

Percy Panter was born in Lavendon in 1895. His parents were Thomas Panter and Jane Holmes who married in 1891. In 1901 Thomas was working as a Shoe Rivetter, living in Castle Road.

In 1911 Percy was still living with his parents at home in Castle Road. His father Thomas was working as a Stockman on a Farm and Percy was working as a 16 year old Farm Labourer. Three other siblings were also living at home - Dora (age 13) worked as a Servant Day Girl, Kenneth (age 9) and Reggie (age 7) were at school. Percy also had an older sister, Muriel Annie (age 18), who by then was working as a Domestic Housemaid in Croydon. The family were all born in Lavendon.

In both the 1901 and 1911 census records, Percy was living next door to Melbourne Gammage in Castle Road who was 2 years younger. Doubtless both were school friends and played together; sadly both perished in the Great War.

In due course the family moved from Castle Road to the cottages in 'Turvey Road' that sit



opposite the junction with Harrold Road. Percy's father is shown as 'next of kin' living at this address when his son enlisted in Olney on 26 November 1915 at the age of 22yrs and 5 months. Percy's enlistment papers show him to have been 5ft 6¾ins in height, a Baptist and Leatherworker by trade. He was evidently of 'very good' character during his early service.

It appears that Percy initially entered the Army but on 12 October 1916 he reported to the Royal Marines Depot at Deal probably for training. In mid-December 1916 he joined the 'Victory V' Royal Marine Brigade. Only a few months later on about 28 April 1917 he was reported missing and evidently he had become a Prisoner of War in German hands.

Left: The Royal Marine Light Infantry crest shown on the left is taken from a silk badge enclosed in a contemporary cigarette packet.



Whilst Percy was in the PoW Camp at Kriegsgefangenen Limburg he wrote to his sister Muriel who was still working or living in Surrey:

13 August 1917

My Dear Sister

Just a card to let you know I am quite well and hope you are the same. I am sorry I could not write to you before but I hope you won't mind, I must send one to Dora [Percy's younger sister] some other time. I wrote to Ma last night and I soon hope to hear from some of you and to receive a parcel.

So best love
from Perce

Kriegsgefangenen - Stammlager
Limburg a. D. Lahn
Postüberwachungsstelle
Geprüft F. a. Q.

Below: A pendant worn later by Percy's Mother, also containing a photo of an unknown sweetheart.

Kriegsgefangenen - Sendung
Kriegsgefangenen - Stammlager
Limburg a. D. Lahn
My Dear Sister 13th/8/1917
Just a card
to let you know I am
quite well and ^{hope} you are
the same, I am sorry
I could not write to
you before but I hope
you won't mind, I must
send one to Dora some
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Perce



During the latter part of 1917 or the early part of 1918, Percy was struck down by some form of disease whilst a Prisoner of War - a disease from which he failed to recover. Thus, as his official record states, Percy "died whilst PoW in German Hands" on 24 April 1918.



Admiralty,
London, S.W.1.
8th, January 1923.

Ch. 1720(3), Mr. P.T. Panter, R.M.L.I.

Madam.

I am directed by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you the accompanying British War Medal and Victory Medal which would have been conferred upon the above-named had he lived, in memory of his services with the British Forces during the Great War.

In forwarding these Decorations, I am commanded by the King to assure you of His Majesty's high appreciation of the services rendered.

I am to request that you will be so good as to acknowledge the receipt of these Decorations on the attached form.

I am, Madam.

Your obedient Servant,

O. Murray
W.H.

Mrs. J. Panter,

Percy was buried at the Hamburg Cemetery, Ohlsdorf, Germany, where his memorial gravestone is to be found, reference I.E.4.

CH/1720 (S) Private RMLI

P. T. PANTER

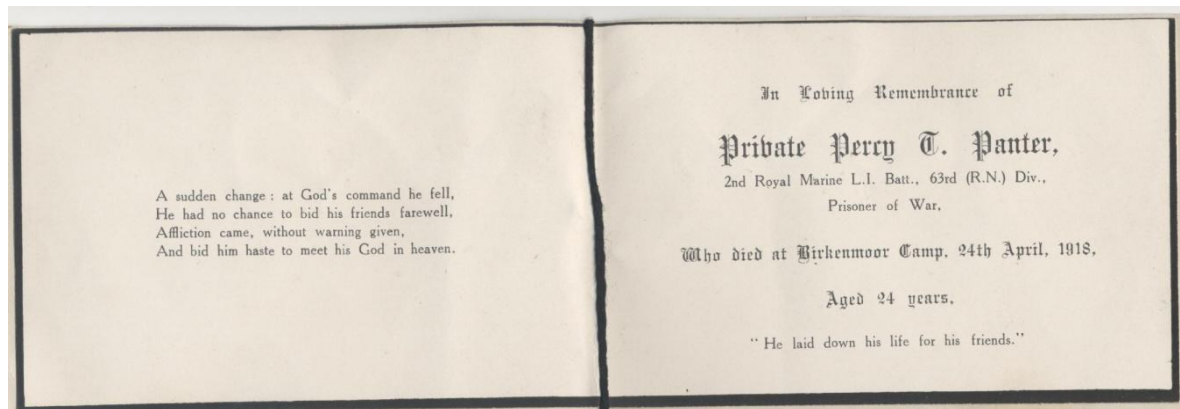
Royal Naval Division

24th April 1918 Age 24

GREATER LOVE

HATH NO MAN THAN THIS





Percy was awarded the British War medal and the Victory medal for his service to the nation. His medals and the so-called 'Death Penny' shown below are in the possession of his nephew, John Panter of Lavendon.





HE whom this scroll commemorates
was numbered among those who,
at the call of King and Country, left all
that was dear to them, endured hardness,
faced danger, and finally passed out of
the sight of men by the path of duty
and self-sacrifice, giving up their own
lives that others might live in freedom.

Let those who come after see to it
that his name be not forgotten.

*Pte. Percy Thomas Panter, R.M.
R.N. Division*