

## Commemorating twenty-four British soldiers killed in the attack on Hill 309 at Saint Ouen-des-Besaces during the first phase of Operation Bluecoat.

En 1945, la commune de Saint-Ouen des Besaces a commandé une plaque de bois pour honorer la mémoire des citoyens morts durant la Libération de la France. En dessous de la liste figurent les noms de vingt-quatre soldats britanniques tués le 31 juillet 1944, pendant la première phase de l'opération Bluecoat, lors de l'assaut de la cote 309 pour la libération de Saint-Ouen. Un léopard héraldique rampant a été peint entre deux colonnes de noms anglais et écossais. Voici le texte original :

### LIBERTÉ ÉGALITÉ FRATERNITÉ MÉMORIAL DES VICTIMES DE LA GUERRE 1940-45

Commune de St Ouen des Besace (Calvados)  
ANNIVERSAIRE de la LIBÉRATION  
célébré le 1 août 1945 en présence de  
M. le général .....  
et de ..... et de .....  
AUX MORTS pour la FRANCE

[liste des noms des civiles, à peine lisible]

### AUX VALEUREUX SOLDATS DE L'EMPIRE BRITANNIQUE DU front de Caumont, morts pour la prise de la côte 309 côté de MONTBOSQ à St OUEN GOD SAVE THE KING IN MEMORY OF TWENTY-FOUR SOLDIERS KILLED IN ACTION JULY AND AUGUST 1944

Private **Arthur Edward ARGYLE**  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 29  
No. 5255652 1st Bt. Middlesex Regt  
Son of Alfred William & Mabel Gertrude Argyle  
Husband of Mary Argyle of Bedworth, Warwickshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Lieutenant **John Anthony BARRY**  
d. 3 August 1944  
No. 307939 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Guardsman **Maurice Henry BOWLER**  
d. 30 July 1944, aged 30  
No. 2618682 4th Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of Samuel & Ethel Bowler of South Wingfield, Derbyshire  
Buried at Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery

Guardsman **William BOWES**  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 21  
No. 2623856 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of Gleniss & Dorothy Bowes of Halton, Yorkshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Serjeant **William BOWMAN**  
d. 1 August 1944, aged 27  
No. 3320370 2nd Bt. Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regt)  
Son of William & Esther S. Bowman of Riddrie, Glasgow  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Private **Francis Robert BROWN \***  
d. 1 August 1944, aged 26  
No. 14208988 2nd Bt. Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regt)  
Son of Francis R. & Mary S. M. Brown of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Private **Henry George CROCKETT**  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 24  
No. 1650634 7th Bt. Seaforth Highlanders  
Son of Ernest Henry & Elizabeth Mary Crockett of Dauntsey, Wiltshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Guardsman **Peter Eric Henry CROUCHER**  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 19  
No. 2623947 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of William J. K. & Lorna S. M. Croucher of Reading, Berkshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Gunner **Bernard Holgate EDWARDS \***  
d. 1 August 1944, aged 23  
No. 1116251 84 Medium Regt, Royal Artillery  
Son of William & Ethel E. G. Edwards of Clapham Common, London  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Private **William FORWOOD**  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 27  
No. 6211592 1st Bt. Middlesex Regt  
Son of Alfred & Jane Forwood  
Husband of Margaret Forwood of Hoxton, London  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Lance Corporal **Roland Thomas George GOOK**  
d. 1 August 1944, aged 27  
No. 2661273 4th Bt. Coldstream Guards  
Son of William & Florence Gook of Totton, Hampshire  
Husband of Ada Mary Gook of Totton, Hampshire  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Guardsman **Robert Kitchener HARRIS**  
d. 1 August 1944, aged 29  
No. 2662107 4th Bt. Coldstream Guards  
Son of Mr & Mrs Albert Harris of Sellyoak, Birmingham  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Lance Corporal **Albert Edward LEE \***  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 22  
No. 6923340 8th Bt. Rifle Brigade (2nd Bt London Rifle Brigade)  
Son of Alfred Charles & Harriet Lee of Newbury Park, Essex  
Buried at Bennesville-la-Campagne War Cemetery

Rifleman **Ronald Stanley William MILLER \***  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 20  
No. 6925268 8th Bt. Rifle Brigade (2nd Bt London Rifle Brigade)  
Son of Arthur Edward & Amy Miller of Barking, Essex  
Buried at St Charles-de-Percy War Cemetery

Guardsman **Samuel George MILLER**  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 25  
No. 2616020 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of Samuel & Charlotte Miller of Poplar, London  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Private **John William SCARLETT**  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 24  
No. 1554908 7th Bt. Seaforth Highlanders  
Son of John William & Annie Scarlett of Leeds, Yorkshire  
Husband of Renée Scarlett  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Guardsman **Charles Harry SHAW \***  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 24  
No. 2661268 5th Bt. Coldstream Guards  
Buried at St Charles-de-Percy War Cemetery

Guardsman **John SNOW**  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 29  
No. 5046864 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Guardsman **Kenneth John SNOW**  
d. 30 July 1944, aged 21  
No. 2665301 4th Bt. Coldstream Guards  
Son of Leonard Horace & Mary Snow  
Buried at St Charles-de-Percy War Cemetery

Serjeant **Harry Ernest THEOBALD**  
d. 3 August 1944, aged 28  
No. 2613660 1st Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of Joseph & Esther Ann Theobald  
Husband of Evelyn Cathrine Theobald of Kensington, London  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

Lance Corporal **Francis Raymond THORNE**  
d. 30 July 1944, aged 21  
No. 2616626 4th Bt. Grenadier Guards  
Son of Francis Robert & Constance M. Thorne of Stoke Heath,  
Coventry  
Buried at Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery

Serjeant **Reginald Charles WOOD \***  
d. 30 July 1944, aged 24  
No. 3320522 2nd Bt. Glasgow Highlanders, HLI (City of Glasgow)  
Son of Charles Frederick & Florence Wood of Teddington, Middlesex  
Husband of Beatrice Mary Wood of Teddington, Middlesex  
Buried at St Charles-de-Percy War Cemetery

Private **Arthur WRIGHT**  
d. 31 July 1944, aged 19  
No. 14583836 7th Bt. Seaforth Highlanders  
Buried at Tilly-sur-Seulles War Cemetery

En 2014, la plaque s'est détériorée et une partie du texte peint est devenu illisible. Un nom est apparu : MUIR. Malheureusement, il a été impossible d'identifier un soldat de ce nom dans le cadre de cette bataille et son identité reste un mystère. Nous vous invitons à le considérer comme le soldat inconnu de l'Opération Bluecoat, cette série d'opérations militaires dans le Calvados et l'Orne, qui a contribué, en partie avec la Grande-Bretagne à la bataille de Normandie et à la libération de la France et de l'Europe de l'Ouest en 1944.



\* The original French commemorative plaque listed, among others, the surnames 'Brown', 'Edwards', 'Lee', 'Miller', 'Millers', 'Muir', 'Smaw' and 'Wood' with no further information as to their identity. We presume seven of these to be: 'F. R. Brown', 'B. H. Edwards', 'A. E. Lee', 'R. S. W. Miller', 'C. H. Shaw' and 'R. C. Wood', who are recorded as having died in the relevant area at the relevant time and who were buried in appropriate cemeteries. Any comments or corrections are warmly welcomed.