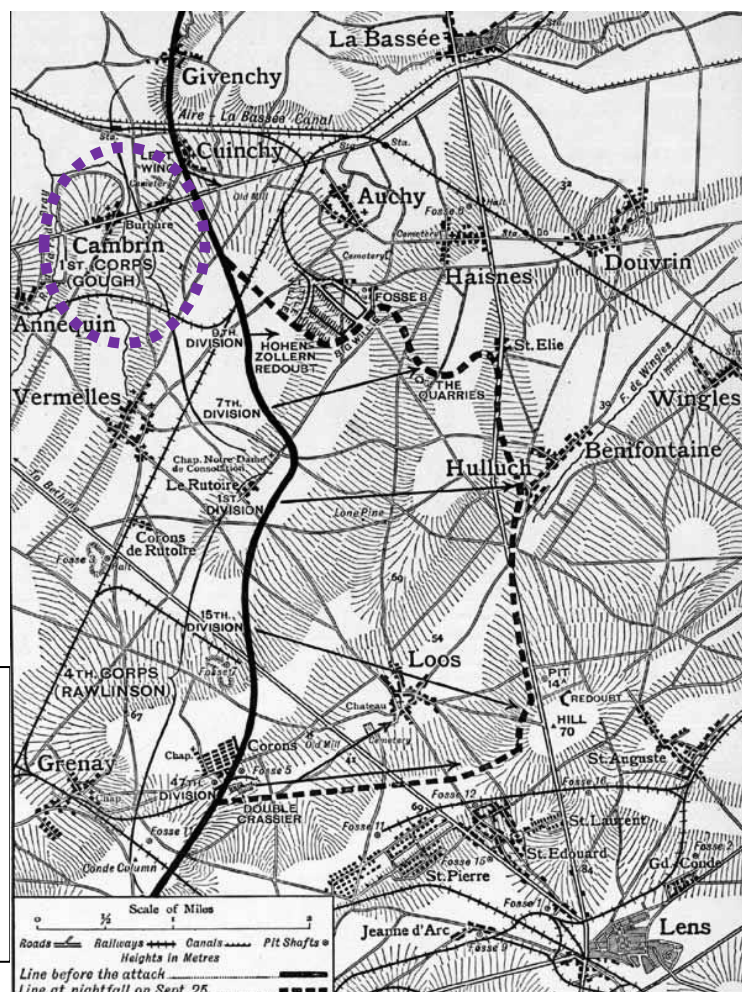


This map shows the area east of Cambrin in mid-June 1916, ten months after Walcot was killed near the village. On the map Cambrin has been encircled in purple and the location of the Cambrin Churchyard Extension, where Walcot Hamood Banner is buried, is indicated by the small red cross to the south of the village centre.

On this map the thin blue lines represent the British trenches, the blue dashed line the position of the front line at this time and, to the east, the thin red lines are the German trenches.

To the north of Cambrin, orientated west-east, is the La Bassée-Aire canal.

[Source : National Library of Scotland
<https://maps.nls.uk/view/101465011>]



The location of Cambrin (encircled in purple) to the west of the front line at the time of the onset of the Battle of Loos, 25 September 1915. Before the battle there had been much localised conflict in the area.

Source :

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Loos#/media/File:Jagger_Cambrai.jpg

DAY TO DAY IN LIVERPOOL

Sir Charles Petrie, yesterday, voiced the general sympathy of the Finance Committee and, indeed, of the whole city, in moving a vote of condolence to Sir Harmood Banner, M.P., and family on the loss of his son, Captain Walcot Harmood Banner. Captain Banner, remarked Sir Charles, who had known him for years, was one of the finest young fellows in Liverpool. He was moving from one part of a trench, "somewhere in France," to another, when he was struck by a shell with instantaneously fatal effect.

The Liverpool Daily Post & Mercury –
Saturday 4 September 1915

Manchester Evening News –
Thursday 2 September 1915

FOR THE EMPIRE.

Casualties at the Dardanelles and in France.

Sir J. Harmood Banner's Son Killed.

Further losses among Lancashire Territorial officers and men at Gallipoli are recorded in to-day's official casualty lists.

From the Western front comes the news that Captain Walcot Harmood Banner, of the 1st South Wales Borderers, third son of Sir James Harmood Banner, M.P., is among those who have laid down their lives for the Empire.

LIVERPOOL M.P.'s SON KILLED.

Captain Walcot Harmood Banner of the 1st South Wales Borderers, who has been killed in action in France, was the third son of Sir J. Harmood Banner, M.P., and was thirty-three years old. He was educated at Winchester, and was associated with his father in business.

Joining the army as a second lieutenant in August, 1914, he became a captain four months ago, having been continually in action at the front since November. On one occasion, when engaged in carrying out a specially difficult task, he was one of two who were the only survivors of a party of twelve.



Boer War / Great War memorial plaque from Dunchurch Lodge and Dunchurch Hall school, now at St. Peter's Church, Dunchurch
[Source: © Rob Palmer. (WMR-19252)]



Walcot Harmood Banner is commemorated also on the War Memorial at St Peter's Church, Aston by Sutton,

Cheshire:

Aston by Sutton War Memorial, Cheshire

[Source:

<http://www.carlscam.com/warmem/astons.htm>]

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
BANNER	<i>S. WALES BORD</i>	<i>2nd LIEUT.</i>	
<i>Walcot, Harmood</i>	<i>S. Wales Bord</i>	<i>T/Capt</i>	

Medal.	Roll.	Face.	Remarks.
VICTORY <i>X</i>	<i>OFF/47</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>14x/9637d/16.6.22 NW/5/1951</i>
BRITISH	<i>OFF/47</i>	<i>22</i>	
<i>15th STAN</i>			
Theatre of War first served in	<i>France</i>		
Date of entry therein	<i>26-1-15</i>		
		<i>NW/5/1951</i>	<i>K. 1389</i>

Correspondence.
Address. <i>Medals.) Sir J. S. Harmood-Banner</i> <i>Aslin Hall</i> <i>Preston Park</i> <i>near Warrington</i>

British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

Probate recorded that Walcot left unsettled Estate to the value of £9159 with personal property to the value of £6697. The testator gave £100 to his brother - probably Harmood rather than Sutherland - £3500 to a *Madame Careire* (a significant sum, equivalent to over £1 million in 2019 – although the identity of this lady is unknown) and the residue in equal shares to his sisters Margaret and Dorothy.

Walcot Harmood Banner
[Source:<http://www.winchestercollegeatwar.com/archive/walcot-harmood-banner/>]



Ingmire Hall [Source:
<http://www.geog.port.ac.uk/webmap/thelakes/html/lgaz/lk06141.htm>]



Oddly, in mid-1916, the family discovered that an imposter, who appeared to have wounds to his chest and right leg, was travelling around the Everton district claiming to be Walcot.

John Sutherland Harmood Banner died, aged 79, on 24 February 1927 at his home, Ingmire Hall, Sedbergh, Yorkshire. He was buried in Toxteth Park Cemetery

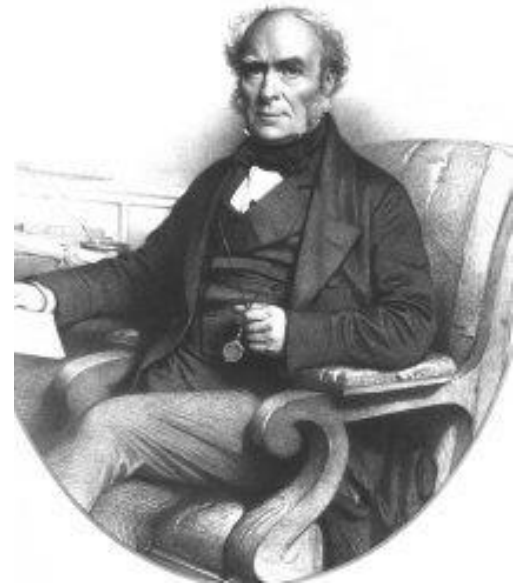
in Liverpool.

Ella Harmood Banner died, aged 75, in early 1954 in Battle, Sussex.

Harmood Banner & Son, Chartered Accountants, 24 North John Street, Liverpool: a postscript

The following, from Wikipedia, gives an outline of the formation of the company and its founders.

Harmood Banner (1782–1865) was a British accountant and auditor. He played a major role in the development of accounting and finance in Liverpool, establishing the foundation for the Liverpool Society of Chartered Accountants 1870; which, in turn, played a part in the formation of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales in 1880. He could be said to be the father of professional accounting in England.



Banner was practising as an accountant in Liverpool by 1805. He took on the role of “Corn Inspector” and “Commissioner for Special Bails”. He acted in cases of liquidation, distributing the remaining assets to claimants. He was involved in banking as both auditor and liquidator. He acted as a share broker, including shares in Liverpool’s Liverpool Athenaeum Club, Liverpool Botanic, Botanic Gardens, Liverpool water companies, Manchester and Liverpool Railway ventures and Manchester, Liverpool and Hull marine insurance.

Banner married in 1808 and the dowry included a piece of inherited land at the corner of North John Street and Harrington Street. The building known as “Harrington Chambers” was erected and Banner practiced there as an accountant. When his son joined the firm, forming Harmood Banner and Son, they remained there and the firm remained in the building until 1962. The family home was at Dingle Mount, no longer standing, situated close to Herculaneum Dock.

Banner was a philanthropist associated with the Liverpool Ophthalmic Infirmary (1824), Liverpool Dispensary (1829), Liverpool Female Orphans Asylum (1841), Liverpool Eye and Ear infirmary (1845) and Liverpool Infant Orphans Asylum (1859). He was involved in raising funds to build new hospitals and orphanages, and, as Treasurer and Auditor, in managing the operations of these institutions. Some of the buildings erected are still standing, but others, such as those on Myrtle Street, have been demolished. The orphans’ provision was moved to Salisbury House in South Liverpool, not far from the Beatles’ beloved “Strawberry Fields”, but this building was itself eventually demolished.

By 1814, Banner was on the committee of Liverpool Lyceum Library and rose to be President. There were cholera outbreaks in Liverpool in 1832, 1849 and 1854. Liverpool’s water at the time was drawn from wells and the disease spread due to seepage of sewage. Banner was involved with Liverpool and Harrington Water Company, one of two

companies that had been granted rights to supply water. Criticisms of Liverpool water supply were voiced publicly, and he answered them in a pamphlet in 1845 "Water". A copy can be found in Liverpool Central Library and Archive, alongside a reply "Want of Water".

These public pronouncements combined with philanthropic work, and involvement in banking and railways, made Harmood Banner a public figure in Liverpool. An obituary described him as much loved and trusted. His funeral in April 1865 was a major event, attended by firemen, orphans, accounting clerks, and five carriages of his extended family and local notables. In the early morning the cortege passed slowly through the streets, passing through Belvedere Road, Catherine Street and Canning Street, and eventually arriving at St James' Cemetery. His grave is close to the cemetery entrance.

Double surnames - to hyphenate or not to hyphenate?

There can be much confusion and inconsistency in the display of double surnames and clarification is not always forthcoming from some of those with such names.

On 6 January 2020 MP Rebecca Roseanne Long-Bailey (or Long Bailey) announced that she was standing for leadership of the Labour Party and it became apparent that there was inconsistency in the display of her surname. The BBC noted that

The Labour leadership contender's team had told media, including the BBC, that her surname officially had no hyphen. It appears that way on her UK Parliament page and her own website too. But it is written as Long-Bailey on her Twitter page (although her handle uses an underscore instead). Then came word from the MP herself. "There actually is a hyphen but I'm not bothered," she told Sky News on Sunday.

The confusion seems to have come about because Mrs Long-Bailey doesn't mind either variation - and she's not alone in her indifference, with Helena Bonham Carter also having previously said the hyphen in her own name was "optional".

The issue of hyphens gets more complex when someone joins the House of Lords, with peerage rules demanding a double surname be hyphenated (so it's Andrew Lloyd Webber but Lord Lloyd-Webber, and Martha Lane Fox but Baroness Lane-Fox).

But where there is a choice, why do some choose a hyphen where others don't?

'Making themselves distinctive'

Jane Pilcher, associate professor of sociology at Nottingham Trent University, studies surnames and is interested in how people choose what to name themselves.

"It's all linked to identity and what people want to say about themselves through the naming choices they make," she said. "People are freer from traditions now. They want to mark themselves out and make themselves distinctive.

"Whether you choose a hyphen or not comes into that. It's a matter of identity and what you want to say about yourself - there are no strict rules about it. More broadly, it's part of the societal trend towards individualisation so you stand out from the crowd more.

"Perhaps someone who wants a two-part surname doesn't want to be seen as conventional and would not choose to hyphenate as a result. Where hyphens sit is not a massive issue - but I would say the absence of one is even more informal and less traditional."

