

Corporal Percy Edgar GOOLD

Service number 5573387

Royal Norfolk Regiment

4th Battalion

Killed in action on 11 February 1942, aged 25

Percy's father was the Headmaster of Wells Boys' Central School. Percy went to the Blue School and was a chorister for 15 years at St Cuthbert's Church. He played football for Wells City Reserves and Sheldon's Sports Club, and cricket for St. Cuthbert's Paper Mill. Before the war he worked in the Bristol Tramways Office in Wells. Percy joined the army early in the war and was given special leave to get married in 1940. After Pearl Harbour his battalion was sent to Singapore and on 11 February 1942 he died fighting the Japanese.



Percy, taken from a Sheldon's Sports Club team photo, 1937-38
Photograph courtesy of Sue Macdonald and Michael Scammell

Percy was born in Wells on 5 April 1916 to Ernest William West Goold and Ada Mary née Hutchings. His father was the Headmaster of Wells Boys' Central School and they lived in the School House. He had one brother and two sisters.

In September 1939, he was living with his parents at Westward Ho, Portway Avenue. Percy joined the army early in the war, and was given special leave to marry Miss Enid Dorothy Parsons of Cinderford at St Cuthbert's Church on 10 May 1940. At that time the 4th Battalion was on coastal defence duties near Yarmouth.

The story of Percy's life was reported in the *Wells Journal* of 16 November 1945:

Cpl. Goold was an old boy of the Wells Blue School. He played football and cricket for the school team and was a member of the cup winning side. He sang in St. Cuthbert's Church Choir for 15 years, and for many years was cross-bearer. He taught in the Sunday school. Before joining the Army he was employed as clerk in the Bristol Tramways Office and was treasurer of the Social Club at the Wells Depot. He had played football for Wells City

Reserves and Sheldons Sports Club and cricket for St. Cuthbert's Paper Mill. Fond of athletics he had won many prizes at the Tramways Sports at Bristol. He was a member of Wells Amateur Operatic Society.

On 20 October 1941 the 4th Battalion, along with the rest of its division, sailed via Halifax and Cape Town for the Middle East. While they were at Cape Town, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour and so they were sent via Bombay to Singapore where they arrived on 29 January 1942.

The Japanese started their invasion of Singapore Island on 8 February, and began advancing towards Bukit Timah. On 11 February, two British brigades, including the 4th Battalion, attempted a counter-attack, but this was repulsed. It was during this action that Percy was killed.

Percy is buried in Singapore at the Kranji War Cemetery in grave 17.A.20. He is also remembered on the rolls of honour at Wells Blue School, Wells Town Hall, Wells Cemetery, and on the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Co.'s war memorial, which is now on the outside of Enterprise House, Easton Road, Bristol.