

EXETER FOOTBALL CLUB  
(RUGBY UNION)



THE SECOND WORLD WAR ROLL OF HONOUR





## **Lieutenant William George Cann**

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Devonshire Regiment

Died 14 December 1944 Age 34

Died from typhus at Imphal, India



Bill Cann joined Exeter at the start of the 1928-9 season making an immediate impression as a free scoring wing-three quarter. He became an automatic selection for five seasons. He played his last match at the start of 1934-5 season. In March 1929 he scored four tries in a match against Tiverton and during the 1930-1 season he scored at least 27 tries including hat-tricks on four occasions.



## **Lieutenant Edwin Harry Coombe**

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Devonshire Regiment

Died 20 November 1944 Age 26

Died in Burma



Lieut. E.H. Coombe Memorial Window, St Thomas of Canterbury Church at Thorverton

Edwin Harry Coombe was a native of Thorverton. He made his debut for Exeter in December 1938. He proved to be a highly promising forward in the second half of the last season before the outbreak of war. He made his last appearance for the club in January 1940.



### **Captain Peter Alexander Davis**

Devonshire Regiment attached 2<sup>nd</sup> (Airborne) Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment

Died 9 July 1943 Age 26

Killed in action, Italy

Educated at Hele's School and Oxford University, Peter Davis made his debut in January 1938 and appeared several times as a scrum-half for the First XV when on vacation during the last two seasons before war.



## **Lieutenant Gavin Heriot Galbraith**

275 Field Company Royal Engineers

Died 11 August 1944 Age 21

Killed in action in Normandy



Played for Brighton College 1<sup>st</sup> XV between 1940 and 1942. No further details known.



## **Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Capel Gostling**

Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada

Died 19 August 1942 Age 39

Killed in action at Dieppe



After attending Heles School, Alfred Gostling Joined Exeter from the Exeter Oaks club and played for the Reserves XV between seasons 1920-1 and 1923-4. He immigrated to Canada and became a Canadian citizen.



### **Major Frederick James Job**

Devonshire Regiment attached Gloucestershire Regiment

Died 6 February 1944 Age 34

Killed in action in Italy



Fred Job made his debut for Exeter in November 1934 and soon became an automatic selection as a wing three-quarter. He proved to be a very popular captain of Exeter for the last season before war broke out. During that season he registered at least 22 tries including a hat-trick against Saracens in the last peace-time fixture. He also represented Devon in the 1936-7 season.



## **Major Peter Henry Lawless M.C.**

Daily Telegraph War Correspondent attached United States First Army

Died 9 March 1945 Age 54

Died from shrapnel wounds received at the Remagen bridgehead



Although born in London, Peter Lawless came from an Exeter family. His grand-father had played for Exeter during the club's early years. He first appeared in Exeter colours in October 1911 and played a handful of games the following season. It is recorded that he led the team on Exeter's first venture to play in France in 1912.

At the end of the First World War, during which he was awarded the Military Cross, Peter Lawless was selected to play for the Mother Country team that faced forces teams representing New Zealand, South Africa and Canada in a rugby tournament in 1919.



He was elected captain of the Richmond club for two seasons 1922-3 and 1923-4. Standing six feet one inch tall and weighing seventeen stone he was literally an outstanding forward of his generation. He also represented Middlesex, Surrey, Devon, the Army and the Barbarians.

He also wrote a book entitled "Rugger's An Attacking Game" which was published posthumously in 1946



### **Flight Sergeant William Milford McGrath**

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 217 Squadron

Died 09 October 1942 Age 22

Killed when SS Laconia was sunk by U-156 in the Mediterranean.

Attended Heles School. No further details known.



### **Captain Charles Marten Osman**

General List

Died 24 July 1940 Age 28

Burned and badly injured by shell-fire on the beach at Dunkirk.

Died of his injuries in Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup.

Educated at Hele's School, where he was captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI cricket and 1<sup>st</sup> XV rugby, and Oxford University, Charles Osman joined the staff at Oundle School.



Charles Osman made his debut for Exeter during September 1934 playing as a centre three-quarter. He made half a dozen or so appearances for the club when on vacation from university.



### **Major George Tristram Palmer**

12<sup>th</sup> (Airborne) Battalion Devonshire Regiment

Died 16 July 1944 Age 29

Killed in action at Normandy



A native of East Budleigh, George Palmer first appeared in Exeter colours during the 1931-2 season. From 1933-4 until the outbreak of war he was a regular selection as a second-row forward.





### **Warrant Officer Class II Albert John Raddon**

153 Battery Royal Artillery

Died 28 February 1943 Age 25

Buried Medjez el Bab, Tunisia

Attended Heles School. No further details known.



### **Major Henry Rew**

7<sup>th</sup> Royal Tank Regiment R.A.C.

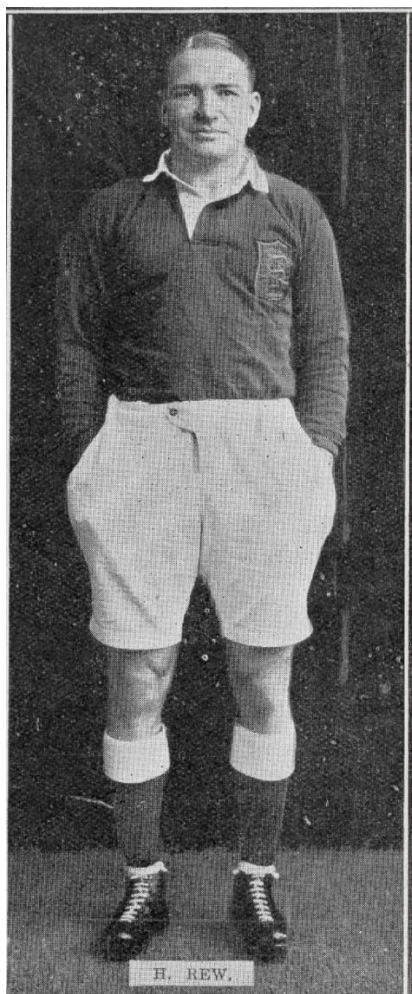
Died 11 November 1940 Age 34

Killed at Nibeiwa Fort, North Africa



Henry Rew's family resided in Woodwater Lane, Exeter. He attended Exeter School and made his debut for the Exeter club in January 1934 whilst still at school. He became an automatic choice as a front row forward. In his early days he was also noted for his long range goal kicking. He played regularly until 1928-9 when he joined the Royal Tank Regiment. He continued to make occasional vacation appearances for Exeter until January 1934.

He was a regular selection for Devon and, as one of the leading front row forwards of his day, he was capped by England on ten occasions between 1929 and 1934. He also appeared in the representative Army XV, the Barbarians and for Blackheath.



Henry Rew was selected to play for the 1930 British Isles party that toured New Zealand and Australia. He played in all four tests against New Zealand but was injured for the second leg of the tour in Australia.



**M.S. Smith**

This name appears on the original club memorial but no further details have been discovered.



## Associated players



### **Captain Caleb Greenwood Penny**

Royal Army Medical Corps 69 Field Ambulance

Died 17 March 1944 Age 31

Killed in action in Burma

From a Cornish family, Caleb Penny was educated at Exeter School, where he was a regular member of the rugby XV, before spending a year studying medicine at the University College of the South West. He continued his studies at St. George's Hospital in London where he captained the rugby XV. He also appeared for Rosslyn Park. He took up an appointment at Exminster Hospital and it is reported that he assisted Exeter when the opportunity occurred.



### **Fusilier Jack Albert George Pannell**

2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers transferred from 1<sup>st</sup> Devonshire Regiment

Died 21 November 1943 Age 30

Killed in action at Moro River

Jack Pannell was a regular member of the Exmouth senior team who also achieved selection for Devon. During the first two war time seasons he played in games on the County Ground for Exeter.

