

Now the labourer's task is o'er;
Now the battle day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last.
There the tears of earth are dried;
There its hidden things are clear;
There the work of life is tried
By a more just Judge than here.

There the Shepherd, bringing home
Many a lamb forlorn and strayed,
Shelters each, no more to roam,
Where the wolf can ne'er invade.
There the sinful souls, that turn
To the cross their dying eyes,
All the love of Christ shall learn
At His feet in Paradise.

There no more the powers of hell
Can prevail to mar their peace;
Christ the Lord shall guard them well,
He who died for their release.
Earth to earth, and dust to dust,
Calmly now the words we say;
Left behind, we wait in trust
For the resurrection day.

John Ellerton, 1826-1893

Sung at the funeral of Sir John Alcock in Manchester Cathedral

Rector: The Revd Richard Young
✉ richardyoung09@gmail.com
Associate Priest: The Revd Jane Walker
www.holyinnocentsff.org
Church Office: 0161 224 05

HOLY INNOCENTS FALLOWFIELD DECEMBER 2019



*“Shine through the gloom,
and point me to the skies”*



Remembering
Captain Sir John Alcock

1892-1919

John (Jack) Alcock was born in 1892, in the lodge of Basford House, Seymour Grove, where his father John was coachman. Basford House was the home of the Nuttall family of Hale. His mother was Mary née Whitelegg. A sister Elsie was also born there, before the family moved to Heaton Moor (where a brother Dudley was born), and he attended St Thomas Heaton Chapel primary school. At some point the family moved back to Manchester, and lived at 6 Kingswood Road; they attended Holy Innocents Church.

He first became interested in flying at the age of 17. His first job was at the Empress Motor Works in Manchester. In 1910 he became an assistant to Works Manager Charles Fletcher, an early Manchester aviator and Norman Crossland, a motor engineer and founder of Manchester Aero Club. It was during this period that Alcock met the Frenchman Maurice Ducrocq who was both a demonstration pilot and UK sales representative for aero engines made by the Italian Spirito Mario Viale. Ducrocq took Alcock on as a mechanic at the Brooklands aerodrome, Surrey, where he learned to fly at Ducrocq's flying school, gaining his pilot's licence there in November 1912. Alcock then joined the Sunbeam Motor Car Company as a racing pilot. By summer 1914 he was proficient enough to compete in a Hendon-Birmingham-Manchester and return air race, flying a Farman biplane. He landed at Trafford Park Aerodrome and flew back to Hendon the same day.

At the outbreak of World War I, Alcock joined the Royal Naval Air Service as a warrant-officer instructor at the Royal Naval Flying School at Eastchurch in Kent. It was whilst at Eastchurch that Alcock received his commission as a flight sub-lieutenant in December 1915. In 1916 he was transferred to a squadron operating at Moudros, on the Greek island of Lemnos. While stationed at Moudros he conceived and built the *Alcock Scout*, a fighter aircraft built out of the remnants of unused and abandoned aircraft.

On 30 September 1917, whilst piloting a Sopwith Camel, Alcock attacked three enemy aircraft, forcing two to crash into the sea. For this action he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. After returning to base he then piloted a Handley Page bomber on a raid to Constantinople. He was forced to turn back to base after an engine failed near Gallipoli. After flying on a single engine for more than 60 miles, that engine failed and the aircraft ditched in the sea, near Suvla Bay. Alcock and his crew of two were unable to attract nearby British destroyers, and when the plane finally began to sink they swam for an hour to reach the enemy-held shore. All three were taken prisoner next day by the Turkish forces. Alcock remained a prisoner of war until the Armistice and retired from the Royal Air Force in March 1919. After the war he worked as a test pilot for Metropolitan Vickers in Trafford Park, and rose to the challenge of being the first to fly non-stop across the Atlantic (for which the Daily Mail had offered a £10,000 prize). With Lt Arthur Whitten Brown as navigator, they made the 1,980 mile crossing from St John's Newfoundland to Derrygimla bog near Clifden in

Connemara in a modified Vickers Vimy bomber in 16 hours 12 minutes. The flight was plagued by atrocious weather, turbulence and instrument failure.

A few days later both men were knighted by King George V at Windsor Castle.

Jack was present at the Science Museum in London on 15 December 1919 when the recovered Vimy was presented to the nation. Three days later he was flying a new Vickers amphibious plane, the Type 54 Viking, from Weybridge to the first postwar aeronautical exhibition in Paris when he crashed in fog at Cottevrard, near Rouen, Normandy, stalling such that a wing hit a tree. He fractured his skull and died in hospital. He was 27. His body was brought from France and taken into Holy Innocents on Christmas morning and was continuously guarded by family members and relays of returned soldiers, Scouts and others, until his funeral on 27 December. After a short service conducted by the Rectors of Holy Innocents and St Chad Ladybarn, with his favourite hymn 'Abide with me', the coffin, covered with a Union Jack on which rested his cap, was removed to the Dead March in Saul onto a long-bodied aeroplane trailer, and drawn by an Air Force motor lorry laden with flowers to the Cathedral, where a large crowd gathered for his funeral service, attended by many local dignitaries. 'Abide with me' was sung again, and 'Now the labourer's task is o'er'. Dean William Swayne led the burial service, but at the relatives' request there was no address. At Southern Cemetery, with a crowd of several thousand, Rector Lockett led the committal. Two aeroplanes circled overhead, volleys were fired over the grave by a firing party of the RAF, and two buglers sounded the Last Post. The public filed past the grave, lined with yellow chrysanthemums. His parents' wreath was of white chrysanthemums and lilies in the form of an aeroplane.

Michael Ainsworth, April 2019

Marking 100 Years

Wednesday 18th December: Installation of art and research project by Year 5 pupils from St James' School in the Lady Chapel.
Lighting of Paschal Candle in remembrance
Short Office
Tolling of Bell

We have invited the parish priest and M.le Maire de Cottevrard to light a candle, lower their town flag and toll their bell at 16h to unite in remembrance.
Candles lit at Manchester Cathedral and St Bride's Old Trafford during the day.

On Christmas Day, flowers will be added to the display.

Friday 27th December 12.00: A short act of remembrance
Floral tribute to go to Southern Cemetery
Walk with photo tribute to Manchester Cathedral