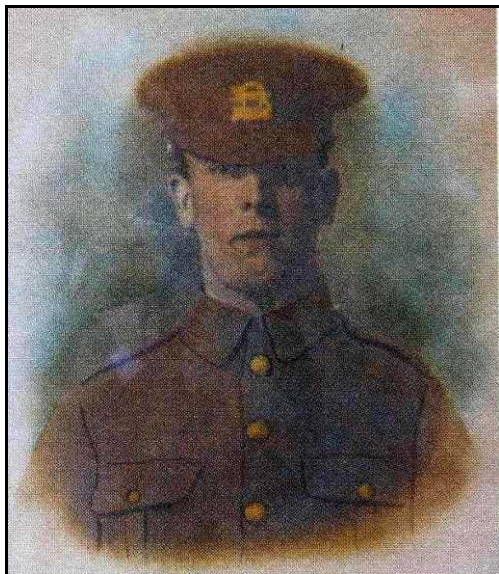


**IN MEMORY OF
15925 LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM BIRD
2nd BATTALION LEICESTERSHIRE REGIMENT
1892 - 25th SEPTEMBER 1915
KILLED IN BATTLE - AGED 23**



THE DUD CORNER CEMETERY



BY SAMUEL T STEWART - OCTOBER 2022



**LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM BIRD IS COMMEMORATED ON
PANEL 42 TO 44**

History information

Dud Corner Cemetery stands almost on the site of a German strong point, the Lens Road Redoubt, captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division on the first day of the battle.

The name "Dud Corner" is believed to be due to the large number of unexploded enemy shells found in the neighbourhood after the Armistice.

The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay, from the first day of the Battle of Loos to the end of the war. On either side of the cemetery is a wall 15 feet high, to which are fixed tablets on which are carved the names of those commemorated. At the back are four small circular courts, open to the sky, in which the lines of tablets are continued, and between these courts are three semicircular walls or apses, two of which carry tablets, while on the centre apse is erected the Cross of Sacrifice.

The memorial was designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Charles Wheeler. It was unveiled by Sir Nevil Macready on 4 August 1930.

The Loos Memorial forms the sides and back of Dud Corner Cemetery. Loos-en-Gohelle is a village 5 kilometres north-west of Lens, and Dud Corner Cemetery is located about 1 kilometre west of the village, to the north-east of the D943, the main Lens to Bethune road.

**COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION
CERTIFICATE INFORMATION**

In Memory Of
LANCE CORPORAL
WILLIAM BIRD

Service Number: 15925
2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment
who died on 25th September 1915, aged 23
Remembered with Honour
LOOS MEMORIAL
Panel 42 to 44



|||||
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
|||||

COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

15925 LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM BIRD BIOGRAPHY

Lance Corporal William Bird was the son of a coal miner William Bird, born in Ashby de la Zouch c.1862 and his wife Sarah, born 1870 in Thringstone. William was the third child of a family of nine children, and in 1901, the Coleorton census shows William as being 8 years of age, and the family living in Rotten Row. This was an area of land within the Parish of Coleorton which was part of the Township of Thringstone till 1884, when it then became part of Coleorton Parish. "Rotten Row" and the "Manor of Thringstone", was purchased by Joseph Boulton senior of Coleorton in 1764 for £1,600 from a Mr. Busby. By 1911, the census shows that the family were living in Elverston's Yard off Stoney Lane, Coleorton, which was part of Rotten Row. William was now 18 and working as a Coal Miner Hewer.

William Bird was one of at least three men who played in the same Pegg's Green Victoria football team which the following newspaper article refers to:-

Transcribed from the Coalville Times - Friday September 15th 1916 PEGG'S GREEN SOLDIER'S DEATH

The death is officially reported to have taken place on August 6th, of Private John William Barkby, of the Leicestershire Regiment, as the result of wounds received in action. He was 21 years of age, and was the son of Mr James Barkby, retired miner, of Lily Cottages, Pegg's Green, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Before the war, he worked at the Coleorton Colliery, and resided with his parents. He enlisted in May, 1915, and had been about six months in France. A letter from a chaplain states that he has been buried in an English cemetery behind the firing line.

The deceased soldier was formerly a popular member of the Pegg's Green Victoria Football Club, being their left half-back. It is interesting to note that members of this club have done splendidly for their King and country. Of the eleven which won the Coalville League cup the two seasons prior to the war. In addition to Barkby having lost his life, the captain, Harold Curtis and W. Bird are reported missing. Another player, Driver Hy. Challoner, of the R.F.A. has been "out there" since the commencement of the war, and Private W. Holt, R.A.M.C., and Private W. Wilton, are also serving – a total of six from the football team of eleven.

William Bird enlisted for 1st World War duty at Coalville on the 10th of November 1914 by which time he had only just signed for Whitwick Imperial football club from Pegg's Green Victoria. He was initially posted to the 10th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and then to the 3rd during his training in the UK. He was sent to France with the British Expeditionary Force on the 19th of March 1915 and around this time he joined the 2nd Battalion which had hastily been recalled from India to France. The 2nd Battalion, commanded by Charles Blackader, landed at Marseille as part of the Garhwal Brigade in the 7th (Meerut) Division in September 1914 also for service on the Western Front. The Battalion saw action at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on the 10th to 15th of March 1915, but Lance Corporal William Bird would not have been involved in this. By the end of May, William Bird had risen to the rank of Lance Corporal and would have been responsible for his own unit of men.

By September 25th 1915, the 2nd Battalion were in action at the "Battle of Loos". Sadly, Lance Corporal William Bird was killed on the first day of this conflict when the British suffered heavy losses in their attack on Moulin de Pietre. [The War Diary for the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment](#), records that on the day Lance Corporal

William Bird was killed, there was an advance on the German Lines in which, excluding officers, 72 men were killed and 96 were missing.

William's name is on the Loos Memorial at the "Dud Corner Cemetery" which commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, and who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay, from the first day of the Battle of Loos to the end of the war.

The following is taken from Wikipedia and the author cannot therefore guarantee the accuracy of the information. Bibliography is provided on their website.

The **Battle of Loos** took place from 25 September to 8 October 1915 in France on the Western Front, during the First World War. It was the biggest British attack of 1915, and the first time that the British used poison gas and the first mass engagement of New Army units. The French and British tried to break through the German defences in Artois and Champagne and restore a war of movement. Despite improved methods, more ammunition and better equipment, the Franco-British attacks were largely contained by the Germans, except for local losses of ground. The British gas attack failed to neutralize the defenders and the artillery bombardment was too short to destroy the barbed wire or machine gun nests. German tactical defensive proficiency was still dramatically superior to the British offensive planning and doctrine, resulting in a British defeat.



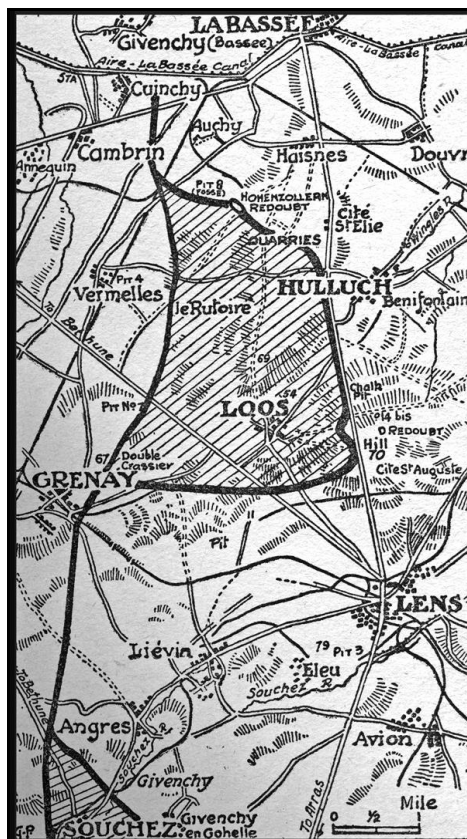
**REPORTED TO BE A PHOTOGRAPH OF A GAS ATTACK
DURING THE BATTLE OF LOOS**

In many places British artillery had failed to cut the German wire before the attack. The engineers manning the poison gas cylinders warned against their use, because of the weakness and unpredictability of the wind but they were overruled by General Sir Hubert Gough. In some places the gas drifted back into the British lines and caused more British than German casualties. Advancing over open fields, within range of German machine guns and artillery, the British infantry suffered many

casualties. The British were able to break through the weaker German defences and capture the village of Loos-en-Gohelle, mainly due to numerical superiority. Supply and communications problems, combined with the late arrival of reserves, meant that the breakthrough could not be exploited. Haig did not hear until 10:00 a.m. that the divisions were moving up to the front. French visited Haig from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. and agreed that Haig could have the reserve but rather than using the telephone he drove to Haking's headquarters and gave the order at 12:10 p.m. Haig then heard from Haking at 1:20 p.m. that the reserves were moving forward. French had not understood the poorness of the roads these reserves would be using and had not constructed new ones. Much of the reserves divisions had to march most of the day and night single file up the only accessible roads.

26–28 September

When the battle resumed the following day, the Germans had recovered and improved their defensive positions. Much of the barbed wire, in some places 30 ft (9.1 m) deep, remained uncut and the British had used their stock of chlorine gas. British attempts to continue the advance with the reserves were repulsed. Twelve attacking battalions suffered 8,000 casualties out of 10,000 men in four hours. The British preparatory bombardment, which amounted to desultory fire for about twenty minutes apparently inflicted no casualties. **German machine gunners reported being "nauseated" from the sight of so many corpses and ceased firing so that the British could retreat with their wounded.** French told Foch on 28 September, that a gap could be "rushed" just north of Hill 70, although Foch felt that this would be difficult to co-ordinate and Haig told him that the First Army was in no position for further attacks. A lull fell on 28 September, with the British back on their starting positions, having suffered more than 20,000 casualties, including three major-generals.





The Great War Memorial Brass plaque in St. George's Church Swannington which features the name of William Bird along with Harold Curtis and John William Barkby who also lost their lives and played with William Bird in Pegg's Green Victoria football team.

IN ABIDING

MEMORY OF THE MEN OF THIS

PARISH, WHITWICK ST. GEORGE

WITH SWANNINGTON WHO LAID DOWN

THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR 1914 -1918

COMMEMORATIVE STONE RECORDS

<u>LOOS MEMORIAL.</u>		
STONE No. 42. B.		
SECOND LIEUT. Alloway H. G. Barker J. E. Emmerson J. Hatter E. Mogridge B. F. W. O'Callaghan T. F. Plummer J. S. Russell G. E. F. Scholes W. P. Walters F. W. Wilkinson E. A. Wilkinson W. J. Woodburn C. G. COY. SGT. MAJOR Bird F. Sanders J. H. SERGEANT Allen F. H.	Freeman E. Glover J. Green W. J. Hunt W. H. Lancashire W. E. Lander W. C. Paul T. Scott T. E. Squires T. W. Turner B. G. Watson E. LCE CORPORAL Abels P. Allen S. W. Barnes H. Barrett W. A. Bartlett A. Bird W. Bloxham C. W. Brodribb A. F. Broughton W.	Warren S. W. Wells F. P. Wells H. Wheatley H. G. Wilson A. PRIVATE Abbott J. Adcock E. W. Adnitt A. Allen A. Allen F. Allen G. F. Allen H. Allsop G. F. Allum H. Ashbourne S. Bacon J. Baddeley H. Baguley G. H. Bailey A. W. Barnes F.
(Typed 15.5.1928).		

**LOOS MEMORIAL - NAMES ON COMMEMORATIVE STONE 42B INCLUDING
LANCE CORPORAL BIRD**

INDEX No. M.R.19 BIRD, Serjt. Charles Harry, 2517. 1st/4th Bn.
LOOS Leicestershire Regt. 13th Oct., 1915. Age 24.
MEMORIAL Son of Charles Ingram Bird and Mary Jane Bird,
PART ONE of 76, Rendell Rd., Leicester.

BIRD, C.S.M. Frederick, 2069. 1st/4th Bn.
Leicestershire Regt. 13th Oct., 1915. Husband of
Annie Buswell (formerly Bird), of 3, Court,
Sanveygate, Leicester.

BIRD, Pte. Henry, 5365. 12th Bn. Northumber-
land Fusiliers. 25th Sept., 1915.

BIRD, Serjt. Herbert H., 267166. 2nd/6th Bn.
Gloucestershire Regt. 19th July, 1916. Age 30.
Son of Edward and Elizabeth Bird, of Station Rd.,
Ditchingham, Norfolk.

BIRD, Lce. Serjt. James, 3978. 12th Bn. Royal
Scots. 25th Sept., 1915.

BIRD, Pte. Reginald Birch, 4549. 1st/19th Bn.
London Regt. 31st Oct., 1915. Age 32. Husband
of A. K. Bird, of 2, Waterloo Rd., Ellacombe,
Torquay, Devon.

BIRD, Lce. Cpl. Sidney, 8170. 1st Bn. Royal
Berkshire Regt. 28th Sept., 1915. Age 26.
Son of Edward and Elizabeth Bird, of 8, Mount
Pleasant, Beenham, Reading.

BIRD, Pte. Sidney, 351103. 15th Bn. Essex Regt.
21st Sept., 1918.

BIRD, Pte. Thomas, 15435. 13th Bn. Royal Scots.
11th May, 1916. Age 21. Son of Mrs. Janet F.
Bird, of 29, Mid St., Mossend, West Calder,
Midlothian.

BIRD, Pte. Thomas, 15726. 10th Bn. Cheshire
Regt. 26th April, 1916. Age 33. Husband
of Elizabeth Wilson (formerly Bird), of 108,
Robinson St., Stalybridge.

BIRD, Lce. Cpl. Thomas, 14139. 10th Bn.
The Cameronians (Sco. Rif.). 25th Sept., 1915.
Age 28. Son of James and Elizabeth Bird, of
Blawearie, Longniddry, Edinburgh.

BIRD, Cpl. William, 11498. 6th Bn. Wiltshire
Regt. 25th Sept., 1915. Age 21. Son of Charles
Henry and Margaret Louisa Bird, of 159, Lord St.,
Hoddesdon, Herts.

BIRD, Pte. William, 19768. 1st Bn. Grenadier
Guards. 17th Nov., 1915.

BIRD, Pte. William, 13788. 8th Bn. King's Own
Scottish Borderers. 25th Sept., 1915. Age 21.
Son of the late Henry Bird and of Eliza Howard
(formerly Bird, stepmother), of 1, Stamford Yard,
Stamford St., Warrington.

BIRD, Lce. Cpl. William, 15925. 2nd Bn.
Leicestershire Regt. 25th Sept., 1915. Age 23.
Son of William and Sarah Bird, of Elversins Yard,
Coleorton, Leicester.

BIRD, Cpl. William Henry, 203128. 1st/4th Bn.
York and Lancaster Regt. 12th June, 1917.

BIRKETT, Rfn. Thomas, 203135. 1st/5th Bn.
The King's Liverpool Regt. 18th Sept., 1918.
Age 29. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Birkett, of
76, Scot Lane, Newtown, Wigan; husband of
Mary Ann Birkett.

BIRKETT, Serjt. William, 8858. "A" Coy.
2nd Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers. 1st Oct., 1915.
Age 27. Son of Mrs. Mary Birkett, of 27,
Frederick St., Walsall, Staffs.

BIRMINGHAM, Pte. James, 202968. 4th Bn.
Seaforth Highlanders. 9th April, 1918. Age 17.
Son of James Birmingham, of 26, West Hender-
son's Wynd, Dundee, and the late Catherine
McPhillips Birmingham.

BIRNIE, Pte. Alexander, S/14335. "C" Coy.
7th Bn. Cameron Highlanders. 6th May, 1916.
Age 24. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Birnie, of
72, Longate, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire.

BIRRELL, Lce. Cpl. Henry, S/3528. 8th Bn.
Seaforth Highlanders. 25th Sept., 1915.

BIRRELL, Lce. Cpl. William, S/2502. 7th Bn.
Seaforth Highlanders. 25th Sept., 1915.

BIRT, Pte. Reginald Arthur, 2110. 1st Bn.
P.W.O. Civil Service Rifles. 19th Dec., 1915.

BIRTLES, Pte. Samuel, 11035. 2nd Bn. Cheshire
Regt. 3rd Oct., 1915.

BISH, Drmr. Frederick Charles, 356. 1st/20th
Bn. London Regt. 25th Sept., 1915. Age 22. Son
of Jesse Francis and Elizabeth Louisa Bish, of 86,
Raglan Rd., Plumstead, London.

BISHOP, Pte. Alexander, G/3380. 9th Bn.
Royal Sussex Regt. 25th Sept., 1915. Age 25.
Son of Thomas and Hannah Bishop, of Coombes
Farm, Dallington, Sussex.