

# Cornish PC found in the corner of a foreign field

**A little research can lead to some great memories and emotion.**

When John Capp of Cornwall branch saw a name in a book regarding police officers killed during World War II, he decided to research into a Cornish police officer who was killed during the Normandy Landings on 8 June 1944.

PC 158 Austin Kinver Ware is commemorated on several monuments – one near his home town of Redruth, one in Penzance, Cornwall, one at the New Strategic Policing Hub at Bodmin and one in a corner of a French field outside Caen, Normandy.

John contacted the force museum who were most helpful with copies of Austin Ware's joining up papers and discovered he joined the Cornwall Constabulary in 1937. Austin Ware, who was previously a porter with the Great Western Railway, joined the force at Bodmin and served in several stations including Hayle. Following this paper trail John discovered Austin joined HM Forces in 1942 and letters he had written to the Chief Constable, Major Hare, describing his training as an observer in the 53rd (London) Medium Artillery Regiment, where he served as a Lance Bombardier. Austin's early years were spent training in Scotland.

During 6 June his regiment were on board landing craft awaiting deployment. The unit eventually entered France on Sword Beach at Ouistreham and pushed forward on to attack Caen which was heavily defended by German units. The Regiment supported the 6th Airborne at Pegasus Bridge (commanded by Major John Howard – Oxford City Police) and deployed between Hermanville and Coleville on the outskirts of Caen.

Lance bombardier Ware (who beat 100 other students) was the top Artillery spotter in the Regiment and was manning a forward observation post on 8 June. His role was to follow the regiment laying down fire in Lisegny Wood in support of ground troops and tanks from the Staffordshire Regiment who were attempting an advance on Caen.

That night the artillery position came under German bomber attack and had two guns knocked out. Ware was killed; two others with him Lieutenant Morrison and Driver Gibbs were wounded.

Ware was the first Royal Artillery casualty of the Normandy landings.

John Capp who is the Force Bugler at ceremonial occasions and secretary of Cornwall branch organised a visit with branch members on a battlefield tour with Leger Tours. The coach drivers, the battlefield guide and 24 other enthusiasts joined the officers at a wreath laying ceremony.

The Chief Constable gave permission for uniform to be worn and supplied a wreath to be laid on his behalf.

PC Ware occupies grave X1VE.4 at Banneville-la-Campagne. A small, quiet and peaceful corner of a foreign field where he rests under the shade of two lime trees.

Paul George laid the wreath and took the salute as the clouds parted and the sun dropped low in the sky. John Capp sounded 'last post'. Graham Trevorrow of Hayle Police station placed a Cornish flag into the ground.

Retired officer John Quiller whose father fought at Pegasus Bridge quoted Laurence Binyon's poem, Ode of remembrance, which was written on the cliffs of Pentire Head overlooking Polzeath beach Cornwall in 1914.

*"For the Fallen - they shall grow not old..."*

Literally, at the going down of the sun and in the Morning, we did remember him.

