

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL
Ivry, Lady Freyberg

Maj. Robert Nevill Cobbold

June 2019

The Times, on August 18th 1944 carried his obituary:

“The news of Robert Cobbold's death in action in Italy will have come as a cruel blow, not only to his family, but to all those, in every walk of life, who were privileged to enjoy his friendship. For with him the art of friendship was a gift rich and rare, & to see him again, however often, was to experience anew a thrill of pleasure. It seemed as if care and worries were all swept aside in the warmth of his welcome, and one felt, immediately, a strange sense of happiness and contentment, and a renewed joy in life.

And how he himself enjoyed his own life, in all its varied aspects! He was supremely happy in his family business, where his compelling charm won him so many friends, and it is possibly here that he will be missed most of all. But there will be many, who, like the writer, shared with him all his other interests, who will feel that, by his passing, they have lost something precious and irreplaceable - something of the spirit of companionship and happiness which were so peculiarly his.

Those who have shot or fished with him, or seen him with his beloved dogs, or, on a golf course, running, always running, down the fairway, will know that this is so. For he contributed, all unconsciously, so much to our enjoyment that, without him, it will not, and cannot, be the same again. The spice is gone.

To his wife, who shared his happy life for so tragically few years, and to all his family - and perhaps most of all, to his father, to whom he was, as a friend has said to the writer, "a part of his daily life" - the hearts of all who knew Robert Cobbold will go out in true and generous sympathy.

Their loss is grievous, but the memories - golden, bright and happy - will always remain. "For Death he taketh all away, but these he cannot take". May these memories serve as a comfort to his family - and, indeed to us all - in the years that lie ahead".

Robert Nevill Cobbold, (1904-1944) #470 on the web family tree, was killed in the battle of Cassino in Italy on 27th May 1944 just a few days before D-Day whilst serving with the 3rd Battalion, Welsh Guards. He is commemorated at Eton, on the War memorial at Tattingstone, Suffolk and in St. Mark's English Church, Florence. His headstone in the Cassino War Cemetery is inscribed "In this rich earth a richer dust concealed that is for ever England". This puts us in mind, of course, of Rupert Brooke's great first World War poem; so poignant that there is no apology for reproducing it here:



Robert Nevill Cobbold



His grave in the Cassino War cemetery

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.