WALTERS, Cyril Harry

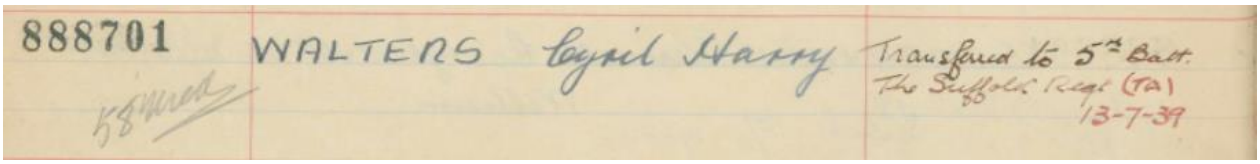


L/Cpl, 888701,
5th Batt., Suffolk Regiment
Place of Birth: Chesterton
Died of Illness in Captivity:
Friday, 12th November 1943
Cemetery: Chungkai War Cemetery
Aged: 31 years

Cyril Harry Walters, born in Chesterton on 9 August 1912, was brought up by foster parents, George William Howard and Sarah E Howard formerly Poole. George and Sarah were married in Haverhill in 1896, making their home at 33 Mill Road. Both were employed as hair cloth weavers, no doubt at Chauntry Mills.

Cyril was to meet Evelyn Brown and they married in 1936. Evelyn's mother's maiden name was Howard, the same as Cyril's foster family so it is possible that he met his wife through this family link.

On 2nd October 1937, Cyril and Evelyn had a son, Richard George. At this time Cyril was working as a grocer's assistant and the family were living at 1 Peas Hill. Shortly after this and prior to the outbreak of war he took a job as a waiter in the Sergeants' Mess at a local aerodrome. In 1939, like so many other local men, he originally enlisted in the Royal Artillery before being transferred to the 5th Suffolks (TA) on 13th July 1939. His wife Evelyn W.M. and son Richard were living at 4 Eden Road at the time of the 1939 Register.


888701 WALTERS Cyril Harry Transferred to 5th Batt. The Suffolk Regt (TA) 13-7-39

After mobilisation, the 5th Battalion, along with Battalions from other East Anglian Regiments, sailed from British ports expecting to go to the Middle East. With the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, plans were changed and they found themselves bound for Singapore.

Following the surrender to Japanese forces on 15 February 1942, Cyril found himself a Prisoner of War. He was one of the many employed in the building of the Thailand railway.

The first news of Cyril was reported in the South West Suffolk Echo on 8 January 1944,

> *"Mrs S E Howard of 1 Priory Avenue, Haverhill, has had the joy of receiving the first news of her foster son, L Cpl Cyril H Walters 5th Suffolk Regiment,*

after a period of nearly two years. He too is a prisoner of war in Thailand Camp.... He has a wife and 6 year old son living in Fairy Croft Road, Saffron Walden. Mrs Howard wishes to express her appreciation of the many kind enquiries received during the period of waiting for news of her son."

When Cyril's wife and foster mother heard the news of his being a prisoner of war, they were not to know that he had in fact died at Chungkai two months earlier on 12th November 1943, suffering from an ulcer, beri-beri and acute enteritis.

57	Lance Corporal	CYRIL HARRY WALTERS	888701	12/11/43	Acute Enteritis Inhumed

Like for so many other next of kin, his death was not confirmed until after the end of the war, in this case on 4th October 1945.

Cyril was buried in Chungkai War Cemetery.



