

In Memory Of  
Chaplain 4th Class

# THE REV. GEORGE SOUTHEY PARDOE

Army Chaplains' Department who died on 15 October 1918 Age 41

Son of George Owen Pardoe, and Letitia Pardoe, of Shropshire; husband of Gertrude Pardoe, of Southoote, Baldock, Herts.

THE STRIFE IS OVER THE BATTLE DONE ALLELUIA

Remembered with Honour

JERUSALEM WAR CEMETERY

R. 108.



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

COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH  
WARGRAVES COMMISSION

## **Revd. George Southey Pardoe – Army Chaplain 4<sup>th</sup> Class**

In a report for News at Ten broadcast on November 4<sup>th</sup> 2018 the BBC's disgraced Religious Correspondent, Martin Bashir, said that every First World War serviceman received a blessing from a Chaplain and was issued with a helmet, a rifle and a Bible. I'd like to honour the life and example of Reverend George Southey Pardoe, who served as an Army Chaplain 4<sup>th</sup> Class and is remembered on our parish war memorial.

It is not clear whether George ever lived in Nash or Boraston - I suspect not, because his name doesn't appear in any local Census records or voter lists - although his family's connection with the parish goes back hundreds of years. Nash Court was built by one of his ancestors, another George Pardoe, in the 1770s; and his aunt, Anna Maria Pardoe, spent much of her life here. She is listed on the 1891 Census as a 36 year old unmarried lady living with her parents at Dean Side, Boraston, although when the 1901 Census was taken she was living with her widowed mother in Dorset.

In 1911, when the next Census was taken, Anna Maria was back in Nash and Boraston living at "Nash Cottage, Tenbury" with George's younger brother, Francis Sneade Pardoe, a 29 year old tutor, and a housekeeper. I'm not sure exactly where Nash Cottage was - but given that Miss Georgina Pardoe of The Nest (which was then a pair of cottages; now Harley House, Nash) signed the Census cover sheet as head of the household, it seems likely that Georgina lived in one half, with Anna Maria and Francis in the other. Francis volunteered early in the War and by the time he married Esme Sykes at Morrow in Surrey on November 20<sup>th</sup> 1915, he was a Lieutenant in the Royal Irish Rifles based at Bordon in Hampshire, where he completed his basic training before going to the Western Front.

In World War One, over 5,000 men of God - including George Southey Pardoe - left their pulpits to serve alongside the soldiers. Clergymen were exempt from conscription, so they all volunteered to serve in the Royal Army Chaplains Department. According to Army Regulations, their only orders were to continue the church's traditions of conducting services and burying the dead, and at the start of the War they were instructed to stay back from the front line. Most chaplains were totally unprepared for what they were about to experience. They could be posted almost anywhere in the world, and their work ranged from serving alongside soldiers in France to ministering to the wounded on hospital ships in the Arabian Sea. In August 1914 there were only 117 commissioned Chaplains representing 3 denominations, but by the end of the War more than 5,000 temporary commissions had been granted to clergymen from 11 different denominations.

As time went on, more and more chaplains chose to serve in the field alongside the battalions they were attached to - and during World War One, 168 of them (including George) lost their lives, 3 were awarded the Victoria Cross and 250 were awarded the Military Cross. Their service alongside the men changed the way Army commanders and ordinary soldiers thought about their padre, which set the tone for the development of a modern "fit for purpose" Army Chaplaincy in subsequent years.

Reverend George Southey Pardoe was born at Hyssington near Churchstoke in Shropshire in 1877, the eldest son of the Rector, Reverend George Owen Pardoe, and his wife, Letitia. George's mother was born in India and came from a colonial family, which may explain why the family doesn't appear on the 1891 Census. We know that at the time, 14 year old

George was being educated at St Andrews College in Grahamstown, South Africa - and that the family have longstanding connections with the Eastern Cape.

Sometime during the 1890s, George's father became Rector of Hinton near Christchurch in Hampshire, and by 1901 the whole family including George, aged 23, his younger brother, Francis Sneade Pardoe, and sister, Fanny, were living there with a gardener and a number of servants. George graduated from University College Oxford and was ordained in 1904, taking up a position as Clerk in Holy Orders at Acton in London. The following year he married Gertrude Edwards at All Saints Church in Finchley, and in 1908 they moved north to Muncaster on the Cumbrian coast, where he is listed as Incumbent right up to the time of his death in 1918.

The 1911 Census confirms that Reverend George Southey Pardoe and his wife had no children and shows that their life in Muncaster was comfortable because they could afford to employ 3 servants. It is probably thanks to George's aunt, Anna Maria, and his brother, Francis Sneade Pardoe, that he is remembered on our War Memorial as well as the one in Muncaster. Francis, who survived the War, loved his home at Nash Cottage so much that he named his post-war residence in South Africa after it.

Reverend George Southey Pardoe enlisted as an Army Chaplain 4<sup>th</sup> Class on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1917 and served in Egypt and Palestine. At the age of 39 he swapped the comfort of his parish at Muncaster for life on the front line, probably because his brother was already serving with the Royal Irish Rifles. George died from a cerebral haemorrhage aged 41 on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1918 at the 74<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station near Jerusalem.

## RAMALLAH. 74 CASUALTY CLEARING STATION SHOWING VIEW OF CAMP FROM NABLUS ROAD.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H00687

His death was probably brought on by stress and over-work, and he is buried in Plot R108 at Jerusalem War Cemetery 4.5 kilometres north of the old walled city of Jerusalem on a neck of land at the north end of the Mount of Olives.

The 74<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing station began life in July 1917, after the Egyptian Expeditionary Force landed in Egypt and began operations in Palestine. It followed the line of battle as the EEF pushed north across the area we now know as the Gaza Strip, southern Israel and the West Bank. As you can see from the photo on the preceding page, which was taken in August 1918, CCS 74 was a tented camp which at the time was situated on the Nablus Road near Ramallah. It moved several times, because we know that in 1917 it was located with a 3 other Casualty Clearing Stations at the head of a railway built by the EEF to bring in supplies and evacuate the wounded.

The Jerusalem War Cemetery was begun with 270 burials when the Egyptian Expeditionary Force first occupied the city on December 11<sup>th</sup> 1917. Fighting continued in Palestine until the end of the War, and the cemetery was later enlarged and consolidated when burials were brought in from the surrounding battlefields and 7 smaller cemeteries in the neighbourhood, including Jericho Military Cemeteries 1 and 2, Jerusalem Protestant Cemetery and Limber Hill Military Cemetery. It now the final resting place for 2,515 British and Commonwealth servicemen and women from the First World War, and it contains the Jerusalem Memorial, which commemorates a further 3,300 soldiers with no known grave.

Thinking about the environment George found himself in, Katy Prickett talks about the War service of another chaplain, Revd. Samuel Leighton Green, in her article "For liberty and righteousness: A chaplain at war", which was published on the BBC News website on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Leighton Green was a Curate from Norwich who, like George Pardoe, volunteered at a time when the chaplain's role was changing. This unassuming man, "who was criticised by his interviewing officer Chaplain-General Bishop John Taylor for his "very mincing manner", was gassed, injured, suffered trench fever and trench foot, and would be awarded two Military Crosses for his bravery".

Although Revd. Leighton Green served on the Western Front, arriving in March 1916 aged 33, his experience of life in the field alongside the men would have been similar to George's. He sent back regular contributions to his monthly parish magazine which give us an insight into daily life for a Chaplain on the front line. Picking out one example from Easter Sunday 1917, when Leighton Green was injured on the first day of the Battle of Arras, he describes watching "wave after wave of our men" going over the top, and he goes on to recall that "presently the machine guns of the enemy began to open fire and one could see gaps here and there in the wave, but still they pressed on". Later that same day, he describes conducting a mass burial for the men who died.

In another piece written by BBC Correspondent, Hugh Pym, for the BBC iWonder website, Hugh talks about the role chaplains played in burying the dead, which was crucial for the morale of the survivors. Chaplains had to search horribly mutilated bodies to find their ID and record the names of the fallen. Every second spent on the battlefield was dangerous, and the number of burials they had to conduct – sometimes up to 40 a day during a big push - meant they often conducted the shortest of services. One example is this simple prayer, which was recited quickly in the field by Reverend Ernest Crosse: "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours".

After the War, it was another army chaplain who helped the whole nation to grieve. Reverend David Railton had the original idea of burying the remains of an unidentified soldier from the Western Front in Westminster Abbey. The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior was intended as a place where grieving families, especially those with loved ones who had no known grave, could find solace – and in the 100 years since the end of the First World War, it has become a symbol of remembrance for all military conflicts.

*Bobbie Matulja*

*16<sup>th</sup> November 2021*

### Sources

- Ancestry.com – Military service records and Census information
- Wikipedia – Information about the Egypt Expeditionary Force and a timeline for the War in Palestine
- The Commonwealth War Graves website (cwgc.org) – CWG Certificate for Revd George Southey Pardoe and information about the Jerusalem War Cemetery, 74<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station and the capture of Jerusalem in December 1917
- Report by Martin Bashir on BBC News at Ten about the way the Bible was used during the First World War, which aired on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- WW1cemeteries.com – Information about the 74<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station
- Michael Snape (2011). Church of England Army Chaplains in the First World War: Goodbye to 'Goodbye to All That'. The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 62, pp 318-345 doi:10.1017/S0022046909991394.
- BBC iWonder : “Why did chaplains end up on the front line in WW1?” by Hugh Pym.
- “For liberty and righteousness’: A chaplain at war” by Katy Prickett, BBC Regional News – Norfolk ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk), 26<sup>th</sup> December 2016).
- Australian War Memorial website (awm.gov.au) – Photograph of the 74<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at Ramallah

# Plan of Jerusalem War Cemetery

