



News from the St. Tudy History Group Research Team

St. Tudy Church was visited by Thomas Rowland from Australia who left his name and contact details in the Church Visitors Book. He commented that his ancestors had originated from St. Tudy, and Michael Straugheir passed this information onto me.

I then contacted Thomas, and several e-mails back and forth from the Pyrenees, we got onto the topic of the Montage in the Church and that we do not have names for all those we have photographs for. Thomas's ancestors were from the Hocken family, and he thought he saw a family resemblance in one of our Soldiers on the Montage. He then asked the "oracle", his mother in Australia, to look at the photos on our History Group website, and she confirmed his thoughts. The only Hocken on our Montage list of names was Harry Hocken but we hadn't matched him to a photo. After looking through various online military resources, there was one man who it could be, but he was called Herbert, not Harry. Herbert had been in the Royal Army Medical Corps, so that gave me some information to go by. Looking closely at an improved images I made, I could see that "No. 49" had a red cross cloth arm patch.

Thomas told me that unfortunately there was a member of the family from Australia who had been lost later in WW2 called Stephen Hocken. I found the website where Stephen was commemorated, and luckily there was a photo of him on there. I then used the same computer package to sharpen this image, colour and also animate both of the photos I had of who I thought was Harry and Stephen. Both men were practically identical. Eureka! Herbert must have been known as "Harry" and that is who is listed on our Montage. It was commonplace in those times to have a nickname that was used instead of your birth name, so we now know that Harry is No. 49 on our Montage.

This got me thinking about the Montage and how unique it is. We know who framed it – W. Cutler of Bournemouth, but why this firm, why Bournemouth, and why don't we know who put all the photos together and organised the Montage. Just to throw the "researcher's spanner" into the works, in my newspaper search I have found references to several memorials in St. Tudy. It looks like the Methodist Chapel unveiled two memorials in January 1919 – one to "The Fallen" and one to "Those Who Served". Then in November 1919, the "Roll of Honour of our Glorious Dead" was unveiled in the Church. There was also the handwritten "Our Roll of Honour" that was discovered by David Seymour. Were all of these memorials combined to make the Montage in the Church, or have some been lost in time?

I would love to hear from anyone who has any information on what actually happened. In the meantime, thanks to the marvels of modern technology in the form of e-mails, computer photo packages and online records from military websites, we now have identified another of our brave young men who served our country in WW1. However, in the end, it was the good old fashioned tried and tested St. Tudy Bush Telegraph that started it all off in the first place!

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