

WALTER GIBSON, Station Master, Age 46, 4th Feb 1944

Brompton-on-Swale Station Master, Age 46

NANCY RICHARDSON, Railway Clerk, Age 19, 4th Feb 1944

Brompton-on-Swale, Railway Clerk, Age 19

The devastating explosion that happened at 3:56pm on the 4th of February 1944 at Catterick Bridge station is easily the most infamous incident of the Second World War in this corner of North Yorkshire.

A lot has been written about it in the local media over the years. Chris Lloyd the well know local historian and writer wrote a series of articles in the Northern Echo and Darlington & Stockton Times. I've included one of those articles below and links to the others. I've also included numerous stories and memories from local residents.

There were truly horrific scenes that day and many acts of bravery and heroism. Although much of what follows below makes difficult reading at times, personally, I don't believe it should be forgotten.

The following is extracted from the Northern Echo article by Chris Lloyd (15 June 2010) which can be found here:

http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/features/columnists/memories/darlington/8220176.Tossing_explosives_around_and_going_out_with_a_bang/

It was four minutes to four on February 4, 1944. "I saw a flame, shaped like a big bat's wing, come from the loading area – it must have been 50 or 60 yards across," recalled the chief goods clerk Len Cockerill. "Then there was a terrific explosion, which burst my ear drum. Next thing I knew, I was sailing through the air."

John Weller, the ammunition truck driver, still sounded incredulous about what he had witnessed



three weeks later. "There was a vivid red flash and a terrific bang. My lorry disappeared," he told an inquest, "and the railway truck, in which the four men were, also disappeared. "When I came round, all I could see was some pathfinder incendiaries coming down like great white lights. As clearly as anything, I remember saying to myself: 'By hell, Jerry's copped us a real packet today'." Jerry, though, wasn't to blame, but it was a real packet: 12 were killed and 102 were injured that day at [Catterick](#) Bridge Station. Devastation was widespread: seven houses, a hotel, a cafe and the goods yard offices were destroyed. And the four men, all soldiers, did quite literally disappear: their bodies were never recovered.

Ruins of the Railway Hotel



The ruins of the Railway Hotel from the rear

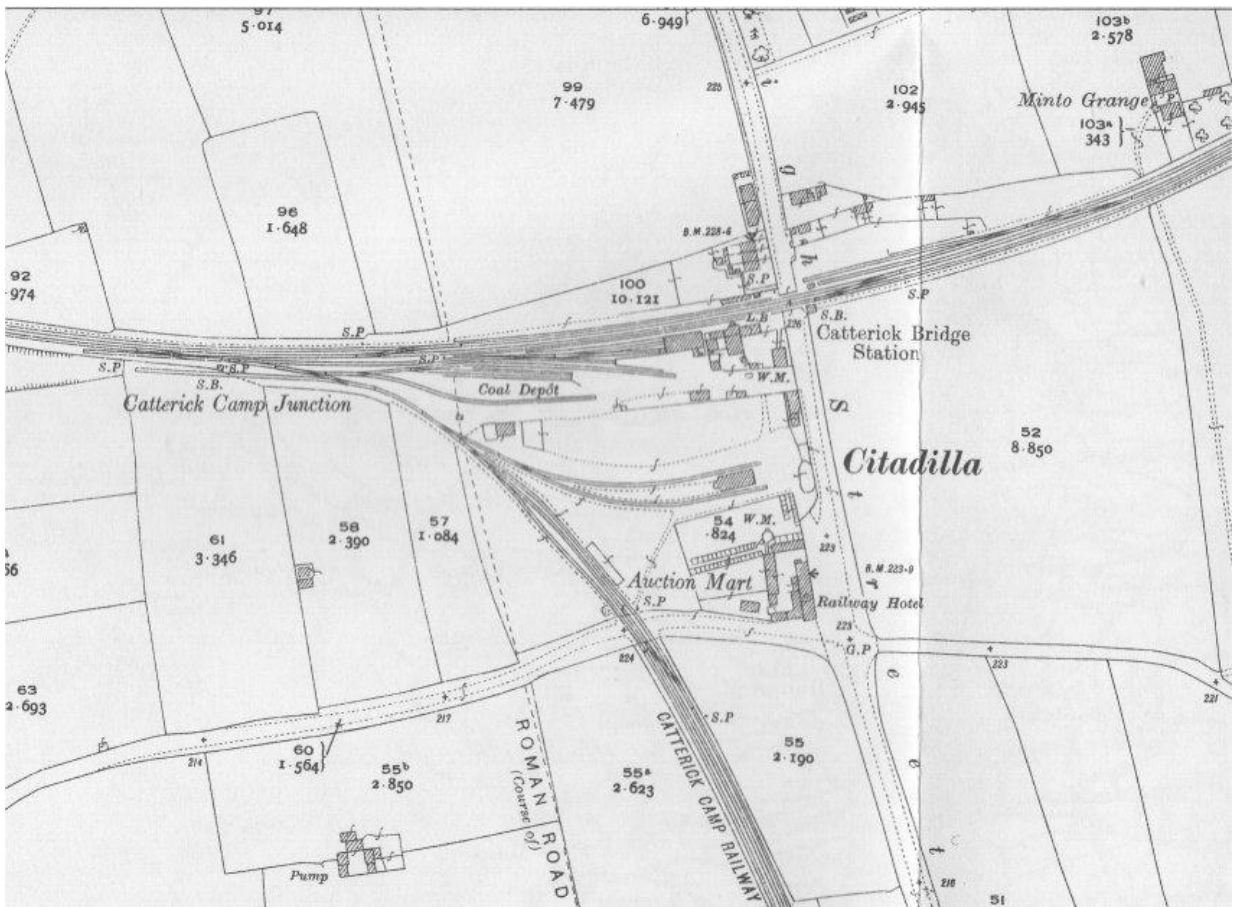
Cockerill, had said: "I'm worried about having all this ammunition so near." Stationmaster Walter Gibson replied: "If that lot goes up, none of us will have any worries." Within 24 hours, he wouldn't, poor fellow.

The terrible events began at about 3.50pm when Mr Weller pulled his laden lorry into the station goods yard.

It was a busy day. A passenger train had just left, and another was due any minute to collect the 25 people – largely schoolchildren making their way home or servicemen heading off on leave – on the platform. A packed double-decker bus was picking up its last passengers – Royal Air Force and Army men – from the Railway Hotel to take them on a big night out in Darlington.

Nine soldiers were loading explosives onto railway trucks. They'd been at it for days – they didn't know it then, but they were assembling the weaponry that would be used in the D-Day landings in Normandy four months later.

In fact, there was some concern locally about the amount of explosives that was building up in the goods yard. The night before, at the bar of the Railway Hotel, the landlady, Mabel



Catterick Bridge Station c 1905, showing location of Railway Hotel

Lorry driver Weller arrived at the goods yard with ammunition from the Hornby Park dump, near Bedale. As he parked up and walked away, Mr Cockerill noticed from a window in the Railway Hotel that four soldiers began unloading it. "I remember thinking that a month ago, they were handling those things so gently, two men to a box," he told The Northern Echo in 1967. "Now they're throwing them."

Bang! And the big bat's wing flame fanned out followed by a noise so loud it was heard ten miles away. Six six-ton trucks of antitank grenades had exploded, followed by tons of incendiary bombs which shot off like fireworks, sparking lots of smaller, satellite fires. Amazingly, the petroleum depot over the road wasn't hit. Even more amazingly, the 20,000lb blockbuster bomb in the goods yard did not go bang. Instead, the 14-ton railway truck in which it sat was blown into the air and landed – no worries – on top of stationmaster Walter Gibson. Despite an Army doctor's six hour battle, there was no saving him.

Extraordinary episodes of bravery broke out. "Though her husband was dying and her home was wrecked, Mrs W Gibson, the stationmaster's wife, warned people in the vicinity to leave their homes," said the Darlington and Stockton Times.

"Mrs Mabel Cockerill defied her own injuries to drag an elderly guest from the ruins of her home. "The signalman, 47-year-old Fred Robinson, was one of the heroes. Although severely injured, he stood by his post in the wrecked box by the level crossing. He saw his cottage across the road collapse and knew that his wife and daughter were inside, but duty demanded his remaining by the signal levers. He got a colleague to open the gates to let through a train...and when it was clear he allowed himself to be taken to hospital."

Said the Echo: "One of the local heroes is a taxi driver who ran along the line waving a flag to stop an approaching train. The roof of his car was torn off and all the glass shattered."

But 12 people died. Six were civilians: William Tindall, 40, contractor's labourer; Lancelot Rymer, 41, motor driver; Richard Stokes, motor driver; Mrs Mary Wallace Richmond, 43, railway clerk; Miss Nancy Georgina Richardson, 19, railway clerk; Walter Gibson, 46, stationmaster. Six were servicemen: Leading Aircraftman Euan Jenkins, 31, of Barry, South Wales; Lieutenant Lawrence George King, 29, radio/telephone operator of St Albans; Private David Reece Hopkins, 23; Private Norman Day, 18; Private William Thomas, 18; Private George Stares, 34, of the Pioneer Corps.

The last four were those who just disappeared before Mr Weller's eyes. "The coroner... called Police Inspector Atkinson," said the Echo, "who testified to finding a piece of spine on the grass verge opposite the Railway Hotel and to finding pieces of skin, bone and clothing stretching for a distance of 500 yards from the scene of the explosion. He took the remains to a County pathologist. He later submitted a piece of Army shirt, which he found on the south side of the explosion, to ultra-violet rays which revealed the name "Day" on the collar.

"Dr William Goldie, county pathologist, expressed the opinion that the remains came from at least three persons. One portion of skull had black wavy hair, and the other two had brown hair." The four soldiers are buried in a tiny grave in Hornby churchyard, about five miles away.

SO what caused the explosion? An official court of inquiry was held immediately, but its classified conclusions were not released to the inquest. The coroner was told that the inquiry was satisfied that there was no negligence and that all precautions had been taken. The jury returned verdicts of "accidental death" on all 12, and the cause was officially regarded as an unsolved mystery. Sabotage, though, was ruled out – a group of Italian prisoners of war were said to be working nearby.

Reports from the Echo in the Sixties suggest that a grenade with its detonator primed had somehow got in the load. The rough handling would have set it off. Another theory was that contractors working on Catterick airfield had a bitumen furnace near the ammunition trucks and it was regularly seen tossing red hot coals out of its chimney.

The explosion ruined the Railway Hotel, and that night soldiers are supposed to have salvaged what beer they could from its open cellars. The ruins were demolished a couple of years later, and its site beside the Great North Road has had light industrial uses since, but because the hotel was \so badly blown to bits, no one bothered to annul its liquor licence which remained valid until February 1984. Old hands in the district still know the hotel's crossroads as Haggie's Corner after Robert Haggie, who was landlord there from 1916 to 1932.

In addition to the 12 killed, 102 people were injured, with casualties being transported to hospitals in Catterick, Richmond and Darlington.



The Railway Hotel's landlady was Mabel Cotterill (left).

She was buried in the rubble, but survived along with her husband, Len.

She later recounted *"It was very a very popular hotel. There was a piano in one room and everyone came for a sing-song. I let my husband out of the back door and was talking to the lady who had fallen (a woman had just a fall and needed some assistance), when everything went up. My husband had just got to the garden gate when a great flame went up and he was blown right down to the crossroads. I was partially buried inside the building. When I got myself free, I heled to drag this other lady out and we were laid on top of a pile of rubble at the bottom of the yard when someone arrived. The bar, where I had been putting stock away, was wrecked when wagon wheels came through the roof."*

Mr Susan Fear (right) was working a few yards down the road in her café, serving tea to some RAF personnel. She later recalled *"I can remember it all. You can't really forget it. It all just went up in smoke. It was a sad day. The café just came down like a pack of cards. We were in it and I was injured on my arm. It all happened about 4 o'clock and I was serving the Air Force boys."*

Mrs Fear was called Mrs Meechan at the time, and her husband James Meechan had lost his life in 1940 (he is also recorded on the village War Memorial). Note that the newspaper clipping above misspelt her surname as "Meechin".



The following photographs give a further impression of the devastating blast:

The Station before:



and after:



The Railway Hotel:





The goods yard:



Clear up work and wrecked carriages:



More wrecked carriages:



The Station from the rear:





As noted above the time of the explosion (about 5 minutes to 4 in the afternoon) meant that schools had just closed for the day. Some school children were sat in a double-decker bus (registration number GHN 340, operated by United Automobile Services) near the station and had a remarkable escape. Fortunately, the blast was absorbed by buildings and despite all the windows in the bus being blown out and they all survived.

Mary Walker noted on the Catterick Village History FaceBook page *“Antie Ruby was on the bus with my cousins Mike and Morris. They were taken back up to the farm by the butchers van. Just cuts and bruises. Dad said you could find train wheels in the field down towards Scorton afterwards”*



Peter Fowler (via FaceBook) informed me that the bus was the subject of an insurance claim by Darlington based United Automobile Services. The claim was met, the vehicle repaired, and it continued in service until 1958. Here seen in Richmond Market Place.

A full list of those killed is as follows;

Civilian

- Walter Gibson, Station Master, age 46
- Mary Wallace, Railway Clerk, age 43
- Nancy Richardson, Railway Clerk, age 19
- William M. Tindill, Ordnance Worker, age 40
- Lancelot Rymer, Motor Driver, age 41
- Richard Stokes, Motor Driver

Services

- [2nd Lieutenant Laurence George King, 302642, Royal Engineers, age 29](#), St. Albans, Hertfordshire.
- [Leading Aircraftman Ieuan Jenkins, 1379397, Royal Air Force, age 34](#), son of William and Margaret Jenkins, of Burry Port, Camarthenshire, Wales. Husband of Margaret Anita Jenkins, of Burry Port
- [Private David Reece Hopkins, 14654284 Royal Army Ordnance Corps, age 23](#), son of David Reece Hopkins and Helen Hopkins
- [Private William Thomas, 14669506, Pioneer Corps, age 18](#), son of George Henry and Rose Elizabeth Thomas, of Clapham, London.
- [Private George Stares, 1691868, Pioneer Corps, age 34](#), son of Harry and Hannah Stares of Romford, Essex
- [Private Norman Day, 14669189, Pioneer Corps, age 17](#), son Thomas and Lilian Day of Harborne, Birmingham

A follow up article from the Northern Echo is also available here regarding the last four of the service casualties of the explosion who were helping load ammunition, one of whom was only 17.

http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/memories/8222939.Ammunition_explosion_ignites_more_memories/

These four are buried at Hornby churchyard, South of Catterick near Hackforth.

Ammunition was stored at Hornby Park and servicemen were billeted in the area. They were only identifiable from laundry marks in their uniforms (which could be discerned using ultra-violet light).



St Mary's Churchyard, Hornby

At the time, reporting restrictions prevented newspapers from informing readers where the explosion had been, but the Northern Echo was quick to rule out sabotage.

NORTHERN AMMUNITION TRAIN EXPLOSION NOT SABOTAGE

Death Roll 12, With Five Missing: At Least 71 Injured

SCENES reminiscent of a battlefield or a blitzed area were seen during the weekend in the vicinity of the North of England railway station where an Army and R.A.F. ammunition train blew up on Friday evening with a terrific explosion. heard ten miles away.

At least five people who were known to be near the railway station are still unaccounted for. One man in a bus, which received the full force of the blast when it pulled up outside the hotel at the station, has not been traced.

The inquest opened on Saturday on eight persons — six civilians and two Service casualties. An earlier statement by the War Office gave the then known total of Service casualties as six killed and six injured.

It is known that at least 71 people were injured. Two injured who were on the danger list at the hospital were yesterday reported to be improving.

One of the local heroes is a taxi driver who ran along the line waving a flag to stop an approaching train, passengers for which were caught by the blast as they waited on the platform. The roof of his car was torn off and all the glass shattered.

The police have ruled out any question of sabotage, and conclude that the explosion was the result of an accident.

At the inquest on Saturday, only medical evidence and evidence of identification were taken. The inquests were adjourned until Friday, 18 February.

STATIONMASTER KILLED: WIFE INJURED

One of the victims was the stationmaster, Walter Gibson, aged 46. It was revealed at the inquest that Army doctors fought for his life for six hours. His wife is among the injured. Two women railway clerks were also killed and three others are in hospital.

A statement issued by the War Office on Saturday read:

The War Office regrets to announce that during the loading of Army and R.A.F. ammunition trucks at a Northern railway station an explosion occurred, causing casualties among Service and civilian personnel. According to present reports the casualties were: Service personnel: Six killed, six injured. Civilian personnel: Four killed, two injured. Passengers in a passing omnibus were injured by broken glass. Of the Service personnel killed four were of the Army and two of the R.A.F. All the injured Service personnel were Army.

The statement added that next-of-kin of Service casualties were being informed and that an inquiry into the circumstances of the explosion would be held.

The eight people known to have lost their lives and on whom the inquest was held were:

William M. Tindill, aged 40, contractor's labourer;

Lancelot Bymer, aged 41, motor driver;

Richard Stokes, motor driver;

Walter Gibson, aged 46, stationmaster;

Mrs. Mary Wallace Richmond, aged 43, clerk at the station goods department;

Miss Nancy Georgina Richardson, aged 19, clerk at the station goods department;

Leading Aircraftman Ieuan Jenkins, aged 31, of the R.A.F.;

Lieut. Lawrence George King, aged 29, of the R.T.O. staff, who was on duty.

Much damage was done over a wide area; house windows were blown out over a radius of about a mile or more. A bus on the road near a level crossing close by the station got the full force of the blast and had all its windows shattered, but remained upright. The drivers and some of the passengers were among the injured.

Several fires broke out in buildings near the scene of the explosion and railway property was extensively damaged.

The N.F.S. and Army Fire Service were called out in force and worked heroically.

Railway services in the district were suspended for some time and a road had to be closed to traffic while debris was cleared away and so that firemen could work unhampered.

Military personnel were loading ammunition trucks just before the explosion. Several casualties occurred on the station premises and some outside the station.

It is stated that some Italian prisoners of war were working not far from the ammunition trucks.

The station felt the full force of the explosion. Buildings on both sides of the platform, the signal box and the stationmaster's house were badly damaged. F. Robinson, signalman, was among the injured.

RAILWAY PASSENGERS' ESCAPE

By a fortunate chance the explosion occurred after a passenger train had left the station and shortly before another was due.

Police, N.F.S., military and civilians worked feverishly amid scenes of devastation for some hours to control the fires. Ambulances were sent from three towns, and first-aid and rescue parties tended the injured before they were taken to hospital.

Numerous buildings outside the station were damaged, including an hotel, a cafe, garage, houses and farm buildings.

The hotel, which was about 200 yards away, was wrecked. Its landlady, Mrs. Cockerill, was among those taken to hospital. Her husband had a remarkable escape. He had been in the goods yard office at the station speaking to Miss Richardson, one of the clerks, only just before the explosion, after which he saw her charred body among the wreckage.

The explosion left a huge crater in the middle of the goods yard. The goods yard office was completely destroyed.

A petrol depot on the opposite side of the main road to the station escaped the fire.

Some further newspaper clippings from the time ...

THE INJURED

Civilians who were detained in the hospital or who received attention included:

Mr J Armitage, Mr Thomas Adamson, Mr Barker, of the L.N.E.R.; Edmond Britton, aged eight; Mr Coles; Mr Chattwin, of the N.A.A.F.I. bakery; Mrs Cowison, Mrs Cockerill, Mr Fitzpatrick, Miss Marion Gray, Thomas Graham, Mrs W Gibson, Mr G Gibson, petroleum board; Mr Hunter, Mr Hochen, St. Austell, Mrs S Meechin, aged 38; John Hugh Meechin a child; John W Nixon, Mr Overton, Miss Roberts; Mr F Robinson, signalman at the station; Miss Ada Robinson; Mr Storey, gatekeeper; Thomas Spencer, a child, Mrs Spender, Mrs Sandford, Mr J Wilds, Mr E White; Mr G Wilson, petroleum board; Mr E Williams, and Dorothy Coates, a child.

Fires and Wreckage

The scene after the explosion was like a war-torn village immediately after a battle—fires blazing, wreckage everywhere, and bodies of dead and injured lying about.

The explosion began in one of the trucks, some of which were loaded with incendiary bombs. These trucks were blown to pieces and their loads were scattered over an area of half a mile, in which they set fire to buildings.

Buildings were shaken over a very wide area and debris covered stretches of road for miles. The blast was felt three miles away.

The railway station was wrecked and Mrs. Gibson, wife of the dead station-master, is among the injured.

She and her 15-year-old daughter Pamela were in their house on the station platform at the time. Pamela said the room they were in started to fall in. They rushed out to try to find her father, but her mother was injured by the debris.

A passing bus caught the full blast of the explosion, and the driver and passengers were injured.

WORKED THROUGH THE NIGHT

Squads worked throughout the night by the aid of flares after the fires had been put out. Many householders near the scene whose homes had been damaged, had to be evacuated. Electricity and gas mains in the area were affected and telephone lines were out of use for a time.

"The scene looked just like a miniature blitz when I arrived," said a man who was on the spot shortly after the explosion occurred. "For a time," he added, "we thought the casualties would be very much heavier than they actually are. Splendid work was done by Servicemen and civilians, including women, in tending to the injured, and a large body of firemen did an excellent job in keeping the various fires under control."

EXPLOSION VICTIMS

Funerals of Stationmaster and Girl Clerk

Representatives of the military authorities, L.N.E.R. officials and many of his railway colleagues were among the big gathering of people at the funeral yesterday of Mr. Walter Gibson, aged 46, stationmaster of a North of England railway station where, last Friday, an ammunition train blew up causing heavy casualties. There were moving scenes at the cemetery, when relatives and fellow workers paid their last tribute at the graveside.

Mr. J. E. M. Roberts, L.N.E.R. District Superintendent and Mr. K. P. Walker, L.N.E.R. District Goods Manager (also representing Mr. C. M. Jenkin Jones, Divisional General Manager) attended for the railway company.

Mr. Walker also represented Mr. Jenkin Jones later in the afternoon at the funeral elsewhere in the area of Miss Nancy Georgina Richardson, aged 19 one of the two women clerks at the railway station who lost their lives in the explosion. So big was the gathering that scores of people were unable to enter the little village Methodist Church where the funeral service took place. It could have been filled twice over.

At another village a private funeral has been arranged for Mrs. Mary Wallace Richmond, the other woman clerk who was killed.

Family mourners at the funeral of Mr Gibson were: Miss Pamela Gibson (daughter); Mr and Mrs F Gibson (brother and sister-in-law); Miss Evelyn Gibson (sister); Mr and Mrs A Gibson (brother and sister-in-law); Mrs Dance and Midshipman Dance (sister-in-law and nephew); Mrs Renwick, Mrs Kendall (sisters-in-law); Miss Freda Swayne (niece).

Nancy Richardson had taught at the village Methodist Church where the funeral was held.

" DAILY HERALD " REPORTER.

FROM his wrecked box by the level-crossing in the North of England a wounded signalman saw his cottage across the road collapsing.

He knew that his wife and daughter were in the cottage. But he also knew that trains were due to pass through the village station, which had just been demolished by an explosion.

So, though almost blinded by blood, he remained at his levers.

Less than 100 yards away an ammunition train was scattering death and destruction over the village.

It had blown up while being loaded by soldiers and airmen from a dump near the goods sidings.

Others Feared Dead

People working on the railway, passengers waiting for buses and trains, housewives preparing tea, children coming home from school were killed and injured.

Twelve people—including six Service men, the stationmaster and two girl goods clerks—lost their lives and 71 were injured. At least five others are missing and are feared to be dead.

The explosion, which was heard 10 miles away, laid waste a square mile of the village, scattering incendiary bombs and bomb fragments over a wide area.

It wrecked houses, shops and hotels, and blasted windows three miles away.

" Nobody Else "

The signalman, 47-years-old Fred Robinson, told me:—

"I saw that my cottage had gone, but there was nobody else to carry on.

"I learned later that my 24-years-old daughter, Ena, was in hospital, but my wife was safe.

"I got a colleague to open the gates to let through a train which had been held up at the distant signals because the explosion had cut our communications, and when it was clear they sent me to hospital."

hospital.

Though her husband was dying, her home wrecked and she was injured, the stationmaster's wife ran through the village warning people to leave their homes.

Mrs. Mabel Cockerill, tenant of the Railway Hotel, also defied her own serious injuries to drag an elderly guest from the ruins of her home.

Blown Across Road

Tom Sykes, aged 42, motor-driver, whose wife and 11-years-old daughter, Jean, escaped with cuts when their cottage was destroyed, had an astonishing escape himself.

"I was unloading potatoes in the goods yard when the explosion blew me and my lorry across the road," he said.

Four of the victims have not yet been identified.

The inquest has been adjourned on the others: Walter Gibson, aged 46, stationmaster; Mary Wallace Richmond, aged 43, railway clerk; Nancy Georgina Richardson, aged 19, railway clerk; 2nd-Lieutenant Lawrence George King, R.E., aged 29; L.A.C. Ieuan Jenkins, R.A.F., aged 34; William M. Tindill, aged 40, ordnance worker; Lancelot Rymer, aged 41, motor-driver; and Richard Stokes, motor-driver.

There are also many memories of the day that have been recalled by local residents ...

David Graham related a number of other local memories on the Brompton-on-Swale village FaceBook page ...

Firstly, how his paternal grandfather Matthew Graham was badly injured in the explosion. *"He worked at the station as a porter and was thrown about thirty yards from where he was stood by the blast. He had been talking to the Station master and he was killed outright with both legs blown off. My granddad was off work for a year afterwards and his nerves were shattered for the rest of his life."*

It is undoubtable that there were truly horrific scenes. Walter Gibson the Station Master was in fact trapped and as noted in the Northern Echo article, there was a three hour battle to rescue him. Apparently, his legs had to be amputated as they tried in vain to save him.

Similarly, Nancy Richardson the 19 year old ticket clerk was trapped under a stove in the remains of the Station office and died of her wounds before she could be extricated.

Neil Percival said on the Catterick Village History Facebook Page

"my great grandfather William Sawyer worked with others to lift that stove off the girl trapped underneath it. They lost most of the skin on their hands trying to save her"

David Graham also mentioned Denis Brown who David worked with as an apprentice ...

"Denis Brown, who grew up in the village, and the afternoon of the explosion, was playing with his pals in the field parallel to Bridge Road which is now Curteis Drive. Denis described to me the scene as being like a gigantic firework with burning debris raining down out of the sky around them, despite their being some distance from the site of the blast. He reckoned that the pressure wave from the explosion did pass over Brompton, as a fall of soot came down the chimney at his house in Richmond Road and covered his dad from head to foot! Allegedly, at what later became our house in Bridge Road, a gentleman sat on the downstairs loo was that startled that he ran out into the back garden with his pants still round his ankles, in shock!"

"By coincidence, my dad came home on leave from his RAF Bomber Command base in Lincolnshire that evening to find the trains weren't running from Darlington to Catterick Bridge, so he got a bus to Richmond and walked to Brompton, to discover his dad (my granddad Matthew Graham) was in the Military Hospital on the Camp, having being blown up at work at the station hours earlier. Going in to the ward where he was, dad didn't at first recognise him due to the state he was in."

My own Father, Geoffrey Hodgson, also recalls playing in a field behind Richmond Road as an 8 year old, with some friends (with Denis Brown?). School had not long finished and they heard the massive explosion. Within a short time a large lump of shrapnel came down, landing a few yards away. The curious children went to pick it up but quickly realised it was smoking hot!

Peter Fowler also related interviewing his Uncle Ron, for an oral history project called Garrison Voices

"when asked if he remembered the explosion, he provided the following answer. " I remember exactly where I was when the explosion took place, I was sitting in the dentists chair at the Military Hospital". Within a few minutes patients were being removed to allow victims of the explosion to be admitted."

Peter went on to say *"Ron has vivid recollections of the rows of stretchers outside the hospital, laden with patients awaiting treatment. One other event which did not receive a great deal of publicity at the time. Three soldiers tasked with guarding the remains of the Railway Hotel,*

decided to help themselves, and sampled the contents of the cellar. All were charged with looting, and were dealt with by Court Martial."

James Crowley posted the following comment on the Catterick Village history FaceBook page:

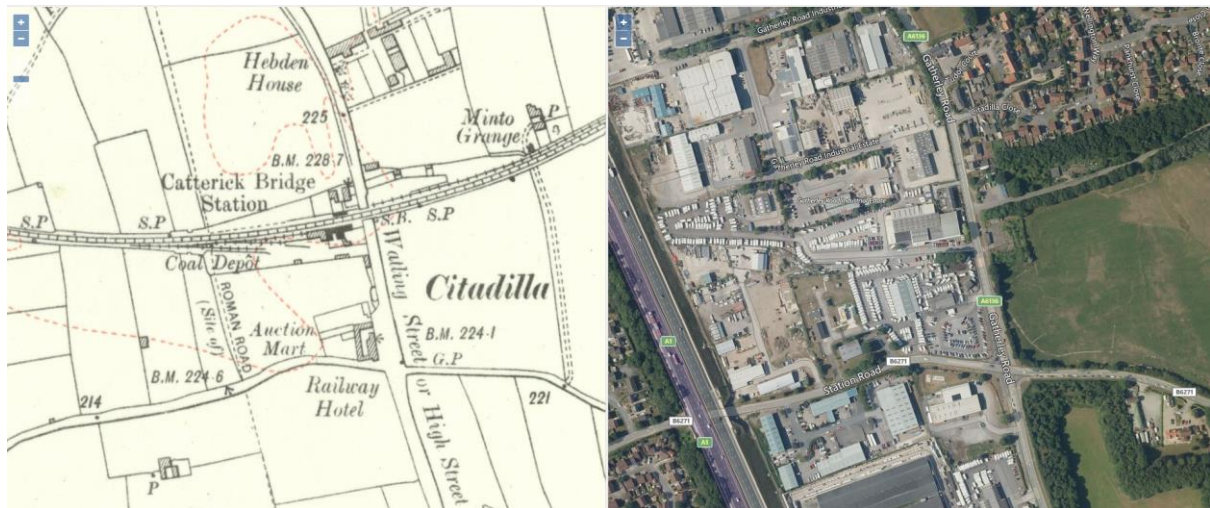
"the late John Meechan was injured in the explosion. He was a schoolboy at the time. Fred Robinson, signal man, was injured, but stuck to his post throughout the mayhem following the explosion."

Truck driver John Weller who rescued people and helped move bodies was subsequently presented with the Edward medal by King George VI – another story related in the Northern Echo

<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/8260071.catterick-bridge-bravery/>

It's now quite amazing to think that there are few reminders of that terrible afternoon, with the Station Hotel and Catterick Bridge Station all gone, replaced by car and caravan lots.

I often think there should be a memorial or a plaque or something to let people know what happened. Perhaps one day.



FaceBook Page Links

Brompton-on-Swale : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bromptononswalebanter>

Catterick Camp : <https://www.facebook.com/Catterick-Camp-History-369617456386087>

Catterick Village : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/118731764922689>