



CHARLES FREDERICK BRISTOW

died 4 April 1942

Charles Frederick Bristow was born in Sleaford, Lincolnshire on 10th October 1898, one of three children of Fred Bristow, a joiner, and his wife Rose (née Topps). After serving during World War One with the Army Service Corps (Regt No T290003) he married Elsie Lomas at St Mary's Church, Thame on 26th December 1924. She was the daughter of the manager of Thame gasworks. They then went to live in Cranwell, Lincolnshire where they had three children, Rita, Enid and Annie. At the start of the Second World War Charles was recalled to join the Pioneer Corps, while Elsie and the children moved to live with Elsie's sister Nellie Pullen (née Lomas) at 26 East Street, Thame*.



Charles was one of the last to be evacuated from Dunkirk and was thought to have died until he was spotted at Thame station by daughter, Rita. He was in a poor state not having washed or changed clothes for three weeks. Soon after, he transferred to 22 Bomb Disposal Company, Royal Engineers, where he was awarded the George Medal in recognition of his bomb disposal work during the winter of 1940/41. On 1st April 1942, with Lieutenant Walton, he attempted to defuse a British "Yellow Peril" balloon bomb on marshes near Great Wakering, Essex. The bomb exploded killing Lieutenant Walton instantly and severely wounding Charles in the abdomen. He died of his wounds on 4th April in St George's Hospital, London and was buried with full military honours. He was 43 years old.

13005511 Lance Sergeant Charles Frederick Bristow GM, Royal Engineers, is buried in St Andrew's churchyard, Cranwell, Lincolnshire. He is commemorated on the church memorial in Cranwell village and his name is to be added to Thame War Memorial

*The Thame Remembers Cross was placed at his grave on 9th July 2017 by
Ian Jones of Thame Remembers.*

London Gazette 17th February 1942

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal, in recognition of conspicuous gallantry in carrying out hazardous work in a very brave manner to :-

No. 13005511 Corporal Charles Frederick BRISTOW, Corps of Royal Engineers, of Thame, Oxon. Awarded for work at Gas works, Romford and A13 road, Rainham, Essex. Cpl Bristow assisted Lt J P Walton on the 5th November 1940 in dealing with two 250kg bombs armed with both no 17 and 50 fuzes. These were in gasholders at the Romford Gas Works. The air conditions were so bad that work had to be stopped every twenty minutes. This work was completed in the shortest possible time, ensuring minimum damage and services to be re-started with the least disruption. Also, this work was carried out whilst the air raid continued. Also, on the 26th to 28th February 1941, Bristow assisted Walton in dealing with three remaining 250kg bombs of a stick of four straddling the A13 at Rainham, Essex. One of this stick exploded after 18 hours. Work commenced on these bombs after a safety period of four days, they were fuzed with both No 17 and 50 fuzes. The two when uncovered were found to be ticking, but immunized successfully.

(Note Lt Walton had previously been awarded the George Medal in 1941)



**Sgt Bristow's
George Medal**

* Note on address:

The Thame Remembers (page 167) book makes reference to his address as 23 East Street, Thame. This was a regrettable typing error and is now corrected to 26 East Street, the address where his wife's sister Nellie was living.