

Codford St. Mary

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War II



LIEUTENANT

A. S. HANCOCK

BUFFS (ROYAL EAST KENT REGIMENT)

26th APRIL, 1945 AGE 22

*“So He Passed Over
And All The Trumpets
Sounded For Him
On The Other Side”*

Anthony Strangman HANCOCK

Anthony Strangman Hancock was born in 1923 to parents Dugald Strangman Hancock & Vivien Fearn Hancock (nee Bell). His birth was registered in the district of Staines, Oxfordshire in the September quarter, 1923. Anthony's parents had married in 1921, in the district of St. George Hanover Square, London.

Anthony's father – Dugald Strangman Hancock had served in World War 1, first with the East Kent Regiment as 2nd Lieutenant then promoted to Captain. He had entered a Theatre of War on 19th April, 1917 in France & was awarded the British War & Victory Medals. Captain Dugald Strangman Hancock had also served with CHQ Signals during World War 1.

A notice in the London Gazette, dated 3 May, 1929 reads:

Notice is hereby given that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us, the undersigned, Anthony Maurice Bell and Dugald Strangman Hancock, carrying on business as Schoolmasters, at Greenways, Aldwick, in the county of Sussex, has been dissolved by mutual consent as and from the first day of May, 1929. All debts due to and owing by the said late firm will be received and paid by the said Dugald Strangman Hancock, who will in future carry on the said business.- Dated the 18th day of April, 1929.

Anthony M. Bell

D. S. Hancock

(Note – Anthony Maurice Bell was Dugald Strangman Hancock's brother-in-law & Vivien Hancock's older brother).

The Greenways School was moved in August, 1940 to Ashton Gifford House by Anthony's mother – Vivien Hancock. (A marriage was registered in the December quarter, 1944 between Dugald S. Hancock & Anne J. C. Manning, in the district of Chatham, Kent. Dugald Strangman Hancock died 26th June, 1962 – Probate was granted to Anne Jacoba Cornelia Hancock, widow in the amount of £8,991).

Anthony was an organ scholar at Wadham College, Oxford. He was a poet, composer and musician who wanted to be a teacher. He was 16 when war was declared & he enlisted while an undergraduate in the Queen's Royal Regiment embodied in the Territorial Army on 5th March, 1942. On 31st October, 1942 he was awarded an Emergency Commission in the Buffs as was promoted again to Lieutenant on 1st May, 1943

Supplement to the London Gazette, 1 December, 1942 reads:

The undermentioned Cadets to be 2nd Lts. 31st Oct, 1942 :-

The Buffs

Francis Herbert Lowe (249761). Laurence Hercy Spelman-Marriott (249762). Anthony Strangman Hancock (249763).

Lieutenant Anthony Strangman Hancock was posted to 2nd Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles on 25th August, 1944 & served in North West Europe. He was wounded twice, the first time he was hospitalised in Oxford, with a severe head wound & the second time in November, 1944, a bullet grazed his throat and a piece of shrapnel went into his cheek.

On 21st April, 1945, Lieutenant Anthony Strangman Hancock took part in the battle of Bremen, the final amphibious battle of World War 2. On 26th April, 1945 he was in a company carrier setting off to contact the 51st (Highland) Division in Huchting, when the vehicle he was in activated a magnetic mine. There were no survivors.

Lieutenant Anthony Strangman Hancock was killed in action on 26th April, 1945, aged 22 years.

From the "History of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Ulster Rifles in North West Europe 1944-45":

"One disaster clouded the completeness of triumph in Bremen. When "D" Company had reached their objective, Major Bird MC, Lt. Hancock, and a section set off in the company carrier to contact the 51 Highland Division in Huchting. Not far from the Company Headquarters there was a fearful explosion, and it soon became apparent that the carrier had activated the most diabolical of all German mines - the magnetic mine. There were no survivors. This was the second accident of its kind within the month, and in each case a high percentage of the casualties had been fatal. Major Bird, a gallant leader, who had brought his Company triumphantly through many actions; Lt. Hancock, whose unassuming bravery and steadfastness in action had won universal admiration; and L/Cpl McCoy, Rfn McGlennon MM, Rfn Stevens, and others who constituted the very core of "D" Company. The loss of these men in this cruelly wasteful manner stunned and shocked the whole Battalion."

And

LIEUTENANT A. S. HANCOCK

Killed at Bremen 26th April 1945.

Tony Hancock joined my Company in September 1944 and was immediately posted to 16 Platoon commander.

His quiet manner and scholarly appearance demanded respect and before long his was the best platoon in the Company. The men in that platoon, and in the Company loved him, both for the excellence of his leadership and for his profound understanding regarding all personal matters.

In action he was outstanding, a fearless leader always cool and unafraid no matter how trying the circumstances or how fierce the battle. Typical of him was a remark which he passed when a bullet narrowly missed its mark in the course of the action at Blitterswijk. He appeared at Company Headquarters bleeding from the throat saying that he'd got a slight scratch. On examination I discovered that the enemy bullet had passed underneath his chin and had dented his "Adam's Apple" !

Although wounded twice in battle he always refused to be evacuated and remained with his platoon until the end of the day.

His untimely death, right at the end of the campaign was a cruel blow. His carrier ran over a mine on a road on the outskirts of Bremen, and all the occupants were instantly killed. But we shall long remember his quiet unassuming personality, and in recalling his worth as a friend we can offer with feeling our deepest sympathies to his bereaved relations.

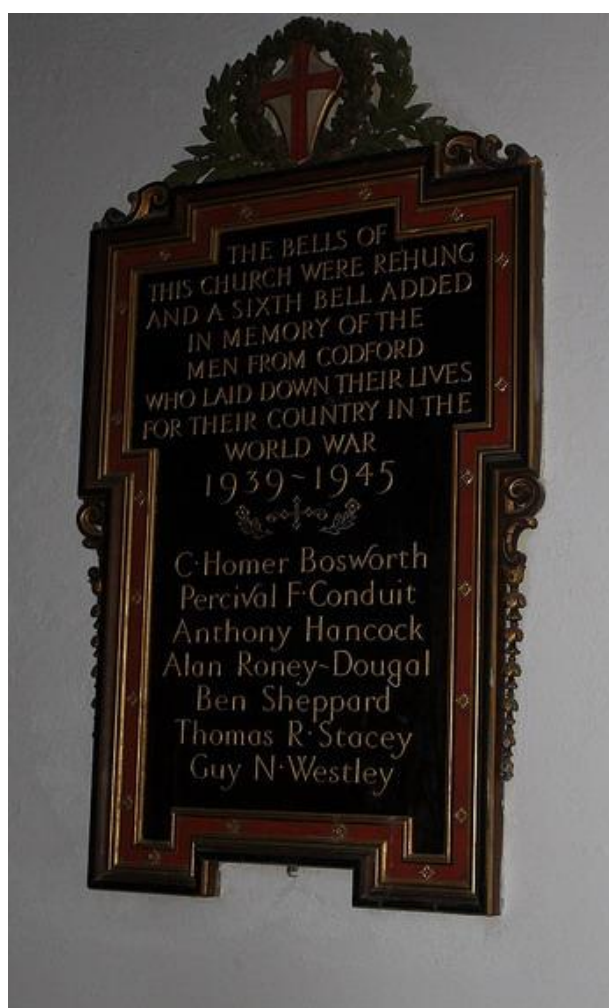
Lieutenant Anthony Strangman Hancock was buried in Becklingen War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany – Grave no. 8. G. 4. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lieutenant Anthony Strangman Hancock, aged 22, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) 9th Battalion attached to Royal Ulster Rifles, as the son of Capt. Dugald Strangman Hancock and Vivien Fearne Hancock.

Newspaper Item dated 3rd May, 1945:

Hancock – In April, 1945, on active service in Western Europe, Lieut. Anthony Hancock, Royal Ulster Rifles, eldest son of Mrs Hancock, Greenways School, Codford, Wilts.

Lieutenant Anthony Hancock is remembered on the Codford World War 2 Memorial plaque located in St. Peter's Church, Codford, Wiltshire as well as a Victory Bell, cast by Mears & Stainbank of Whitechapel in 1946, which was added to commemorate the seven men with Codford connections that lost their lives in World War 2.



(Photo with permission Christopher Wright 2013)



Lieut. Anthony Strangman Hancock

(Photo & school & military information - courtesy of Romy Wyeth)

Becklingen War Cemetery, Germany

The small village of Becklingen lies in the north of Germany approximately 85kms north of Hannover.

The site of Becklingen War Cemetery was chosen for its position on a hillside overlooking Luneburg Heath. Luneburg Heath was where, on 4 May 1945, Field-Marshal Montgomery accepted the German surrender from Admiral Doenitz.

Burials were brought into the cemetery from isolated sites in the countryside, small German cemeteries and prisoner of war camps cemeteries, including the Fallingbostal cemetery, within a radius of about 80 kilometres. Most of those buried in the cemetery died during the last two months of the war.

Becklingen War Cemetery contains 2,374 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 97 of them unidentified. There are also 27 war graves of other nationalities, many of them Polish.



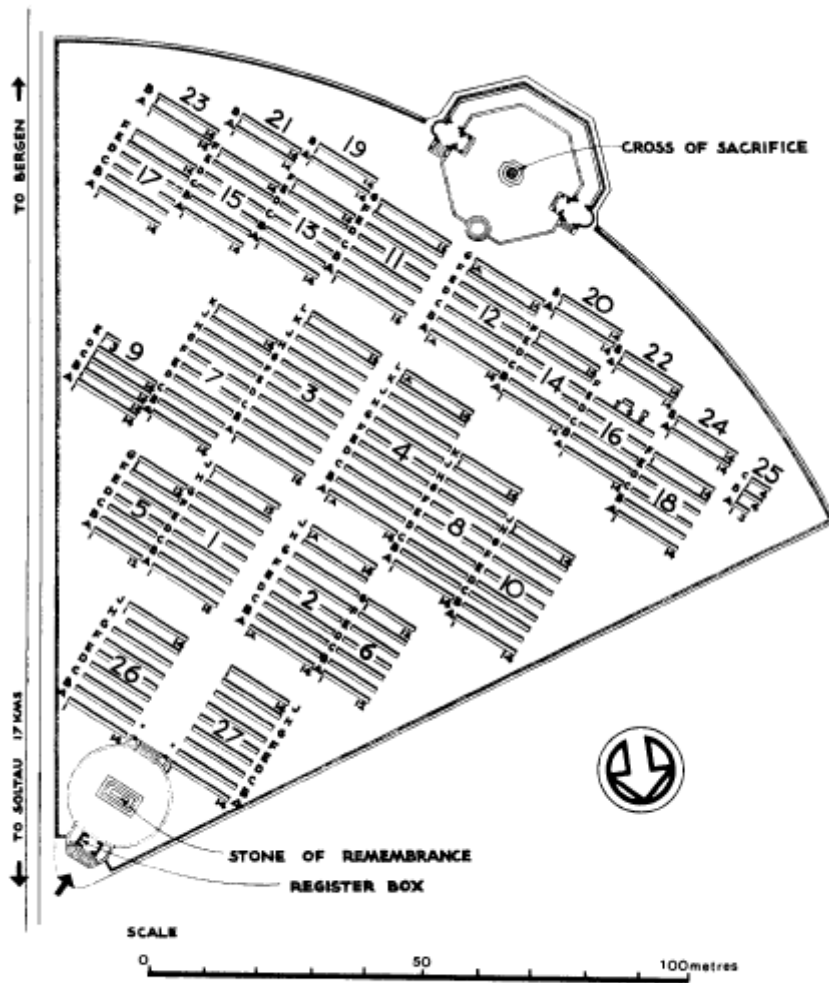
(CWGC photos)



Photo of Lieutenant A. S. Hancock's CWGC Headstone



(Photo from The War Graves Photographic Project – courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



**BECKLINGEN WAR CEMETERY
SOLTAU**