



Ramleh War Cemetery, Jerusalem

## *Philip Usher, RAF Chaplain*

There are many in Gloucester and in the Diocese who will have heard with very great regret the news of the death of Philip Usher in the Near East, and as I (Dr A C Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester) was so closely associated with him and was in many ways responsible for his whole career, I should like to pay some tribute to his memory.

The son of Mr H W Usher, of Seend, Wiltshire, he was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford. He served at the end of the Great War in the Garrison Artillery at Salonika, and there first came in contact with the Greek people and the Orthodox Church, and acquired the interest he kept throughout his life. He came to me as Chaplain in 1923 with the express object of preparing himself for work in the East, and he acted as Assistant Curate at All Saints Church. He took a great interest particularly in the boys and young men of the Parish and I think there are many still who remember him with affection. After he had been ordained Priest he went out to Jerusalem attached to St George's Cathedral, where he stayed for about two years. He then came home invalided. After his recovery he went out to Athens, where he was Chaplain to the British Legation. He learnt to speak Modern Greek with ease and fluency, and made a wide circle of acquaintances in Athens. He loved the Greek people, and thought Athens one of the most delightful of cities. He then returned to Gloucester as my Chaplain with which he associated

the editorship of the "Church Quarterly Review" and ultimately became head of Liddon House associated with Grosvenor Chapel.

He had a wide and intimate knowledge of the Near East especially from its ecclesiastical side, and in all our negotiations with the Orthodox Church and with other Churches of Europe, he was of very great assistance. He had a quick and bright intellect and a great genius for friendship. He threw himself wholeheartedly into work with young men and boys both at Gloucester and at Liddon House. I know from the many letters I have received of the affection he aroused and there were many who looked forward to his future as one of the best brains in the service of the Church. The circumstances of the war brought to an end his work at Grosvenor Chapel and Liddon House, and he joined up as Chaplain in the RAF. He was sent out to the East with the hope and expectation of working with the Air Force in Greece and Athens, but he was never able to get there. He died of cerebral hemorrhage in the hospital at Jerusalem, and he is buried there. His father died only about a fortnight before.

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