

FORGET ME NOT

GEORGE ALLSOP

GEORGE ALLSOP'S UNCLE

VIC ALLSOP'S GREAT UNCLE



My uncle George was born in 1898. He joined the Sherwood Foresters as a Subaltern in 1915, when he was still only 17 years old. I believe he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in early 1916 and trained as a pilot in the United Kingdom.

He embarked for France, where he flew bombing missions and also missions to find targets for the artillery and range finding missions. Uncle George flew with a navigator, two of whom he told us were killed in the seat in front of him. Bombs in those days were hung on hooks in the cockpit and just dropped over the side. Eventually, during a mission George was shot in the left shoulder but he managed to get back to base. After recuperating back in England he spent the rest of the war as an instructor at a training base at Gamston near Retford in Nottinghamshire.

Uncle George was very lucky to survive the war, as the life expectancy of a new pilot could be measured in weeks.

Uncle George was a very private person, very clever, an eccentric who had a photographic memory. After he was discharged from the RAF, as the RFC become in April 1918, he attended Sheffield University, and in June 1921 obtained a M. Engineering Degree. He then obtained a PhD in Electrical Engineering; his forte was pure and applied maths. George became an Associate Member of the Institution of Mining Engineers in January 1928. He joined the Safety and Research operation for the mines around Buxton and was involved in the development of spark free underground electric transport.

He lectured in the U.K., in Germany, where he learnt to speak German fluently, and also in the U.S.A. before the Second World War. He was also a fluent Latin speaker and referred to Vic as Maximus and Lynn Minimus!!

George resigned from the mines on 30 Sept 1949 because his good friend Professor Jacob Bronowski had got the job of Director of The Coal Research Establishment at the National Coal Board, a job which he felt should have been his.

He sold up and bought a small farm in Cornwall, five acres, literally, and did the "good life" with one cow, one pig, chickens, bees, a bit of corn and a bit of hay and he grew all his own vegetables. Always a keen bird man he recorded every bird he saw in his garden every day, something he did until no longer able.

He was an excellent teacher, with the patience of Job, and was a very good friend of the Headmaster of Redruth Grammar School, where he taught pure and applied maths to A level students in times of need.

Sometime in late 50's early 60's, with his friend Ken Williams, George started the Cornish Wildlife Trust, which gave rise to what is now the Cornish Trust for Nature Conservation. The Trust now owns many acres of Cornwall, and provides many of the notices you see on headlands around the county. On his death in 1986 he left the whole of his considerable estate to the Trust. His wife having pre-deceased him, he married Olive Mary Marsden in September 1927. They had no family and in 1989 Vic and I went to open the Trust's new Head Quarters built on the site of his former bungalow.

Unfortunately, when George was in his eighties all his war medals were stolen. I still have some of his trench maps that he must have used to navigate his missions.



EDWARD WOODFORD

IVY WOODFORD'S GREAT UNCLE



Edward Woodford (Ted) was my great uncle and he lived in one of the cottages in Back Lane, Hoby with his brother Thias and his sister Mary Anne. During the war he was a Private in the 5th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers and he is listed on the Roll of Honour that is fixed to the North Aisle Wall in All Saints Church Hoby.

For many years Ted was the Church sexton and he was responsible for the care and up-keep of the Church building. He used to light the anthracite stove on a Friday so the Church would be warm for the Sunday services. In those days hot air was released through fancy metal grills in the floor of the Church and Ted ensured it was always working perfectly. I don't remember Ted but I'm told he had enormous hands and use to wear white gloves during services. Aunt Mary Anne did the Church cleaning and the accounts book records that they were paid around £9 per year between them for carrying out these duties. Despite cleaning for the Church of England Mary Anne was a Methodist and attended Chapel regularly.

