

Albert Bickle 1887-1918

Private Albert Bickle (M/274278) of 1015th Motor Transport Company of the Army Service Corps was born in Coryton on 15th March 1887 and killed in action in Mesopotamia (Iran) on 20th July 1918 aged 31.

A warehouseman, living in Penge, South East London in 1911, he had enlisted in Harrow, North London.

He was the son of James, a platelayer on the Great Western Railway, and Ann Maria (Tredennick) Bickle of Liddaton Green, Lewdown.

Albert Bickle was the son of James and Ann Maria (Tredennick) Bickle of Liddaton Green, Lewdon, Devon. He was born at Mill Cottage, Coryton on 15th March 1887.

The first census record of the family in 1881 shows them living in a cottage next to the Board School in Lidford. James was 27, having been born in Lewdown in 1853. He was a Railway labourer, living with his wife Ann Maria (21) and their two young sons William (2) and John (1). *(It is possible that Ann Maria was his second wife. A marriage took place between James Bickle and Elizabeth Emma Coles in 1874, though it has been impossible to trace a death record for her pre 1877.)*

In 1891 the family was living at Mill Cottages, Coryton and had grown with the addition of four more sons. James is listed as 36, born in Marystowe and a Railway Packer. Ann M, his wife, was 30 and had been born in Bridestow. Their sons were William (12), John (11), Richard (9), James H (8), Thomas (6) and **Albert** (4). All were born in Coryton.

By 1901 the family had settled in Liddaton. By this time James (46) had become a Platelayer with the GW Railway. Ann M was 40 and they had five of their six sons still living at home. John (21) was a stonemason, Richard (19) an apprentice, Thomas (15) was apprenticed to a wheelwright; **Albert** (14) and Sidney (7) were still at school.

James appears to have remarried in 1906, which may have been when Albert left home. His father, James (55), a platelayer on the railway was living in Liddaton Cottage, Lewdown in the 1911 Census, with Jane (45) his new wife, and youngest son Sidney, now 17 and a grocer's apprentice, and grandson, Sidney John Bickle, aged 5.

In the census of 1911 **Albert**, aged 24, was unmarried, boarding with Thomas and Gertrude Furber in a six roomed house at 10 Kenilworth Road, Penge in South London, a warehouseman in a hosiery warehouse. While there he may have learnt to drive, perhaps delivering to goods to customers from the warehouse.

He joined the Army Service Corps as a Motor Driver. The ASC depot was at Grove Park, only a stone's throw from Penge, though he enlisted at Harrow, Middlesex. He was posted to Mesopotamia and joined 1015th Mechanical Transport Column, which dated from October 1917. This was one of four transport columns, some of which were equipped with new Ford vans. In March 1918 the unit was "en route to Baghdad," while in October their headquarters were said to be in Baghdad.

There is some confusion and mystery over Private Albert Bickle's death. The date is given as Killed in Action in Mesopotamia (Iraq) on 20th July 1918, when he was 31 years old, but his body was never recovered for burial and his name is commemorated not in Iraq, but Iran. It appears that he was either part of the original "Dunsterforce" or among reinforcements sent from Mesopotamia. This force was

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sent to Persia following the Russian Revolution, ostensibly to support the “White Russians” and to help in the fight against the Ottomans, but with an eye to the value of the oilfields in that part of the world. General Dunster reached the Caspian Sea at Enzeli in February, intending to sail to Baku in Azerbaijan, the centre of huge oilfields, but stiff opposition forced him to withdraw to Hamadan to await reinforcements. Albert could have been killed during the journey from Baghdad to the Caspian Sea. He was commemorated on the Reshire (now Bushehr) British Memorial to the Missing in and Beyond Persia on the coast of the Persian Gulf, but in 1962 the 209 British names there were transferred to the Tehran War Cemetery, within the British Embassy compound at Gulhak, about 13 kilometres from Tehran. where he is commemorated on Panel 5, Column 1 of the Tehran Memorial.

The Tehran Memorial commemorates casualties of the Indian, United Kingdom and New Zealand Forces who lost their lives during the campaign in Iran (formerly known as Persia) and who have no known grave. It also commemorates some of those who died in the neighbouring regions of Russia whose graves are unknown or unmaintainable.

The Memorial comprises six free-standing memorial walls, three on each side of the central avenue leading to the Cross of Sacrifice. Between the two groups of memorial walls is a central feature bearing the inscription:

1914 - 1918 1939 - 1945

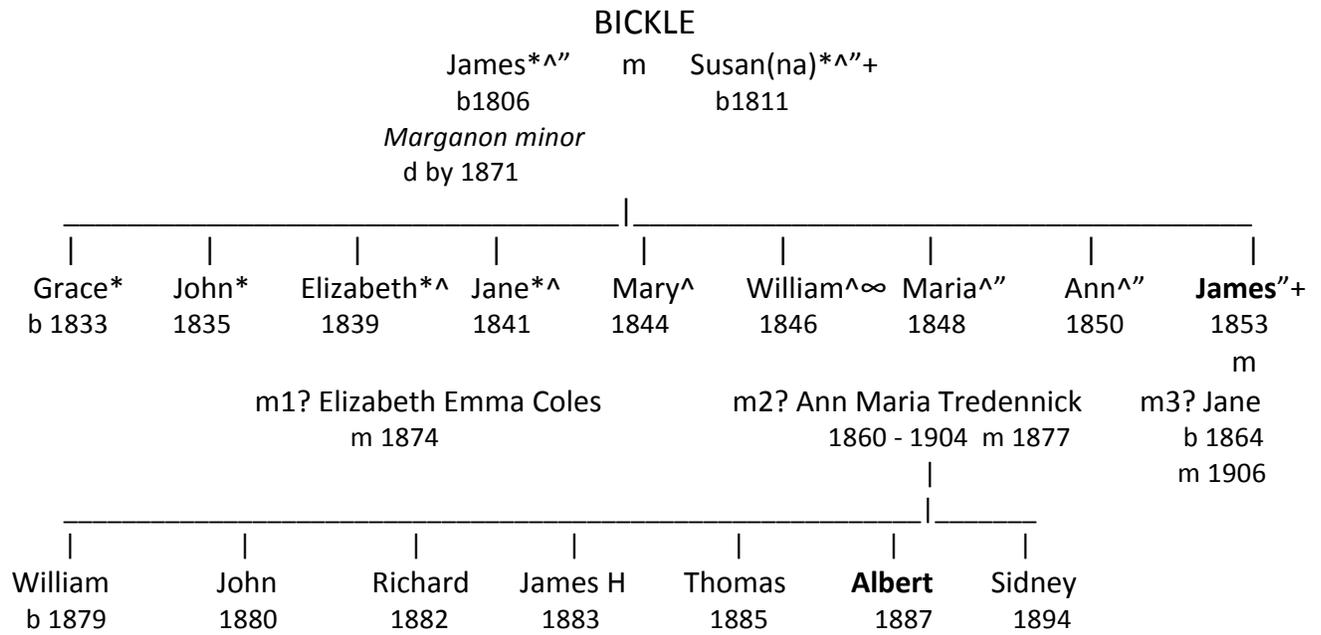
IN THIS CEMETERY ARE THE GRAVES OF FIVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY THREE
COMMONWEALTH SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN AND ONE NURSING SISTER WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES IN IRAN DURING THE TWO WORLD WARS.
THE NAMES OF THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND NINETY OF THEIR COMRADES
WHO DIED IN IRAN AND IN NEIGHBOURING LANDS DURING THE WAR OF 1914 -1918
AND WHO HAVE NO KNOWN GRAVE ARE INSCRIBED ON THESE MONUMENTS

Albert qualified for the British War and Victory medals. He was also owed £19 10s 1d which went to his father. He is listed as the son of James and Maria, rather than James and Ann Maria. Their address was Liddaton Green.

Albert's grandparents can be traced throughout the earlier censuses. Grandfather James was a Marganon miner, born in 1806 and in 1841 was living in Lewdown with his wife, Susan, sometimes called Susanna, born in 1811. At that time they had four children Grace (1833), John (1835), Elizabeth (1839) and Jane (1841). By 1851 James had become an agricultural labourer and Grace and John were no longer living in Holstreet, Marystowe with the family, which had increased with the addition of Mary (1844), William (1846), Maria (1848) and Ann (1850).

James' arrival late in 1853 completed the family, but by the census of 1861 Elizabeth, Jane, Mary and William were not recorded as living at home. Their father was described as a labourer. In 1871 Susanna had been widowed and was living with only her youngest son, James in Holster Yard, Marystow, where she continued to live in 1881, the last census before her death in 1882. Her son William, unmarried 34 and a platelayer on the railway, lived with her at that time.

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[grandson: Sidney John Bickle b 1906]

Census: Lewdown: *1841

Census Marystow: ^1851 "1861 +1871 ∞1881

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Other Bickles, also Bickel and Bickell

The 1841 Census shows John Bickle, born 1801, also a *marganon minor* in the adjacent dwelling to James and Susan in Lewdown.

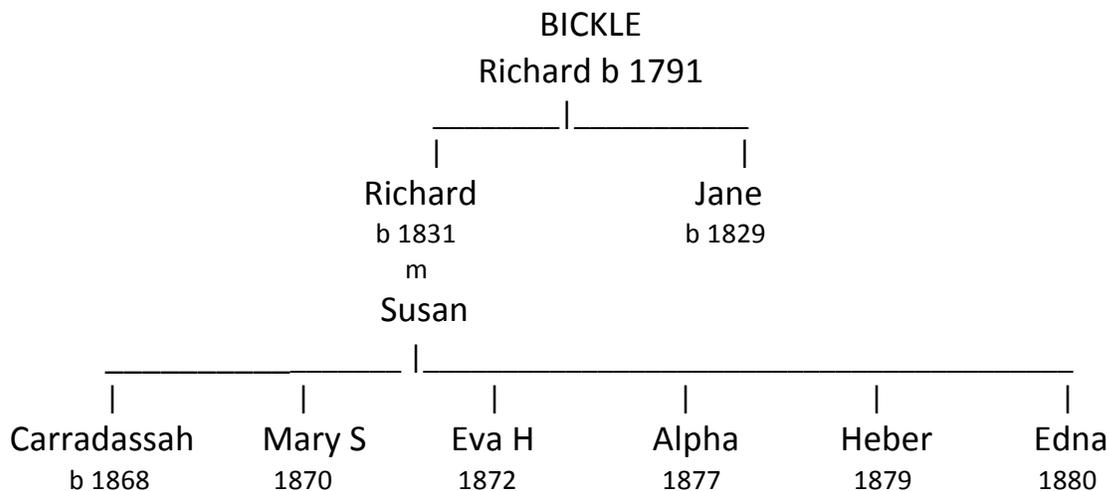
In 1851, next door to James and Susan in Holstreet Marystow, lived Richard Bickle born in 1791 and his unmarried son Richard a carpenter aged 20, his daughter Jane a 22 year old unmarried dressmaker and John Mason aged 66, a pauper agricultural labourer, listed as an unmarried relative. In 1841 Richard snr had been at Moreton Mill in St Dominick, owned by James Blatchford. In 1861 Richard jnr had been an unmarried carpenter of 30 living with Ann Mason a 68 year old relative, a housekeeper born in Bratton Clovelly.

In 1871 when Susan(na) was living with her son and her nephew 7 year old William Rowe, next door in Holster Yard lived young Richard (a carpenter), his wife Susan and daughters, Carradassah and Mary S.

In 1881 they continued to live next door but their family had increased with the addition of Eva H (b1872), Alpha (1877), Heber (1879) and Edna (1880).

By 1891 Susan was widowed and was earning a living as a grocer. Eva was living at home and a dressmaker. Heber and Edna were still at school. Mary was a draper's assistant in Launceston. Alpha had moved to Tavistock and at 14 was a draper's assistant.

By the following Census (1901) Alpha was in Falmouth as a draper's assistant. His older sisters Carrie (dressmaker 32), Mary S (draper's assistant 30) and Eva H (dressmaker 28) were reunited, living together in Western Road, Launceston In 1911 they were living in St Thomas Street Launceston with Carrie and Eva listed as costumiers and Mary a milliner



ALSO LISTED LOCALLY in various census:
George and Susan Bickle Wheelwright of Lydford
Henry Bickle boarder

The 1841 Census, which gives ages of adults to the nearest 5 year mark, lists

Richard	John	James	Henry
a 50	a 40	a 35	a 30