The Family of Eileen Mary Fell: an example of 20th Century Family Research

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to make a note of various means and sources for researching family history in the 20th Century (i.e. without the benefit of the census after 1901) used in researching one branch of my family.

It concerns the family of my 1st Cousin Twice Removed, Eileen Mary Fell.

2. Initial knowledge

The initial knowledge came from a discussion between my Grandmother Marjorie Fell Faulder (née Lendrum) and my mother around the time of the latter’s marriage in 1957.

It showed that Eileen had married a Paul Petrie and had three children: Tony, Douglas and Anne. Douglas had married a Nancy who had a daughter Alison and an un-known son. Alison and her brother would be my third cousins.

![Figure 1 - Extract of Fell Family tree drawn up between Marjorie Lendrum and Elizabeth Willett around 1957](image.png)

I could not find any further records relating to Eileen’s children or grandchildren. This is often the case with 20th century records, partly because many records have not been indexed and partly because for reasons of privacy some records (such as the 1911 Census) are not publicly available for 100 years.

The registers of births, marriages and deaths are available for inspection, but until 1984 the only indices available are the FreeBMD (quarterly) indices - and these are currently incomplete (particularly for more recent events). From 1984 the official (monthly) indices are available on-line.
3. Follow up knowledge

3.1. Details of Eileen’s Marriage

The 1901 Census showed Eileen Mary Fell (unmarried) living with her father at Easby Drive, Ilkley. The 1911 census is not yet available for public inspection. One can presume that the marriage was after 1901.

Within a family scrap-book I found a cutting from the Bradford Observer. This shows a marriage in 1914 (October 3rd) of Eileen to a Captain Paul Cuthbert Steinthal. This marriage was also recorded in The Times (Tuesday, Oct 06, 1914; pg. 1; Issue 40657; col A).

Figure 2 - Bradford Observer October 5th 1914

Suspecting that this was a previous marriage, I checked the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on-line Roll of Honour for the Death of Captain Steinthal - without success. Likewise, I could not find reports of a death in The Times. Searching the on-line World War One Medal Rolls at The National Archives returned no record for Paul Steinthal. This should have surprised me.

I could not find details of Eileen’s marriage to Paul Petrie, but was not over surprised as second marriages are not necessarily reported as publicly as first marriages. So I created the family tree showing Eileen as having married twice with children assumed to be from the second (Petrie) marriage.

3.2. Wider Search for Paul Steinthal

I remained intrigued by Captain Paul Steinthal and the lack of information about him - perhaps there had been a scandal (and a divorce)?

So I did a plain Google Search for “Paul Cuthbert Steinthal” and found a single reference in the Great War Forum (on a thread about looking people up in particular reference sources) on May 16th 2006 from “Simon R”:

Any refs. to Paul Cuthbert Petrie, O.C. the 1/11th bty. of the 4th West Riding Brigade RFA (which became D battery 245th Brigade RFA at a later date). He may have been referenced as Paul Cuthbert Steinthal - the name was changed for obvious reasons.

If not Paul Cuthbert - then anything on his brother Paul Telford Petrie?

Figure 3 - Posting on Great War Forum by Simon R
I contacted “Simon R” asking for any additional information. In the meanwhile I searched for and found in the London Gazette details of the name change:

I PAUL CUTHBERT PETRIE, heretofore called Paul Cuthbert Steinthal, of Mount Stead, Ben Rhydding, in the county of York, Merchant, now serving as Major of the 4th West Riding Howitzer Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery (Territorial Force), being a British subject, born in England of natural born British parents, give public notice, that (as declared and evidenced by deed under my hand and seal dated the 29th July, 1915, and enrolled in the Central Office of the Supreme Court of Judicature on the 10th August, 1915) I have assumed the surname of Petrie (being the maiden surname of my Mother) in lieu of the surname of Steinthal, and that I intend henceforth to sign, use and be known by the surname of Petrie.—Dated the 10th day of August, 1915.

023

PAUL CUTHBERT PETRIE.

Figure 4 - London Gazette (Gazette Issue 29262 published on the 13 August 1915. Page 51 of 94)

Simon Riches, whose main interest is in the Military History of the Royal Field Artillery rather than Family History, provided the following family tree (based on information on the Steinthal Family Plot in Ilkley Cemetery):

Figure 5 - Suggested Steinthal Family Tree (source Simon Riches)

Simon also gave details from a military reminiscence describing how:

Major Paul Petrie was our Commanding Officer, and actually we'd lost him a few weeks before we went to France. It was a strange affair, because he wasn't called Petrie then. His name was Steinthal, a German name, and he'd been forced to leave the battery, because the powers that be were suspicious about his antecedents and thought he might have German sympathies. He was in the wool trade in Bradford, and there were a lot of families in that business who were German from generations back. Anyway, he was forced to give up the command while they checked all this out and we got a nasty little fat short-arsed fellow in his place. Nobody liked him. He had a high opinion of himself and he used to give orders in a high-pitched, snarling voice. …

… Fortunately our own Major came back to us just before we left. He came back as Major Petrie. Someone who knew him said Petrie was his wife's name and he'd adopted it to avoid any more trouble.

Figure 6 - Macdonald, L. 1997 '1915: The Death of Innocence' (Penguin, London) p. 300-301

I could, therefore, conclude that I was wrong in believing that Eileen Fell had been married twice - it was one husband, but two surnames (his father’s and, contrary to the above, his mother’s maiden name).

Simon also provided a Wharfedale and Airedale Observer report of the wedding - which also included reference to Eileen’s brother Lieutenant Fell
(which would have been Harry Keith Fell, his brother, Ronald Gillies Fell, being a Captain).

He also forwarded photographs and further details of Paul Cuthbert Petrie’s service as a Battery Commander in World War I (the official history of the Battery paying glowing tribute to him as an officer) and of his involvement in the Home Guard in World War II. The battery history records how at 9:00 am, just before the armistice, Major Petrie himself fired the last shell from his battery (which at the time was the British battery which could claim to be nearest to Germany). In view of the impending armistice he despatched it with the safety-cap still on. The Germans responded at 10:45 with a dozen shells with the safety-caps most certainly off. (A Record of D245 Battery 1914-1919 by Sgt Gee M.M. and Cpl Shaw, Renwick, Otley and London p.167-168). I do not yet know how he earned his M.C. (or D.S.O).

3.3. Francis Steinthal’s Family

Although I restrict my interest to my ancestors and their descendants – which means that the Steinthal Family is outside scope – I often have a quick look at the siblings of those who “marry in” to families in my area of interest. This can often prove valuable when trying to sort out later family groups.

Because many of the Steinthal Family shown above (including Paul Cuthbert and his siblings, Paul Telford and Dorothea) were born before the 1901 Census, examination of the Census would normally confirm many of the details such as place and approximate year of birth. However, there were no references found other than for Francis Frederick Steinthal (the father) prior to his marriage to Emeline Petrie. At the time of the 1881 census he was probably visiting the Ben Rhydding Hydropathic Establishment. His occupation is listed as a Worsted Yarn Merchant and he was 26 years old and born in Bradford (in about 1855). From early telephone directories we know that he was living in Bradford (1888: 7 Selbourne Grove) and lower Wharfedale (1896: Wharfemead, Ilkley, 1902: St Johns, Ilkley); quite why he or members of his family do not show up on the 1891 and 1901 census is still not understood.

Looking through the FreeBMD index of Births confirms that the birth of Francis Frederick Steinthal was registered in the 3rd quarter of 1854 in the Bradford registration district. I also found references to Paul Telford (Q1 1883), Dorothea (Q2 1884) and Paul Cuthbert (Q1 1888), Steinthal giving their place of birth as Bradford (Registration district).

Using the FreeBMD index of marriages (which in places is not as complete as the birth index), I found marriages for both the Pauls (as Steinthals) although the Spouse’s name for Paul Telford appeared in the index (for Malton) to be Edith N Fraser, and not Eileen Mary - which being the same name as Eileen Fell, could have been a miss-transcription of the Ilkley memorial. Simon obtained photographs of the memorial which showed Paul Telford Petrie to be the “devoted husband of” Edith and later on recorded
Edith Mary Petrie as “beloved wife and mother”. The Edith Mary rather than the Edith N in the FreeBMD index might be a miss-transcription in the FreeBMD index. Edith Mary Fraser is also listed in the Malton Registration District in the 1901 Census (although born in Headingley - with the registration quarter recorded in the birth index being a quarter later than the birth date on the memorial).

Figure 7 - Steinthal / Petrie Memorial plot at Ilkley Cemetery - Photo by Simon Riches

A transcription of the Memorial is in the Appendix.

Also listed on the memorial is a Francis Eric Petrie M.A. (1886-1974), although no relationship is stated. However searching the London Gazette finds a name change declaration (Issue 31136 published on the 21 January 1919 Page 43 of 60) from “Steinthal”, giving his residence as Mount Stead, Ben Rhydding - the same address that Paul Cuthbert Steinthal used on his deed poll. A birth for a Francis Eric Steinthal is then found in the FreeBMD birth index for Bradford (Q4 1886).

Also found in the London Gazette (Issue 34088 published on the 18 September 1934. Page 47) was a declaration by the Executors of Emeline Steinthal (Paul Telford Petrie, Francis Eric Petrie, and Paul Cuthbert Petrie) and of Francis Steinthal (Francis Eric Petrie, Paul Cuthbert Petrie, and Dorothea Steinthal). The most probable conclusion is that the four executors were siblings (giving us four children compared to the previously identified three), although it has not been possible to completely exclude the possibility that Francis Eric was just a cousin.

It is probable that both parents appointed their three sons, Paul T, Francis E, and Paul C, as their executors. As the Commonwealth War Graves commission records gives the parents of Martin Alfred Petrie (d 1941), as Francis Eric and Maria Petrie, of Santa Barbara, California, Dorothea may
have been appointed an executor for their father (in place of Francis Eric) because sometime after his mother died in 1921, but possibly before his father died in 1934, Francis Eric had moved abroad. Accessing the wills would probably settle this matter.

Maria Petrie’s maiden name is deduced from the FreeBMD birth index for Martin Alfred which suggests Petrie and Zimmern as the only possible parents. I can’t, however, find the index entry for the marriage. It is possible therefore that Eric had moved abroad before marrying (and before the death of his mother) and returned to Britain to enlist bringing his wife with him. His enlistment papers may give some information. The American Ancestry website lists in its index a Maria Petrie [other possible names: Maria Zimmern] born Germany, crossing the Mexico-US border. My subscription does not give access to the detail.

These four children are probably all the children of Francis Steinthal and Emeline Petrie. However, without being able to find the family group on the 1901 census, there is a possibility that further children may be found. However, a review of the FreeBMD birth index for the period using wildcard searches does not throw up any further possible children.

3.4. The Grandchildren of Francis Steinthal

Looking through the FreeBMD birth index for Paul Telford and Edith Steinthal/Petrie children showed that Ronald A G Petrie was registered in the Wharfedale district in 1916 (Quarter 1, but consistent with a birth in late December 1915), but the mother’s maiden name was listed as Fell. However there was a Mary M F Petrie listed in Q1 of 1916 at Malton (mother’s maiden name Fraser). Provisionally we might move Ronald to be a child of Paul Cuthbert Petrie and Eileen Mary Fell. However, he does not appear to have been listed by Marjorie Fell Lendrum when she drew out the original family tree. We can also add Mary M F as a daughter of Paul Telford and Edith Fraser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>First name(s)</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Vol</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Petrie</td>
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<td>Kennington</td>
<td>Shoreditch</td>
<td>1c</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>Smith</td>
<td>W. Derby</td>
<td>8b</td>
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<td>Nantwich</td>
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<td>Petrie</td>
<td>Ormskirk</td>
<td>8b</td>
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<td>Petrie</td>
<td>Marie K</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Hammersmith</td>
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<td>Mary M F</td>
<td>Fraser</td>
<td>Malton</td>
<td>9d</td>
<td>724</td>
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<td>Tate</td>
<td>Rochford</td>
<td>4a</td>
<td>1341</td>
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<td>Ronald A G</td>
<td>Fell</td>
<td>Wharfedale</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8 - Extract: Index of Petrie Births First Quarter 1916 (per FreeBMD)

3.4.1. Children of Paul Cuthbert Petrie and Eileen Fell

Ronald Arthur George Petrie was listed on the memorial as “killed”. This was before the start of the Second World War, so the Commonwealth War Grave Commission gives no further details. However, given the slightly
unusual name, a search on the Times Archives was considered and this revealed:

THREE KILLED IN R.A.F. ACCIDENTS

The pilot and observer of a Lysander two-seat aeroplane attached to No, 2 (Army Cooperation) Squadron stationed at Hawkinge near Folkestone, were killed yesterday when their machine struck the landing ground of the aerodrome and burst into flames. It had been engaged with five similar machines in flying exercises, and they were all about to land when the accident occurred. The occupants of the aeroplane were Flying Officer Ronald Anthony George Petrie, the pilot, and Aircraftman Second Class Henry Arthur John Stacy.

Flying Officer Dennis Grenville Bell, aged 23 was killed yesterday when a single-seat aeroplane from the aerodrome at Odiham, Hampshire dived into a field near Denham (Bucks) Aerodrome, burying its nose in ground and bursting into flames. The machine had taken off from the aerodrome and had risen only above the hangars when it crashed.

Figure 9 - The London Times April 29th 1939 (pg. 16; Issue 48292; col E)

This gives his second name as Anthony, which means that he is probably the Tony on the original family tree. Simon Riches’ photographs of the memorial confirm that he is Ronald Anthony George. The formal death announcement in the Times (Monday, May 01, 1939; pg. 1; Issue 48293; col B) confirms that he was known as “Tony”.

The inquest concluded that Petrie had probably died due to cramp because The Squadron Leader had tried a similar manoeuvre and established that if Petrie had applied right rudder (which as a “fearless but absolutely safe pilot” he would have known) he would have levelled out and not crashed. (Times: Monday, May 01, 1939; pg. 16; Issue 48293; col D)

The FreeBMD birth index also suggested a “Paul D” as a Petrie - Fell child in the final quarter of 1919. The death index gives the full name - Paul Douglas Petrie, and the date of birth as 21 November 1919. Marjorie Fell Lendrum’s “Douglas” is probably “Paul Douglas Petrie”. The “Nancy” that she records as Douglas’s wife is Nancy Heather Dunlop - according to the announcement of their engagement in the Times (Aug 08, 1949; pg. 7; Issue 51454; col C):

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT P. D. PETRIE AND MISS N.H. DUNLOP

The engagement is announced between Flight Lieutenant Paul Douglas Petrie, D.F.C., younger son of Colonel P.C. Petrie, D.S.O., M.C., and Mrs Petrie, of Mount Stead, Ben Rhydding, and Nancy Heather, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C.B. Dunlop, of Riverlea, Ilkley.

Figure 10 - Announcement of Engagement of Paul Douglas Petrie and Nancy Heather Dunlop

The Ilkley memorial records an Emeline Anne Petrie as a daughter of Paul and Eileen. This is almost certainly the Anne listed by Marjorie Lendrum on the original family tree. The England & Wales Death index (Sept 2005) gives a date of birth of 7th July 1923 - exactly a year later than the date given on the memorial. Given the lack of other records, this is most likely to be the same person and the difference in year is due to an error on reporting the
death, transcribing the index, or (less likely due to the public display of the result) carving the memorial.

3.4.2. **Children of Paul Telford Petrie and Edith Fraser**

Turning to the other Paul, Paul Telford - who married Edith Mary Fraser, the FreeBMD birth index gives no entries for Steinthal - Fraser children, but three for Petrie - Fraser children all in different locations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Surname: First name(s)</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 1916</td>
<td>Petrie</td>
<td>Mary M F Fraser</td>
<td>Malton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1917</td>
<td>Petrie</td>
<td>Christine E Fraser</td>
<td>Uppingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1921</td>
<td>PETRIE Pauline M</td>
<td>Fraser Chorlton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11 - FreeBMD birth index entries for Petrie - Fraser children**

Malton is the same place as Paul and Edith were married; Uppingham is in Rutland and Paul served with the Rutland Volunteer Regiment; Chorlton is in South Manchester and Paul worked at Manchester Technical College.

The FreeBMD marriage index gave the registration district for Paul and Edith’s marriage as Malton. The London Gazette states that Paul Telford Petrie was a Temporary Captain with the 1st Bn Rutland Volunteer Regiment from July 1917 to July 1918 (Issue 30210 published on the 27 July 1917. Page 16 of 18 and Issue 30850 published on the 16 August 1918 Page 15 of 16). This supports the notes made by Simon Riches from his service file (held at the National Archives).

These same notes record that he resigns from the Manchester University OTC in 1922 due to the demands of his academic work. In a 1920 patent he is referred to as being an Engineer at Manchester Technical College (which became the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology - UMIST - now merged with the Victoria University of Manchester as Manchester University).

We can safely conclude that these three children are all the daughters of Paul Telford and Edith Mary Petrie. Their absence from the Ilkley memorial may mean that they are still alive. Searching the Times on-line archives shows:

- that Mary M F Petrie (“Peggie”, the M being for Margaret) became engaged to Arthur G H Lane Roberts (“Algy”) in 1949 (Jan 19, 1949; pg. 7; Issue 51283; col C); marriage details not found.
- that Pauline Myers Petrie married Stewart John Mitchell Marshal at Burgess Hill on 2nd December 1950 (Dec 05, 1950; pg. 1; Issue 51866; col A); and,
- that a John Telford Petrie became engaged to a Jane Adcock in 1952 (Jul 18, 1952; pg. 8; Issue 52367; col C).

The later announcement gives details of the parents showing this is a hitherto unrecognised son of Paul Telford Petrie and Edith Fraser. A renewed search of the FreeBMD index showed that his birth was registered.
in quarter 4 of 1917 at Uppingham (making him a twin of Christine) - but had not shown up on the original search because the transcribers had not been sure of the spelling of the mother’s maiden name and had indexed it as “Fra[sz]er” - which was a permutation that I had not checked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>First name(s)</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Vol</th>
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<td>Jay</td>
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Figure 12 - Petrie births registered in Q4 1917 (per freeBMD)

3.4.3. **Children of Francis Eric Petrie and Maria Zimmern**

There is one further possible grandchild of Francis and Emeline Steinthal listed on the Ilkley memorial: Martin Alfred Petrie. He is listed as the son of Eric and Maria Petrie and husband of Barbara, born March 3rd 1916, died Jan. 25th 1941 on active service in Kenya. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission includes the following details:

- Rank: Second Lieutenant
- Regiment/Service: West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own)
- Age: 24
- Date of Death: 25/01/1941
- Service No: 130027
- Additional information: Son of Francis Eric and Maria Petrie, of Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.; husband of Barbara Pym Eyre Petrie (nee Spells), of Netherfield, Hertfordshire. B.A., Hons. (Lond.).
- Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead
- Grave/Memorial Reference: Grave 246.
- Cemetery: ELDORET CEMETERY

Figure 13 - Commonwealth War Graves Commission Record for Martin Alfred Petrie

Details of his commission the year before have been found in the London Gazette (issue 34855 published on the 21 May 1940. Page 7&8 of 16), but as yet no details have been found of his marriage or the existence of any children. His wife remarried in 1957 - to David Kindersley, but that marriage was dissolved prior to 1968 (Independent Obituary: David Guy Barnabas Kindersley: stone-carver and type designer, Feb 4th 1995).

3.5. **Grandchildren of Paul Cuthbert Petrie and Eileen Mary Fell**

Although all Petries listed on the Ilkley Memorial are now accounted for, the family tree drawn out by Marjorie Lendrum lists two grandchildren of Paul Cuthbert and Eileen, Alison and an un-named boy (both third cousins). I
There are unlikely to be any others grandchildren of Paul and Eileen as Ronald Anthony George (“Tony”) and Emeline Anne (“Anne”) are not mentioned as fathers or mothers on the Ilkley memorial: it is probably safe to assume that they did not have children. In addition there is no mention of a wife for Tony in his Times Death notice; Anne is listed on the memorial as Petrie, so it is likely that she never married.

4. Outstanding Questions

Areas where I would like to find some more detail are:

1. Location of the Steinthal family at the time of the 1891 Census and at the time of the 1901 Census
2. Deed poll name change declaration for Paul Telford Steinthal
3. When and how did Paul Cuthbert Petrie gain his MC and DSO?
4. Check the wills of Francis Frederick Steinthal and Emeline Steinthal to confirm whether Francis Eric Petrie was their son.
5. If and when Francis Eric Steinthal emigrated
6. What happened to Mary M F Lane Roberts (née Petrie), Pauline Myers Marshal (née Petrie), Christine E Petrie and John Telford Petrie?
7. When did Martin Alfred Petrie and his wife Barbara marry and did they have children?
8. When was Alison Petrie born and what happened to her?
9. What happened to David Anthony Petrie?

5. Updated Family Tree

The currently understood family tree is a little larger than the original and is in a separate document.

6. Conclusions

Provided the family appears in publications like the Times and the London Gazette, it is possible with use of the Free BMD indices to trace quite a bit of a 20th Century family. Most of this can be done on line, however in this case a family memorial (and another researcher) was of significant help.
1. Annex: The Steinthal / Petrie Memorial at Ilkley

centre panel reads:

IN MEMORY OF
EMELINE PETRIE BELOVED
WIFE OF FRANCIS F STEINTHAL
BORN JULY 26TH 1855 DIED AUG 7TH 1921

ALSO OF
PAUL TELFORD PETRIE D.Sc
THEIR ELDEST SON DEVOTED
HUSBAND OF EDITH PETRIE
BORN FEB 12TH 1883 DIED MAY 19TH 1930

ALSO OF
FRANCIS F STEINTHAL J.P.
DEAR HUSBAND AND FATHER
BORN AUG 23RD 1854 DIED MARCH 30TH 1934

ALSO OF
RONALD ANTHONY GEORGE
FLYING OFFICER ROYAL AIR FORCE
SON OF PAUL AND EILEEN PETRIE
BORN DEC 15TH 1915 KILLED APRIL 28TH 1939

centre base reads:

ALSO EILEEN MARY PETRIE
WIFE OF PAUL
BORN 13TH JULY 1897 DIED 27TH JUNE 1980

left panel reads:

ALSO OF
EDITH MARY PETRIE
BELOVED WIFE AND MOTHER
BORN MAY 1ST 1882 DIED NOV. 2ND 1971

ALSO OF DOROTHEA
BELOVED DAUGHTER OF
FRANCIS AND EMELINE
MUCH LOVED AUNT
BORN APRIL 12TH 1884
DIED JAN. 16TH 1978

ALSO OF
PAUL CUTHBERT PETRIE D.S.O. M.C.
BORN JULY 18TH 1888
DIED JAN. 30TH 1979
EMELINE ANNE PETRIE
DAUGHTER OF PAUL AND EILEEN
7. 7. 1922 ~ 26. 8. 2005

right panel reads

ALSO OF
MARTIN ALFRED
SON OF ERIC AND MARIA PETRIE
AND HUSBAND OF BARBARA
BORN MARCH 3 RD 1916 DIED JAN. 25 TH 1941
ON ACTIVE SERVICE IN KENYA

ALSO OF
JULIA COLLIER
BORN AUG. 23 RD 1894 DIED MARCH 29 TH 1957
A DEAR FRIEND TO FOUR GENERATIONS

ALSO FRANCIS ERIC PETRIE M.A.
BORN NOV. 21 ST 1886 DIED MAY 23 RD 1974
AND HIS WIFE MARIA PETRIE
BORN AUG. 14 TH 1887 DIED OCT. 25 TH 1972

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