Letter written by Peggy Lane

I don’t know if this will interest you but some years ago before my husband died we received some newspaper cuttings from a friend in Devon who lives in the same village we lived in after the war for about 20 years she thought it would interest my husband. It was about a body that had been found washed up on the shores of Ireland years ago during the war. He had been unidentified all these years. An historian was writing this story about this and put the adverts in to see if anyone had any info for his story about a liner called Arandora Star, which had been torpedoed off the coast of Ireland. A man from Teignmouth wrote and said he thought he recognised the body as Eddie Lane, my husband’s brother. M. Reid the historian did a lot of investigating and went to Ireland himself. It turned out it was John’s brother and he had been in this little cemetery unidentified for all these years. Sadly my husband died before he could visit the grave. It turned out Eddie had been a soldier on the ship the Arandora Star, which was taking children and internees to Canada. It had been torpedoed off the coast of Ireland on July 2nd 1940. Sadly Eddie’s body had been washed up on the shores of Ireland with one arm missing and nothing to say who he was. Last year a councillor called Mr. L. N. Holland rang us from Kingsteignton where we used to live; rang us for information of Eddie.

He said the War Graves Commission were going to erect a proper headstone for Eddie instead of the old that had been standing all these years with no name, rank etc. He went to Ireland himself last August to oversee the new headstone with Eddie’s name, age and rank. It was a real occasion with full military honours, and with a gathering of villagers and the relations and other who had looked after Eddie’s grave all these years. I wrote some years to thank the people who had been kind enough to tend his grave. Mr Holland the councillor who had gone to all this trouble sent me photos of the gravestones before and after, the new one is really grand. I’m sending this in case it might be something you would be interested in. Although sadly enough I never met Eddie it was before I met my husband.