

2nd Lieutenant Robert Trerise[©]

Regimental number: —

237th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

born: 1895 - died: 13 June 1918

Second Lieutenant Robert Trerise was born in 1895 in Redruth, Cornwall,¹ the son of John and Ellen Trerise of St. Stythians, Cornwall.² John (born in about 1859 in Gwennap, Cornwall)³ and Ellen (nee Andrew) (born in about 1861 in Stithians, near Redruth)⁴ married on 26 December 1883 in the parish church of St. Stythians. Interestingly, the following year, John's younger brother, William (born about 1861),⁵ married Ellen's younger sister, Kate (born in about 1863),⁶ in Redruth.⁷

John and Ellen had ten children, seven of whom were still living in 1911.⁸ The eight children who have been identified are: William John (born in 1885),⁹ Percy (born in 1886),¹⁰ Jacob Ernest (born on 5 August 1887),¹¹ Winifred (born in 1890, but died in 1892),¹² Ellen, also known as Ella (born on 25 April 1894),¹³ Robert, Reginald (born on 4 February 1897)¹⁴ and Frank (born on 11 November 1899).¹⁵ It is not certain who the other two children were.

Robert's father was a tin miner and, in 1901, the family was living at Tresevern in Stithians.¹⁶ Robert obviously had a good voice because in September 1907, when he was just 12, he participated as a soloist in a concert at Stythians Wesley School. He sang "The Cradle Song" and (perhaps foreseeing his own future) "The Dying Child." His sister, Ella, accompanied him and the other singers on organ.¹⁷

The following year his father died, at the age of 47.¹⁸ Three years later, his widow was living at Trembroath Street, Stithians, with four of her children. At 15, Robert was an apprentice to a stonemason.¹⁹ He also continued to sing publicly to benefit a number of organizations. At the beginning of the Great War, he contributed to a concert to benefit the Belgian Relief Fund, at which he sang "Queen of the Angels" and a duet, "While Old Time," in Portkellis Wesleyan Church.²⁰ The following month, he sang "Queen of the Angels" again at Stythians Methodist Church in a concert to benefit the Royal Cornwall Infirmary and the Male Choir Funds.²¹

Robert enlisted as a bombardier in the Royal Garrison Artillery and went to France on 3 October 1916.²² Less than two years later, he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his back and abdomen. He died the same day, 13 June 1918, and was buried two days later in Pernes Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row A, Grave No. 26), with the Canadian chaplain R. K. Lambert presiding.²³

His mother, who was living on East Road in Stithians, was his next of kin and the chaplain wrote to inform her of his death.²⁴ She had the following inscription put on his gravestone:

SHORT LIFE HE LIVED
GOD SAW HIM FIT
FOR HEAVEN
WHEN DOING HIS BIT²⁵

In June 1918, over 4,000 soldiers were admitted to No. 1 CCCS.²⁶ There were 82 deaths that month. The Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCS came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.²⁷

Some of the money owing to Robert from the army upon his death was apparently to go to Cox & Co.²⁸ This may have been the eponymous company of iron workers and ship builders that had been operating in Falmouth, Cornwall, since 1878.²⁹ Perhaps Robert worked for this company before he enlisted.

Robert was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).³⁰

Robert is remembered on the war memorial in Stithians and possibly also on the Royal Regiment of Artillery Memorial in London.³¹

Robert's mother and all but one of his surviving siblings immigrated to North America; however, not all of them stayed.

Only his eldest brother, **William**, a tin miner, remained in England. He had probably married Minnie Climo in 1908³² and he and his wife were living at Crelow New Road in Stythians in 1911.³³ He died in 1927.³⁴

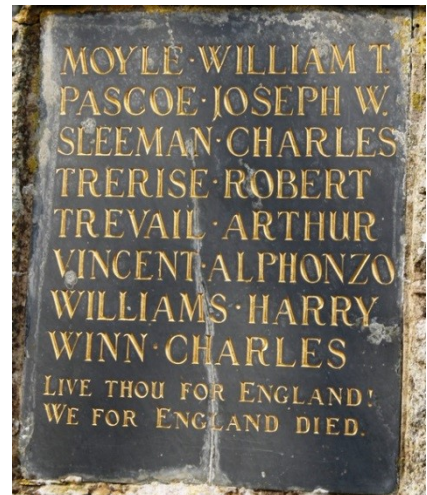
Percy probably immigrated to Canada in 1905 and, in 1911, was a lodger in the home of Mary Hogue at 1042 Dana Street in Vancouver. Three years later, on 22 July 1914, he married her daughter, Violet Irene May, in Vancouver.³⁵ In 1951, they returned to England,³⁶ probably for a visit, because Percy died in Vancouver in 1965.³⁷

Jacob immigrated to North America, going first to Vancouver, Canada, and then to Los Angeles, California, in 1909.³⁸ His wife, Frances E. (née Meyer) was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 20 June 1889.³⁹ He completed a draft card for the Great War in 1917, but he may not have served, as he was disabled in one eye. He was working for Llewellyn Iron Works in Torrance, California, and living at 4429³/₄ Staunton Avenue, Los Angeles, at the time.⁴⁰ In 1930, Jacob and his wife were living at 3373 Hope Street, Huntington Park, Los Angeles, but by 1940 Jacob, who was then a pipe fitter for an oil company, was again living at 4429³/₄ Staunton Avenue, Los Angeles. When he registered for the WWII draft, he was working for the California Sanitary Canning Company in Los Angeles. Frances died on 26 May 1949⁴¹ and Jacob on 28 May 1958.⁴²

Ella married Albert Dunstan (born on 21 July 1894 in Stithians)⁴³ and moved to the United States in 1923.

Her husband Albert, a carpenter, and his brother Edward⁴⁴ had immigrated to the United States before her. During the Great War, they sailed from Liverpool to New York, arriving on 14 October 1915.⁴⁵ When he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in January 1918, he was living at 1311 Fairview Street in Flint, Michigan.⁴⁶ He went to England in August 1918 and joined the Front in France on 9 November 1918—two days before the end of the war. On 21 April 1919, he was given permission to marry and four days later he began 10 days leave in England. On 14 May 1919, he married Ella in Redruth.⁴⁷

In June 1919, Albert elected to be discharged from the CEF in England and was living at Martin's Terrace in Stythians. Four years later he moved to Canada, looking for work.⁴⁸ He arrived in May 1923 and, although he indicated that he intended to stay in Canada, four months later he crossed



Stithians War Memorial

Source: *Cornwall's War History Remembered* (with permission)

into the United States from Windsor, Ontario. He arrived in Detroit, Michigan on 2 September 1923⁴⁹ and moved to 4422 Morgan Avenue, Los Angeles.⁵⁰ At the time, his wife Ella was still in Stithians. Ella immigrated to the United States later that year, sailing from Southampton to New York with her brother Reginald and his family and her mother. She arrived in New York on 2 November 1923.⁵¹

Albert and Ella had a son, John R., born on 29 August 1927 in Los Angeles.⁵² In 1940, Albert, Ella and their son were living at 3252½ Broadway in San Antonio, Los Angeles.⁵³ Albert died in 1980⁵⁴ and Ella in 1984.⁵⁵

Reginald, a miner, married Dorothy Cock in 1921 in Redruth⁵⁶ and their son, Robert C., was born there later that year⁵⁷ on 21 August 1921.⁵⁸ The family immigrated to the United States with Reginald's mother and sister in 1923. They sailed from Southampton, arrived in New York on 2 November 1923 and settled in California.⁵⁹ Their second son, Roy, was born in on 20 June 1929.⁶⁰ In 1930, the family was living at 4429 Staunton Avenue, next door to Reginald's brother Frank, sister Ella and his mother. Reginald was a pump assemblyman.⁶¹ However, Reginald and his family did not remain in the United States. At some point, they returned to England and, in 1939, were living in Cornwall. His mother had also returned to England and was living with them. She was 79 years old and was incapacitated.⁶² Reginald died in 1917.⁶³

Frank, a miner, also went to the States in 1923. He was 24 when he landed in New York on 28 April 1923 on his way to California.⁶⁴ In 1929, Frank indicated his intention to marry Gwenyth R Manhire in Los Angeles.⁶⁵ The following year they were living at 4433 Staunton Avenue, next door to Reginald.⁶⁶ However, like his brother, Frank returned to England. He sailed from New York to Southampton in July 1938 with his wife, his 4-year old son and his mother Ellen. They were heading to Crelow Cottage in Stythians. In 1939, they were living in Cornwall.⁶⁷ Frank died in 1960.⁶⁸

Robert's mother died in 1943, having had 10 children, lost her husband when she was just 48 years old, moved to, and lived in, the United States for about 15 years, then returned to Cornwall and died there at the age of 83.

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² *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 3 December 2017), entry for Trerise, Robert

³ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 November 2017), entry for John Trerise, Registration district: Redruth, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 23, Piece: 2329, Folio: 112, Page: 18

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