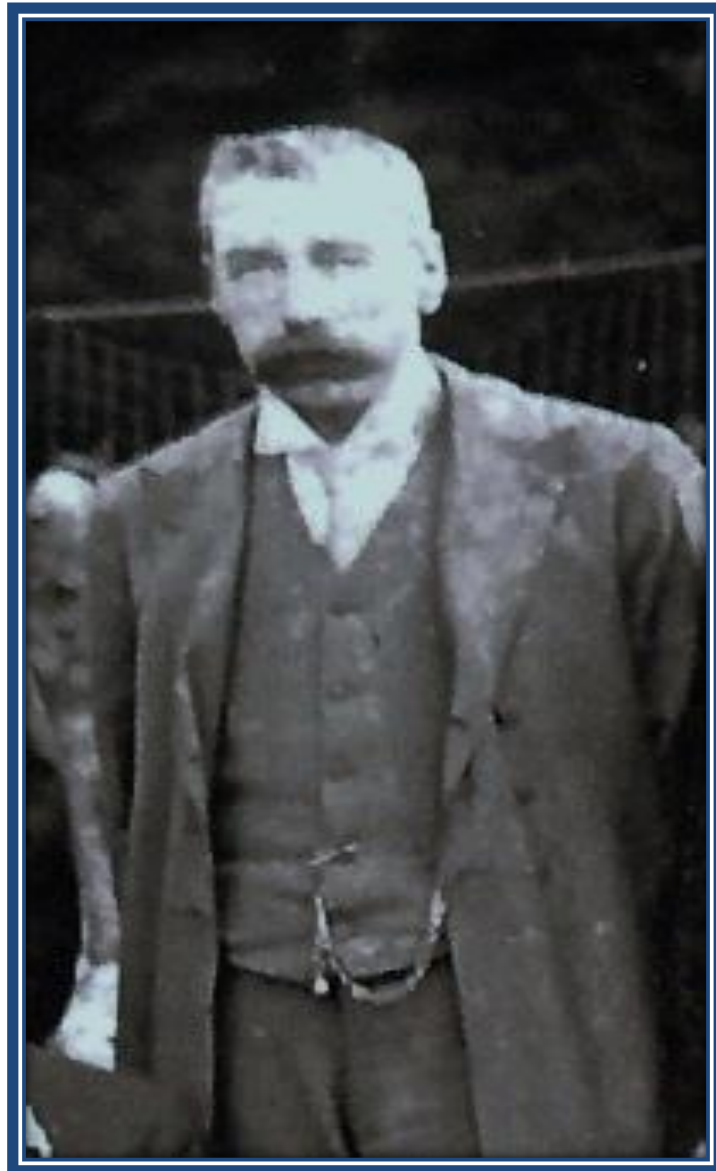


DOUGLAS TULLOCH FORBES

Douglas Tulloch Forbes was born in Wanstead on the 6th June 1895 and baptised in Wanstead Congregational Church on 29th October 1895. He was the only child of William Patrick Tulloch Forbes who was born in Forest Gate, Essex in 1859 and his wife Edith Clara Forbes (née Hanks) who was born in Hackney on 3rd Nov 1872.



William Patrick Tulloch Forbes about 1908 (Archives Wanstead United Reformed Church)

Douglas's parents were married in July 1894. Douglas's grandfather, William Henry Forbes, an inn-keeper was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland in 1820 and in 1861 he was the licenced victualler (Inn-keeper) at the Old Bell Inn, Leyton where he lived with his wife Clara Drusilla Forbes (née Skeen) and their two sons, Arthur aged 4 and William Patrick aged 1.

In 1871, the Forbes family were living with Clara's parents, John and Louisa Skeen at Grove Terrace in Barking, Essex. William Henry was working as a builder. Sadly Clara Forbes died aged 41 the following year in 1872 and their eldest son Arthur died in 1878 aged 21.

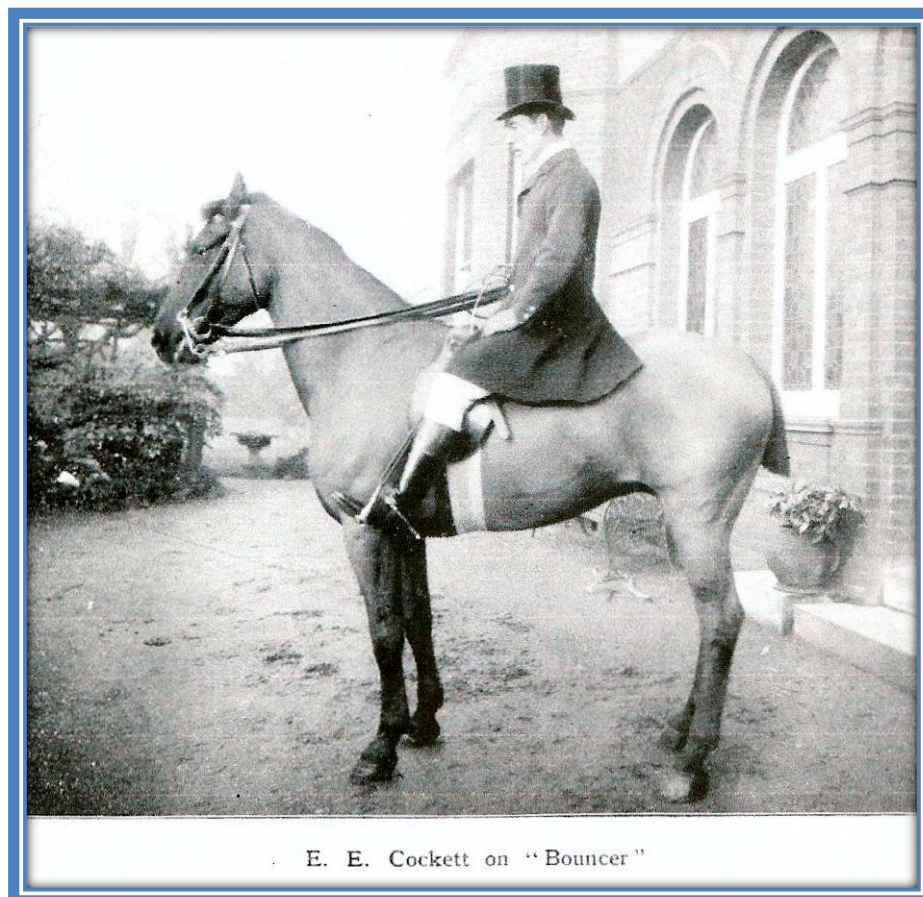
In 1877, when William Patrick was 18 years old, he founded the Wanstead Young Men's Association which was originally set up as a literary and debating society and was an association belonging to the Wanstead Congregational Church. He also became a committee member of the Church's Wanstead Men's Meeting, a Christian brotherhood.

In August 1880, aged 20, William became an early member of the Essex Field Club, a popular Victorian natural history club which is still in existence today. Charles Darwin was elected as an Honorary Member at the Club's foundation in January 1880. At the Club's 50th Anniversary celebration in 1930, William was honoured as one of only five original founding members still alive.

In 1881, William Patrick Tulloch Forbes now aged 21 was employed as a cashier clerk with Central News. He was living

at “Evergreen Lodge”, 30 High Street, Wanstead ,with his aunt and uncle, John E. and Emma Cockett. William had probably moved in with the Cockett family after the death of his mother in 1872 when he was 13 years old.

Evergreen Lodge, a large house demolished in the 1960’s, stood on the land now known as the Evergreen Field. John Cockett was a Railway Transport Manager at the Headquarters of W.H.Smith in London. John Cockett subscribed to a book called “Leaves from a Hunting Diary in Essex,” published in 1900. His son Edward E Cockett, a land agent and his wife rode with the Essex Hunt and they were featured in this book.



William Patrick Tulloch Forbes' cousin Mr Edward Cockett

William's 21 year old cousin Miss Louisa M. Cockett became a member of Wanstead Congregational Church in July 1888; she was a collector for the London Missionary Society.

William became a Director of Central News Ltd in 1885 and eventually the company's Managing Director between 1918 and 1927. Central News was a news distribution agency founded in 1863. It distributed often sensational and imaginative stories and in its early days gained a reputation amongst newsmen for "underhand practice and stories of dubious veracity." *(Reference Paul Begg author "Jack the Ripper" 2003 p219)*

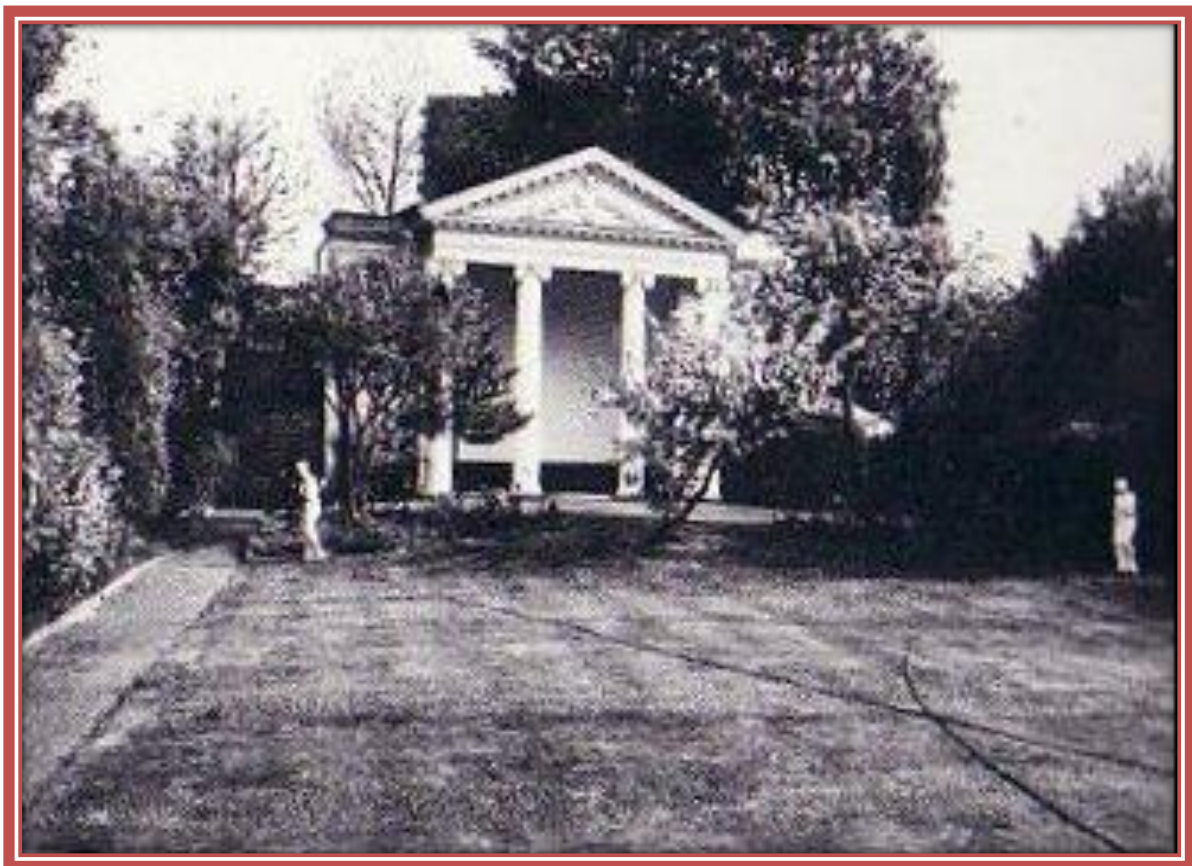
In the summer of 1894, William aged 35 married 21 year old Edith Clara Hanks. She was born on 3rd November 1872 in Hackney, Middlesex. Edith was the daughter of James Upton Hanks, a timber merchant and Mary Ann Hanks née Goodrich of "The Shrubbery", 2 Grove Road, Wanstead. (Flats of the same name are now where this large house once stood in Grosvenor Road.) The Hanks family had become members of Wanstead Congregational Church in November 1883.

William and Edith's only child Douglas Tulloch Forbes was born at "Kintyre", Sylvan Road, Wanstead, on 6th June 1895 and he was baptised in the Wanstead Congregational Church on the 29th October 1895 by the Revd G. Frank Cullen.

Douglas's father became a director of several companies which included Titus Ward & Co Ltd, grocer's.. He was also an author and journalist. As his career flourished William became an influential figure in the world of news as well as

being appointed as a J.P for Essex in 1906 and serving as an Alderman.

In 1901, William Patrick Forbes and his family were living in a large house called “The Chilterns” in Grove Park. In his garden was the Temple, a classical stone summerhouse which originally stood in the garden of a large house called The Grove. It remained as an attractive relic in the grounds of The Chilterns long after the Grove Estate had been cut up to make way for modern houses.



(Photograph “Epping Forest Then and Now” Winston G. Ramsey 1986 ISBN 0 900913 39 8)

The Temple now stands in the garden of ‘Temple House’ 14, The Avenue. Many Wanstead Congregational Church Garden

parties and fund-raisers were held at The Chilterns in Grove Park.



The Wanstead Congregational Church fellowship. A photograph which was taken at a Summer Garden Party. It was held in the grounds of the Chilterns in 1899. Many of the small boys in this photograph, including Douglas, went on to fight for King and country in WW1.

The Chilterns was eventually demolished and its land parcelled out for more housing which is now part of The Avenue, Wanstead. Another house also called The Chilterns can still be seen on the corner of Grove Park and The Avenue.

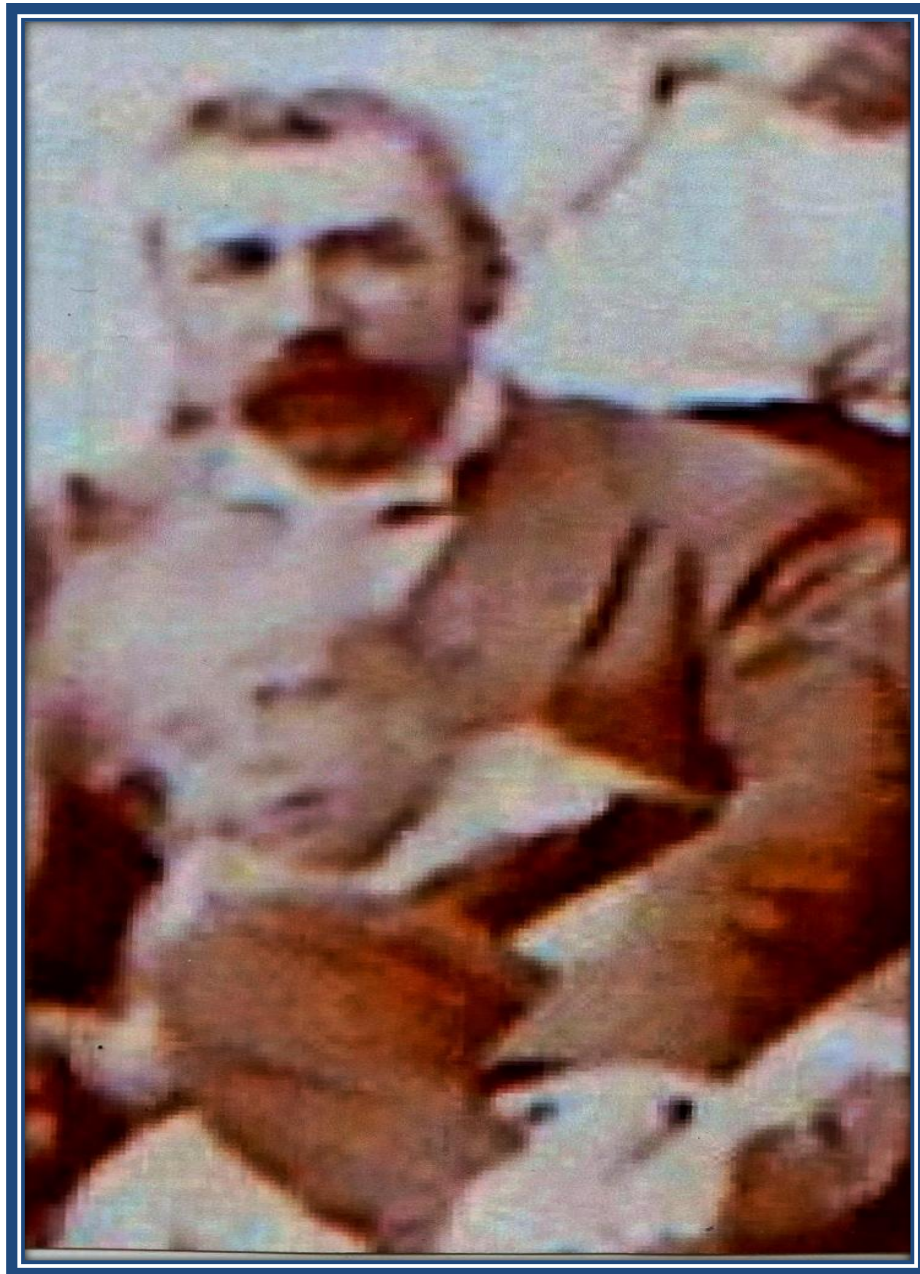
In 1900, William Forbes aged 41, a dedicated philanthropist, was treasurer of the Wanstead Boer War Fund. It was fundraising locally for the Sailors and Soldiers' families, especially for the wives and orphans of the men of the Essex Regiment. Fund members' working parties were held in the Church's Grove Hall where they organised packing cases of goods to be sent to the men and hospitals in the front line.

In 1901, when Douglas was 5 years old, the family had live-in servants at The Chilterns. A nurse called Mabel Coombe for Douglas, Thirza Gamble, the Cook, Rose Mills, a kitchen maid and Jessie Elste a domestic housemaid.

In September 1909, Mr and Mrs Forbes sent 14 year old Douglas to Mill Hill School in North London as a boarder. Mill Hill was an all-boys school which drew its pupils largely from the non-conformist Christian community throughout England and Wales. Douglas was a pupil at Mill Hill School until December 1912 when he left at age 17.

Whilst at Mill Hill, Douglas was a member of the school's own military Officer Training Corps and the school's unit of

the Honourable Artillery Company, an army regiment staffed by volunteers designed for the defence of Britain.



Douglas Tulloch Forbes aged 4 with his father William Patrick Tulloch Forbes in 1899 (Wanstead United Reformed Church Archives)



Photograph courtesy of Kate Thompson Archivist, Mill Hill School

On the 14th July 1915, Douglas received a commission in the army. He became a Lieutenant with the 17th Battalion (County Of London) London Regiment (Poplar and Stepney Rifles). When war was declared, the Battalion was training on Salisbury Plain. They returned to H.Q. in Tredegar Road, Bow, for mobilisation and then moved to Essex for training. The Battalion landed in France at Le Havre on 16th March 1915. Douglas entered France on 17th October 1915. The Battalion fought their first battle in 1915 at Loos.

Philip Richard Rathbone, another of 'Our 15', had enlisted as a rifleman with this regiment and had arrived in France four months earlier in June 1915.

Percy Chidgey, another of 'Our 15' was the son of Alderman Hugh Thomas Arthur Chidgey, Stepney's Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1905 and later Mayor of Stepney for two terms during WW1. Hugh Chidgey was active in recruiting young men for the Poplar and Stepney Rifles. Hugh was a member of Wanstead Congregational Church and it is possible that he encouraged the young men of the church to enlist with the "Rifles."

Commissioned officers like Douglas had very high mortality rates because at that time officers were trained and expected to lead from the front.

In January 1916, just under 10 months since landing in France, Douglas was rapidly promoted to Temporary 2nd Lieutenant. Sadly though, just a few days later, Douglas was wounded and taken to Lillers, just N.W. of Béthune, Pas de Calais.

At Lillers there was a Casualty Clearing Stations and a Hospital. Douglas did not recover and he died of his wounds on 17th January 1916 aged 20.

He was buried in grave VA2 at the Lillers Communal Cemetery.

Douglas earned the War and Victory Medals with the 14/15 Star which were sent to his father.

Douglas is commemorated on the Mill Hill War Memorial, the Great War Memorial inside Wanstead United Reformed Church and the Wanstead War Memorial in High Street, Wanstead.

Mill Hill School's Roll of Honour records the words of Douglas's Commanding Officer:-

“Lieutenant Forbes was an exceedingly popular officer, being a favourite with his colleagues, and also with his men. Of a somewhat studious disposition, he took his duties seriously, and his work was marked by thoroughness unusual in one so young. He was very keen on going to the Front and made himself competent in order to qualify for the work before him. His untimely death is deeply regretted.”

With thanks to Mill Hill School

The death of Douglas, their only child, was a devastating blow for his parents William and Edith. In 1920 they made the journey from Southampton to New York on an ocean liner, not only for William's business, but perhaps as a welcome break to help them come to terms with their loss.

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
FORBES		17 th Lond. R.	* 2. Lieut	
Douglas Tulloch				
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
* VICTORY	17 th Lond. R. 07/23	110	Dofls. 17-1-16.	
* BRITISH		"	I.V. x/1283 d. 18/4/22 EF/6/8452	
* 15 th STAR	07/23	17		
Theatre of War first served in		France		
Date of entry therein		17.10.15.		
16 ³ / ₂₂		EF/6/8452		K. 1530

Return EF9 9-2-22
Correspondence

Address to father
W. P. Forbes Esq
The Chilterns
Wanstead
Essex

(1475) Wt. W2703/11P8142 1,000m 12/21 J.F.W. E 8281.

Medal Record Card

Second Lieutenant Douglas Tulloch Forbes

17th Battalion London Regiment (Poplar and Stepney Rifles)

William lost a great deal of money in the 1930's Stock Market Crash. What remained of his assets, effects amounting to £3624 10s 9p was inherited by his widow Edith.

William Patrick Tulloch Forbes died on the 19th January 1935 aged 73.

Mrs Edith Clara Forbes died on 11th May 1958 in Colchester, Essex aged 85

DEATH OF
MR. W. P. FORBES

LOSS TO WANSTEAD.

The death occurred at his residence on Saturday of Mr. William Patrick Forbes, J.P., of The Chilterns, Wanstead, at the age of 73. He had been for 57 years on the staff of the Central News, Limited, and was a well-known figure in Fleet Street. He became a director of the company in 1885, and was managing director from 1918 to 1927, when, on completing 50 years' service with the company, he retired from the managing directorship, but retained his seat on the board. He maintained an active interest in the affairs of the agency to the last, and was at the office as recently as 10 days before his death. He qualified as a J.P. for Essex on September 26, 1906, and was deputy-chairman of the Becontree Bench.

Mr. Forbes is survived by his wife; their only son was killed in the Great War.

The funeral was at the Parish Church Cemetery at Wanstead, after the service at the Congregational Church, on Wednesday. Behind the coffin followed the widow and members and relatives of Mr. Forbes' family, and the large congregation included Sir Wilfred King, managing director of the Exchange Telegraph Company, Mr. W. L. Murray, European general manager of Reuter's, and Mr. Rodwell, who represented Sir Roderick Jones, the chairman of the same Agency. The Central News was represented by Mr. E. Hugh Herbert, managing director, Mr. H. G. Hart, secretary, and Mr. L. Pook, managing editor, etc.

The service was conducted by the Rev. W. G. Harrison, and the Rev. John Jermyn paid tribute to Mr. Forbes, whose death, he said, was an irreparable loss to Wanstead.

Mr. Forbes was a lover of gardening, and the coffin was covered with lilies-of-the-valley, tulips, chrysanthemums, and roses.

At the Stratford Police Court on Monday all present joined in a silent tribute to the late deputy-chairman.

(Above William P. Forbes obituary which appeared in the 'Essex Newsman' on 26th January 1935)

Every effort has been made to contact all copyright holders of the material in the profiles of these young men. We will be glad to make good any errors or omissions brought to our attention.

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Margaretha Pollitt Brown for Wanstead United Reformed Church.