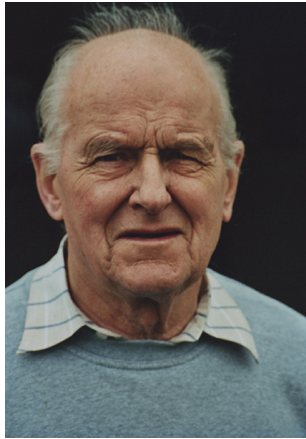


WILLIAM FREDERICK COWLEY (1925–2016)



Known as Bill to his friends and relatives, but Dad and Grampy to extended family, Bill spent his entire life of more than 91 years in Deddington. He was the middle child to Gertrude and Frederick and was born in the row of village cottages called The Stile.

His childhood was hard since his father died when he was only 11 years old. Bill was a choir boy in Deddington and on one occasion sang in Westminster Abbey along with others from the village. After attending Deddington School, Bill trained as a bespoke tailor at the haberdashery store in the Market Place owned by Harry Wells, known as Ticky.

At the age of 17 Bill joined the Royal Marines and became a corporal in the 46th Commandos. On 12 August 1944 he was severely wounded in Troarn and was shipped back to England. After spending weeks in a coma, he spent months in rehabilitation, learning to walk and feed himself. Eventually he recovered enough to allow him to return to his career at the tailors. The effects of his wounds would limit some things for the remainder of his life such as never being able to hold a driving licence. As a result he was regularly seen on his bicycle, usually whistling a tune. The final years of his working life were spent as caretaker at Deddington Primary School.

Following his retirement Bill and Daisy enjoyed a number of trips to visit daughter Susan and her family in Canada and the United States. Bill was pre-deceased by Daisy in 2012 following 62 years of marriage. They met in Deddington where she was working as a children's nanny. They were married in Souldern Church in 1950 and spent their early years at The Stile where they welcomed three children: Janet, John and Paul. In 1959 the family moved to The Paddocks where their family was completed with the arrival of Susan and David.

For many years he was a bellringer and sidesman. He also took on the role of Bellringing Captain until he was no longer able to climb the stairs to the belfry. He enjoyed his garden and had an allotment providing the family with a steady supply of fresh fruit and vegetables. He was still tending his garden well into his 80s.

In 2004 he returned to Normandy with his son, Paul, for the 60th anniversary of D-Day where he spent an emotional few days. He proudly wore his war medals and Royal Marines beret. In December last year he was awarded the Légion d'Honneur, France's highest honour for D-Day veterans which he was proud to show visitors.

Bill was always independent and lived alone for several years, with support from his daughter, Janet. Bill enjoyed regular visits from family members and he was always happy to hear about their latest activities. In May this year he moved to Galanos House, the British Legion care home in Southam. He settled in well and made new friends with similar experiences of the War. Bill left us with many fond memories.

The Cowley Family