

## RISLEY VILLAGE WAR MEMORIAL 1914 - 1918

COLIN CLAUDE BAKER born 1889 Nottingham, died 12<sup>th</sup> May 1917 age 27

1911 census: Son of Joseph Henry and Annie (Stevenson) of "Hillcrest", Derby Road, Sandiacre. A factory manager, probably of his father's Levers Lace factory.

No. 1772 A private in the Army Pay Corps.

Entered France 20 4 1915. Became acting Sergeant and then 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Notts.and Derby Regt., then Sherwood Foresters D Company 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

*"2nd Lieutenant C C Baker was wounded on 23rd April 1917. The battalion advanced at 4.50 am on 23rd April towards Bayonet Trench, with the objective of capturing Keeling Copse, near the village of Pelves in France (Battle of Arras). The battalion suffered heavy casualties from shelling and machine gun fire. Part of Bayonet Trench was captured and the battalion was relieved the next day."*

A History of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Sherwood Foresters (ISBN 0 9529648 2 1)

He died of his wounds and is buried at Etaples, France. (Etaples was a strategic rail junction, which became an important depot and transit camp for the BEF and subsequently a vast hospital base.)

In the grant of probate he left effects of £256 to his father.

Cousin to Harry Leslie Baker below.

**HARRY LESLIE “Les” BAKER** born 1891 Nottingham,  
died 8<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1918 age 25  
1911 census: Son of Henry Edgar and Lily (Flick) of 118, Derby Rd.  
Sandiacre.

An accountant's clerk.

No. 2533. Lance Sergeant Notts. and Derby Regt. 1914. He served in Ireland as Corporal, B Coy, 2/7 Sherwood Foresters (the “Robin Hoods”) 178<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 59<sup>th</sup> Division. In a letter home from Kingston he describes to his younger brother how he was closely involved in the suppression of the Easter Rising on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1916.

An account of the action can be found at:  
[www.beeston-notts.co.uk/ww1\\_sibley](http://www.beeston-notts.co.uk/ww1_sibley)

Subsequently Les became Lieut. 18<sup>th</sup> (Lancs. Hussars) Battalion, Kings Liverpool Regt. (a Territorial Force Yeomanry Unit) and entered France 1917.

Awarded the Military Cross for:

*"conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in a counter attack on a position. When compelled to dig in by the heavy enemy machine gun fire, he hung on with the greatest courage and determination, and his fine example so encouraged his men that he was able to delay the advance of the enemy for over twenty four hours. "*

Supplement to the London Gazette 26th July 1918

He was killed in action near Marbaix, France and is buried at Dourlers Communal Cemetery Extension.

*"At 7.30am, however, on 8th November, in what was to be its last action of the war, the Battalion was ordered to attack the enemy near Marbaix with support from the 25<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> Battalions of the Machine Gun Corps. The Pals met stiff resistance from the Germans however and, although the attack was ultimately successful, Lieutenant H L Baker, MC, and fourteen other ranks were killed and three more soldiers would die of their wounds over the next few days."*

From the book Liverpool Pals by Graham Maddocks.

In the grant of probate, his address is “Lyndhurst” Derby Road, Sandiacre. He left effects of £229 to his father.

Obituary in Ilkeston Advertiser 15<sup>th</sup> November 1918:

*“Lieutenant Harry Leslie Baker the elder son of Mr. and Mrs. H E Baker of Sandiacre, who was awarded the M.C. in March this year, was killed in action three days before hostilities ceased. He was at Messrs. Derbyshire Bros. and Co. Chartered accountants at the outbreak of war and joined the Sherwood Foresters in September 1914. He received a commission in the Kings Liverpool Regiment April 1917.”*

Cousin to Colin Baker above.

**LEON CHARLES BOSWORTH** born 1897 Melbourne, Derbyshire, 1911 census: Son of William and Mary (Smith) of 11, Lawrence St. Sandiacre.

A cowboy on farm.

Enlisted Ilkeston No. 52156

A member of the Royal Army Medical Corps. 93<sup>rd</sup> Field Ambulance  
Died of wounds 16<sup>th</sup> April 1918.

Buried at Etaples, France

There is nuncupative soldier's will dated 1918, where the family address is Breaston Lane, Risley. This may explain his inclusion on Risley's war memorial.

**BERTRAM “Bert” FIGG** born 10<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1889

Var.Mapperly/Shiple, Derby.

Died on or before 6<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1917 age 27

1911 census: Son of George and Caroline (Messingham) of Stanton Lane (now Rushy Lane)

A “labourer in furnis” (Stanton Ironworks, see obituary below)

Initially an Able Seaman, Service No. Bristol Z/14679 in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, he became a Stoker 1<sup>st</sup> Class

No. K/32366 in the Royal Navy.

His ship, the “Begonia”, sailed to patrol west of the UK on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept. 1917. It failed to return from patrol. Discussions about the Begonia's fate can be found on the internet but consensus is that the circumstances are unknown.

He is commemorated on Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Obituary in the Ilkeston Pioneer 25<sup>th</sup> October 1917:

*“Mr. and Mrs. Figg of Derby Road Risley have been officially informed by the Admiralty that the mine sweeper “Begonia” on which their son*

*Bertram Figg was a first class stoker, has been lost with all hands. He was 38 years and single, being the sole supporter of his aged parents. He was the fifth son, but all his brothers are married. He had been in the navy about two years and was a moulder at Stanton Ironworks when he enlisted. He was at home on furlough three months ago, when he said his boat had been in action six times, but he made very lightly of the dangers of the deep”*

### **JOHN “Jack” HITCHCOCK**

born 1894 Hopwell, died 30<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1917 age 23.

Son of Ellis and Hannah (Conway) of Lodge Farm Risley.

He went to Risley School where his drawing books show some artistic talent.

1911 census: A labourer on farm like his father.

His family say that he did not want to follow the farming tradition and worked at the Screw Factory in Sandiacre.

Attested 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1915 at Ilkeston and made reservist.

Mobilized 19<sup>th</sup> July 1916. No. 107945 calling himself a farm horseman. He joined the Royal Garrison Artillery.

He was at Great Yarmouth, where the RGA did basic training. He was initially with 300<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery.

His letters home mention how he had to have 10 of his teeth removed and 4 “stopped”; A process which took several months before he was given false teeth.

He also talks of the size of the guns he worked with.

“Tell Dad our guns weigh 8 or 9 tons each and the shells are 2 cwt”.

#### The role of the Siege Battery

Siege Batteries RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers, sending large calibre high explosive shells in high trajectory, plunging fire. The usual armaments were 6 inch, 8 inch and 9.2 inch howitzers, although some had huge railway- or road-mounted 12 inch howitzers. As British artillery tactics developed, the Siege Batteries were most often employed in destroying or neutralising the enemy artillery, as well as putting destructive fire down on strongpoints, dumps, store, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

(From The Long, Long Trail website.)

He was moved to Aldershot, then Lydd in Kent, where gunnery training took place. His letters confirm that he embarked for France on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1917.

He was in the field from 29<sup>th</sup> July as gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery 156<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery.

Although he was not able to say where he was, he gives clues which manage to pass the censor.

“ I cannot say where I am but the name starts with A and finishes with s so you can guess what front” 10<sup>th</sup> July 1917 (Arras/Amiens/Armentierres, Western Front)

and “ we are now in Belgium... you know where yipres (sic) is so that will do about the war” 17<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1917.

He was wounded in right arm and elbow and suffered mustard gas poisoning on 28<sup>th</sup> Dec. and died of these wounds at No. 46 Casualty Clearing Station based at Mendinghem, two days later.

Buried at Mendinghem, Belgium

Relative of present day resident of Risley.

**BASIL TERAH HOOLEY** b 8<sup>th</sup> June 1892 Risley died 28<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1918 age 26  
1911 census: Son of Terah and Mary Elizabeth (Swaffield) of The Lodge,  
Risley.

An engineer with Geo. Fletcher & Co. Derby.

Gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. in the Sherwood Foresters 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Territorial 4 3 1915

Entered France 24 8 1915. Transferred to Machine Gun Corps 26 10 1916.

Gazetted acting Capt. 26 5 1917 and transferred to Tank Corps Nov. 1917.

Acting Major Tank Corps. from 17 5 1918 (Gazetted 30 7 1918)

Decorated with the Military Cross (gazetted Nov 1918) *“for conspicuous gallantry while commanding a company of tanks in action. In spite of heavy artillery and machine gun fire he kept in close touch with the tanks, directing them with the utmost judgement and decision. His able handling enabled the infantry to reach their objective at the expense of very few casualties”*

He died while on home leave, of influenza. Among the obituaries are the following:

From the Ilkeston Advertiser 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November 1918:

*“Among the victims of pneumonia following influenza is Major B T Hooley M.C. Tank Corps. who succumbed at Risley Lodge... In fact he was on the point of leaving home for the station to return to France when he suddenly collapsed “*

He is buried in Risley churchyard.

In 1964 Mr. Gordon Baker (younger brother of Harry Leslie Baker above) wrote an account of his memories of Basil Hooley's funeral.

*“Other outstanding recollections of my days in the choir..... the military funeral of Basil Hooley which took place from Risley Lodge. The choir stood out in the churchyard as the funeral cortege came slowly down the Park Drive to the strains of Chopin's Marche de Funebre”*

More formally the Ilkeston Pioneer has:

*“From the Lodge the funeral cortege proceeded down the main drive, the coffin, covered by the Union Jack on which rested the deceased officer's sword and cap, being borne on a gun carriage. Proceeding it was the band of the Notts. and Derby Regt. playing Chopin's Funeral March.”*

In the grant of probate he left effects of £313 to his wife Emily.

The following is from Du Revugney's role of honour

**JOHN GORDON JOHNSTONE** b 28<sup>th</sup> April 1888, d 31<sup>st</sup> May 1922 age 34  
**HENRY ARCHER JOHNSTONE** b 1890, died 21<sup>st</sup> March 1918 age 27  
**WILLIAM McCALL JOHNSTONE** b 1892, died 13<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1916 age 23

These three men named on the war memorial were brothers, born in Nottingham.

They were the sons of John and Ada (Archer) who, in 1914, lived at "Fairmead", Derby Road, Risley. John senior was a solicitor (at one time President of Nottinghamshire Law Society) and he died that year.

1911 census:

John Gordon is a solicitor's articled clerk of 14 Mapperly Rd. Nottingham.  
Henry does not appear.

William is still at school.

There is a younger brother Herbert Alan born 1894 at school.

All four brothers attended Sedbergh School, Cumbria.

The eldest, **JOHN GORDON** emigrated to Canada. One passage of his is recorded as Liverpool to Halifax on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1913 on the "Virginian" where he gives his occupation as engineer.

Attestation on 18 12 1914 at Minnedosa, Manitoba. Occupation - farmer.

Description: Height 5' 6 ½"; fair hair and blue eyes.

No. 424440 Canadian Infantry. His regimental number suggests that he was attached to the 45<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

Wounded in France, details as yet unknown, he died in 1922 at "Fairmead", Risley, of meningitis (source: death certificate). He is buried, along with his parents, in the General Cemetery, Nottingham.

**HENRY** entered France on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 1916. He was frequently gazetted with ranks from 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. to acting Major and was at the time of his death promoted to Acting Major of the 152<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. Killed in action "south of Arras on the first day of the German offensive in Picardy ...aged 27" (from Sedbergh Roll of Honour) near Bullecourt and buried at Wancourt British Cemetery, France.

He was a member of Nottingham Rugby Club, Notts. Rugby F.C. and the Notts. Golf Club.

In the grant of probate he left effects of £932 to his mother Ada.

**WILLIAM** joined the forces May 1913 as Gunner, Notts. Royal Horse Artillery. Gazetted 17 3 1915 as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. 152<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Royal Field Artillery. Served at home Aug. 1914 to Jan. 1916, training at some time on Salisbury Plain. Entered France Jan. 1916. "Killed in action with his Battery near Armentieres...aged 23" (from Sedbergh Roll of Honour) and buried at Erquinghem-Lys, France.

*"News has been received in Nottingham of the death in action of second Lieutenant W. McC. Johnstone of the 188<sup>th</sup> (Nottingham) Brigade of the R.F.A. The deceased officer, who was quite young, was one of four sons*

*of the late Mr. John Johnstone, solicitor of Nottingham, serving with the forces. He got his commission in June last year. Lieut. Johnstone was educated at Sedbergh, and was a member of the Nottingham Rowing Club”*

Nottingham Evening Post 18<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1916

In the grant of probate he left effects of £573 to his mother Ada Johnstone.

**FREDERICK ALFRED LAST** born 1895 in a cottage along the canal side near the Navigation Inn, Breaston. Died 19<sup>th</sup> August 1917 age 22

1911 census: Son of Alfred and Mary Ellen (Jackson) later of The Crescent, Risley. Then, he is a ploughboy, but on attestation at Derby on 16<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1915, a blacksmith. He worked at the forge in Risley.

A family memory: “He was good with horses.”

No. 71572 Royal Field Artillery

Posted France 4<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1915 as gunner in C battery 71<sup>st</sup> Brigade.

On home leave from 30<sup>th</sup> June 1917 to 10<sup>th</sup> July 1917

Killed in action probably during the third battle of Ypres.

(Passchendaele)

Buried at Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, Belgium.

Relative of present day resident of Risley.

**WALTER JOHN ROBERT PACEY** b 1890 Newcastle d 18<sup>th</sup> July 1916  
age 26

1911 census: Son of John William and Mary E (Adamson).

He is an apprentice engineer and draughtsman in the colliery and railway plant industry, living in Heanor.

Enlisted Woolwich No.58057. Royal Garrison Artillery.

Entered France 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1915. Sgt. 23<sup>rd</sup> Heavy Battery.

Wounded and returned to England where, according to his death certificate, he died of tetanus septicaemia at Egginton Military Hospital near Burton on Trent. Given address was "Claremont" Sandiacre.

Walter is buried in Risley churchyard with a CWGC gravestone.

*"A Sandiacre Hero*

*Staff Sergeant Walter Pacey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Pacey of Derby Road, Sandiacre was wounded by shrapnel in the great advance. He was brought to England and lay in a critical condition in the military hospital at Egginton Hall near Derby where he succumbed to his wounds on Tuesday last; and is to be interred at Risley today (Friday) with military honours. Previous to enlistment, Staff Serg. Pacey was for some years a member of the Risley Church Choir and the prayers of the congregation were asked on his behalf. His parents and his fiancée (Miss Baker of Sandiacre) have received much sympathy in their sad loss."*

Obituary in Ilkeston Pioneer 21<sup>st</sup> July 1916:

*"Sandiacre has learned with regret of the death of Sergeant Major Walter Pacey RGA., of Derby Road, who has just died in a military hospital after being seriously wounded in France. Deceased was very well known in the district as a pleasing and artistic baritone singer and was, until joining up, a member of the choir at Risley Church."*

Long Eaton Advertiser 21<sup>st</sup> July 1916

In the grant of probate he leaves effects of £431 15s 6d to his father.

His fiancée mentioned in the article above was Norah Lilian Baker sister of Harry Leslie Baker. In 1919 she married Walter Pacey's widowed father John William, his wife Mary having died in 1916, the same year as their son Walter.

**FREDERICK JOHN PRINCE** b 30<sup>th</sup> March 1891 at Gateham Grange, Leek, Staffs. Died 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 1918 age 27

Son of John (deceased) and Eliza (Hall) of Keys Farm, Hopwell. (1914)

He emigrated to Canada, probably prior to 1911.

Attested 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept. 1914 in Valcartier, Quebec. Occupation cook

Description: height 5' 2 ½'' black hair; brown eyes.

No. 21507 Manitoba Regt. 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. "The Canadian Scottish"

A member of the CEF he reached the rank of Lance Sergeant and was recommended for the Military Medal on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> 1918 following

*"raids north of Hill 70"* (from war diaries of 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion)

*"For his gallantry and nonchalance under fire Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> 1918. He showed energy and coolness in bringing up ammonal tubes and mats for crossing barbed wire under heavy M.G. fire. He has, on many other occasions, given a fine example."*

Canada Military Honours and awards Citation Cards. 1900-1960  
Gazetted 10<sup>th</sup> April 1918.

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1918 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion was involved in the action at Cuvillers.

The 16th and 14th Battalions leapfrogged the 13th east of Blécourt and occupied Cuvillers and Bantigny, pushing patrols farther forward. But as enfilade fire from the left flank increased, it became apparent that these positions were untenable—three times the enemy counter-attacked the 14th Battalion in Bantigny—and both units had to retire. Nor could the 13th Battalion retain Blécourt, in spite of efforts by the 15th Battalion to reinforce it. With the coming of darkness the Brigade was forced to withdraw west of the village, having lost 29 officers and 618 other ranks.

From "Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War"

Frederick was one of a total of 335 men of the Battalion killed, wounded or missing.

He died of wounds at No. 22 casualty clearing station, Pernes.  
Buried Bucquoy Cemetery, Ficheux, France.

He was mentioned in a sermon given by Canon Massey of All  
Saints, Risley.

*“Early in the month came the tidings that one beloved son had laid down  
his life for us. Wounded to the death Frederic Prince passed away from  
all earthly strife, and from his nameless grave in a foreign land comes to  
his surviving home the cry – Be still and know that I am God”*

Reported in the Ilkeston Pioneer 8<sup>th</sup> November 1918.

**SIDNEY LAWRENCE STAFFORD** b 1889 Risley d 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1916  
age 27



1911 census: Son of Joseph and Sarah Jane (Wilson) of Brook  
House, Risley.

A lacemaker

Attested Nottingham. 10<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1914.

No. R/6941 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Kings Royal Rifle Corps.

Posted France 13<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1915

Reported missing 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1916 possibly in battle of Flers-  
Courselette (Somme) Confirmed killed in action 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1917

9th (Service) Battalion, The King's Royal Rifle Corps was raised at Winchester on 21st of August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army and joined 42nd Brigade, 14th (Light) Division. They trained at Aldershot, moving to Petworth in November, returning to Aldershot in March 1915. They proceeded to France, landing at Boulogne on the 20th of May 1915. They fought in the the Action of Hooge, being the first division to be attacked by flamethrowers. They were in action in The Second Attack on Bellewaarde. In 1916 they were on the Somme seeing action in The Battle of Delville Wood and The Battle of Flers-Courcelette.  
Taken from The Long, Long trail website

Buried Guards Cemetery, Lesbeoufs, France.

His grandparents, William and Millicent Stafford, are buried in Risley Churchyard.

**RO(W)LAND TIVEY** b 1896 Melbourne, Derbys. d 4 8 1917 age 20  
Son of George and Ann (Dallman) of "Mount Pleasant", Derby Road, Risley.

!911 census: A market gardener like his father.

Attested Ilkeston. 8 12 1915

No. 23413 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Durham Light Infantry.

Posted France 20 10 1916 - 26 12 1916

Repatriated with trench fever, **date** on HMS Carrisbrook Castle.

Posted France 10 6 1917 until his death.

Died of wounds and buried Godewaersvelde on French/Belgian border.

Relative of present day resident of Risley.

His forename is spelt both ways on documents.

A family memory: "He was one for the ladies"

Also with associations to Risley was:

**JOHN BAGSHAW** born 1879 Risley, died 27.5.1918 age 38.

His memorial is added to the grave of his parents in the churchyard. This lies on the left hand side of the path next to the grave of Walter Pacey.

Born 1879 in the old cottages along the City by Risley Brook.

Christened on 28<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1879 at All Saints, Risley.

Son of James and Rachel (Cannon).

1901 census he is a groom, boarding in Peveril St., Nottingham.

1911 census: Married to Jane Agnes (Beecroft) with daughter Ethel age 5 years and living in Radford.

Listed as a worker for tobacco manufacturers, probably Players.

No. 56045 private in the 1st Battalion Sherwood Foresters.  
Died of wounds 27 5 1918. That day the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was involved in the Battle of the Aisne River, part of the German “Spring Offensive”. He is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial for those with no known grave.

His brother Harry, sister in law Sarah Maria, and niece Victoria Adelaide are also buried in Risley Churchyard.

The story of the Johnstone brothers above shows how some families suffered the loss of more than one son. Further research shows that the following deceased men were brothers of those on Risley’s Memorial.

**EDGAR CECIL BAKER** b 1885 d 19 6 1918 age 32

Older brother of Colin Claude Baker above.

1911 census: A salesman living at home “Hillcrest”, Sandiacre.

No. 1476. Acting sergeant in the Royal Army Pay Corps.

He died of wounds at Queen Mary’s Military Hospital Walley, Lancashire.

Left £402 to his father in his will

Bert Figg had a younger brother **ALFRED FIGG** b 1892 d 8 10 1918

Married to Mary Elizabeth (Oldershaw) in Lenton, Nottingham, with 3 living children in 1916 and one was born after his death.

Attested Stanton 10 12 1915. No. 187923

Enlisted 18 10 1917 Gunner 278th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Killed in action and buried Bournon Wood Cemetery

Sidney Stafford