

25/26 June 1944 – V-1 Flying-Bombs

Carisbrooke Road & North Fairlee

The night of 25/26 June marks the anniversary of the night in 1944 when two V-1 flying-bombs (aka doodle-bugs) dropped to earth and exploded in the Newport area. They had probably been intended for Southampton but had run out of fuel over the Island.

One flying-bomb exploded in North Fairlee with little damage, and no casualties. The minutes of the General Purposes Committee of Newport Borough 29 August 1944 refer to a barn needing to be rebuilt at North Fairlee Farm due to war damage; this could have been as a result of the flying-bomb.

The other flying-bomb dropped and exploded near, what is now, the junction of Wellington Road and Carisbrooke Road. From a WVS report¹ of the time, this caused “vast amount of damage to the houses and ... miraculously few casualties: only one death through blast and 14 persons” needing First Aid attention.

The WVS report also recorded that “Mrs. Dufton’s house [**141 Carisbrooke Road**] being badly damaged in the raid and Mrs. Perry [wife of Rev. W. E. Perry, **72 Carisbrooke Road**] very ill — she died the following day. 27 families were eventually billeted.....” The property at 72 Carisbrooke Road seems possibly too far away to have received any significant damage.

Unlike previous air raids, the incident wasn’t reported in the local press as the national policy at the time was a total news blackout of V1 ‘hits’, damage and casualties.

The death was of a pedestrian, George Henry Woodmore, manager of ‘John Sheath’, corn merchants of Upper St James’s Street, Newport (now the site of McDonalds) who died on Carisbrooke Road.

Buried on the same day as George Woodmore was Emily Chiverton, housekeeper to Percy and George Long of **136 Carisbrooke Road**, she died in St Mary’s Hospital, having been taken there “..suffering from shock...”; no doubt a flying-bomb damaging ones house would cause ‘shock’. However, Emily was not recorded as a Civilian War death.

A few more details of the events on that night were given when Percy Long died in Brighstone in August 1944; his obituary in the IW County Press included “..He had gone to stay at Brighstone since his residence at **136 Carisbrooke-road** was recently damaged by enemy action...”

May 1946 saw another piece of ‘the story’ emerge when Ada Maria Pittis died and her obituary recorded “...When a flying bomb fell near her home [**145 Carisbrooke Road**] at the end of June, 1944, badly damaging it, Miss Pittis had a miraculous escape.”

A few months later in August 1946, Alfred Percy Knight, of **139 Carisbrooke Road** died and his obituary included “...Mr. Knight had been in poor health since his home was wrecked by a flying bomb just over two years ago...”

George Robert Barrett (an ‘esteemed’ member of the IWCP staff) was living at **153 Carisbrooke Road** with his widowed sister during the war, and when he died in 1948 his obituary recorded that

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/86/a2885286.shtml>

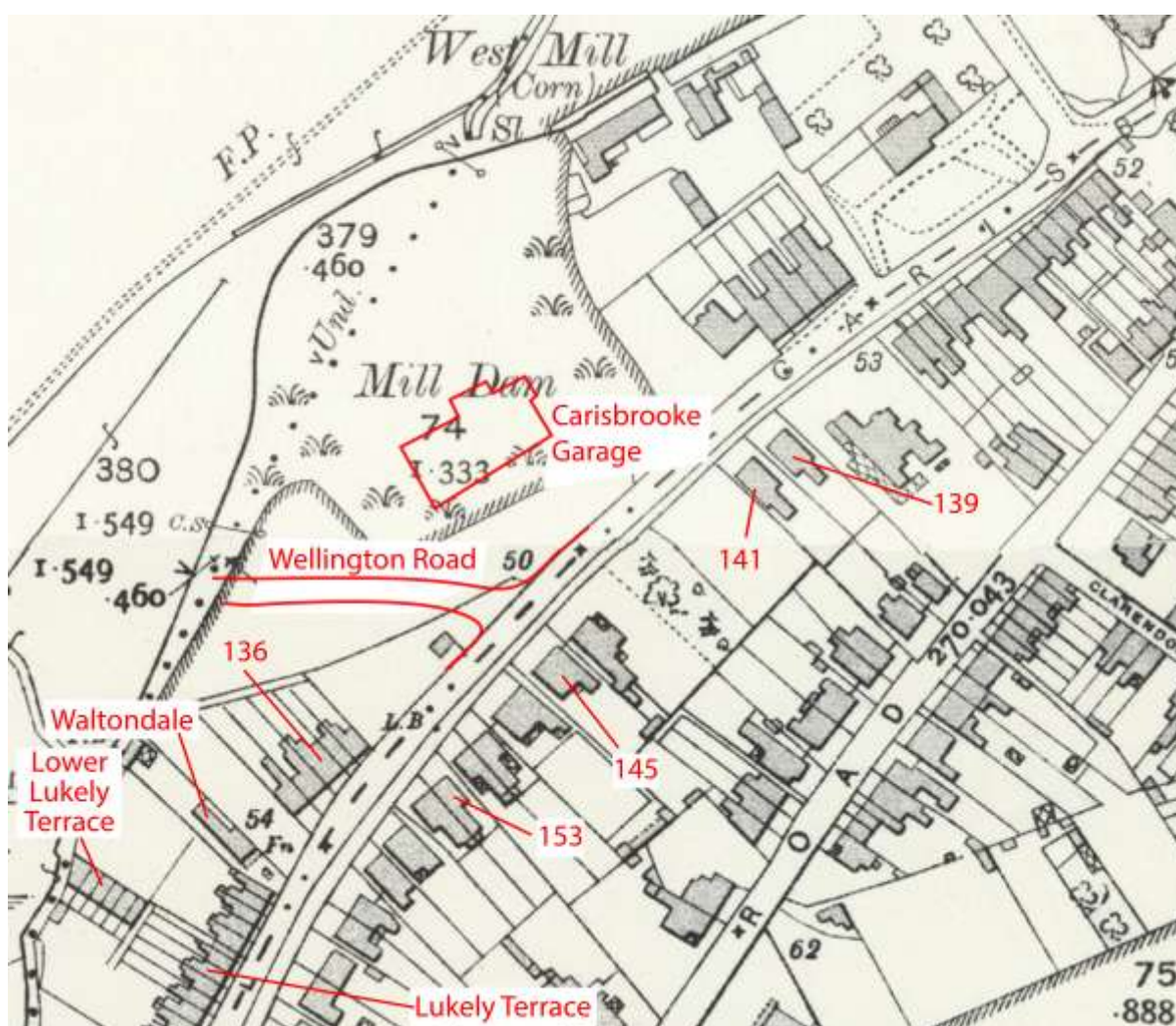
“...heavy burdens fell on his shoulders, particularly when the ‘County Press’ premises and his own house suffered damage by enemy action.”

Facebook comment:

Barbara Wilkins

“I was living at 152 Carisbrooke road at that time, in the Lukely Terrace above Waltondale, our ceilings came down and windows blew out, I was about 11 years old, wooden houses behind ours got blown to forty degree angle, weird to see workmen just came pushed/pulled them up straight again, and people just carried on with life.”

The marked-up 1906 map below shows the properties recorded as being damaged (and also the locations of modern-day Wellington Road and Carisbrooke Garage), it’s inconceivable that other properties weren’t damaged.



Information compiled by Tony Barton for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries, © 2022
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