



WAR GRAVES at St. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, GRIMSARGH

There are seven persons who died in World War I and World War II whose names appear on gravestones in the churchyard of St Michael's Church, Grimsargh:

- Philip Hankinson
- William Morris Park
- John James Park
- John Howard Vincent Latham
- William Lloyd
- James Trevelyan Rea
- Robert Askew

With the exception of the Hankinson Column, the locations of the gravestones are west of the church (from the tower, moving away from the road.) Row 1 is the first continuous row on the west of the church, back to the last continuous row emanating from the cut down tree/ stump in the NW corner, numbering that row as Row 7.

To assist orientation, the back wall of the churchyard is west, the wall alongside the car park is north and the wall by the new houses is south.

The Locations of the gravestones are as follows:

Philip Hankinson:

- i) Memorial Column on *south* side opposite the door to Tower;
- ii) Family gravestone, Row 1, 3rd from south wall.

William Morris Park:

Row 4, 1st from south wall.

John James Park:

Row 4, 1st from south wall.

John Howard Vincent Latham:

Row 5, 9th from south wall.

William Lloyd:

Row 6, 7th from south wall.

James Trevelyan Rea:

Row 6, 6th from north wall

Robert Askew:

Row 7, 12th from south wall.

The following information is available in respect of the seven men:

Philip Hankinson

He was born on 6th December 1891, the son of John Helm Hankinson and Clara Adelaide Hankinson. He was baptised On 7/2/1892. At the time of the 1911 census his parents were both aged 45; his father is described as "asylum joiner". Philip Hankinson was then aged 19, an apprentice joiner, and his siblings were Mary Adelaide aged 17, Clara Alice 15 and John 14. The family lived at 102 Castleton Road, Preston, a house that still stands today located near Preston Prison.

He died on 2nd March 1919, aged 27. His service no. was 68035. In 1918 he was an acting corporal ("wheeler") in the Royal Field Artillery, 'A' battery, 286th Brigade. He was awarded the Military Medal, at that time the non-commissioned officer's version of the Military Cross, also at that time, the 3rd highest award for gallantry in the field after the Victoria Cross, and the Distinguished Conduct Medal. It is not known for what act of bravery he was awarded the medal. The award of the

medal was Gazetted on 22/2/1918: it is said that the act of bravery leading to the award usually took place 2-3 months before the date of Gazetting. He was reported as wounded on Saturday 9th November 1918, two days before the Armistice on Monday 11th November 1918. The Memorial Column was erected at the behest of his comrades in the battery.

William Morris Park

His service no. was 21592. He served in the Loyal North Lancashire regiment from 20/7/1915 to 30/8/1916, when he was declared no longer fit for war service. He was awarded the Silver War badge, awarded for honourable discharge because of wounds. He died on 11th April 1918 aged 28. No other information, except that his name appears on the village memorial (see below).

John James Park

He was born in Goosnargh. He was the son of John Park and Emily Park, Dam Cottage, Grimsargh. He enlisted in the 9th battalion, Loyal North Lancashire regiment in Bootle. His service no. was 34426. He was a corporal. He was killed in action in France on 25th May 1918 aged 30: this is the date on the grave although the military service record has the date as 25th April 1918. He is clearly related to William Morris Park as both names appear on the gravestone with others of the Park family: seven weeks separate the two deaths.

John Howard Vincent Latham

He was the son of Howard Latham and Alice Latham of 7 Sunny Bank, Grimsargh. He was a 2nd Lieutenant in the newly created RAF (on 1st April 1918). He was killed in a flying accident at Lincoln on 20th April 1918, aged 19.

William Lloyd

He was born and lived in Preston. He enlisted in Preston as a private in the C supply company, Army Service Corps, service no. S4/146429. He died in the United Kingdom on 27th April 1916, aged 26. He was a member of the church choir "for many years".

James Trevelyan Rea

He was born in St Anne's, son of John Marcus B. Rea and Constance Rea. He lived at Larches, Fulwood, Preston. His service no. was S4/144111 in the Royal Army Service Corps. He died "of sickness" as a corporal on 8th December 1920, aged 29.

Robert Askew

He was born on 26th July 1918, the son of Robert Askew, OBE, a senior police officer in Preston and Margaret Annie Harrison. He entered Preston Grammar School in Preston on 10th September 1928 and left on 22nd July 1932. He served in the RAF, service no. 1535621, enlisting at Padgate some time after April 1941 and serving in Bomber Command, from October 1941 as a Flight Sergeant Observer. On Thursday 27th May 1943 he was part of the crew of a twin engine Wellington X which flew from Dalton, Yorkshire on a raid on Essen in the Ruhr. The other members of the crew were all members of the Royal Canadian Airforce. The plane suffered engine trouble near the target and was hit by FLAK on its return. It ditched in the sea off Grimsby and the tail gunner was killed; the remaining members including Robert Askew survived. Just over 2 weeks later, on Friday 11th June 1943 the same plane took off in County Durham for a raid on Dusseldorf. It crashed just after take-off and all except one member of the crew were killed; those killed included Robert Askew. He was aged 24. (His grave records his death as on 10th June 1943.)

The following names of the above also appear among those on the Memorial at Three Mile Cross, Longridge Road, Grimsargh:

John Howard Vincent Latham

John James Park

William Morris Park



The following names also appear on the brass memorial plaque within St Michael's church, on the south side wall of the nave:

John Howard Vincent Latham

John James Park

*With thanks to Mark Lamberty
(churchwarden) for collating this information.
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