

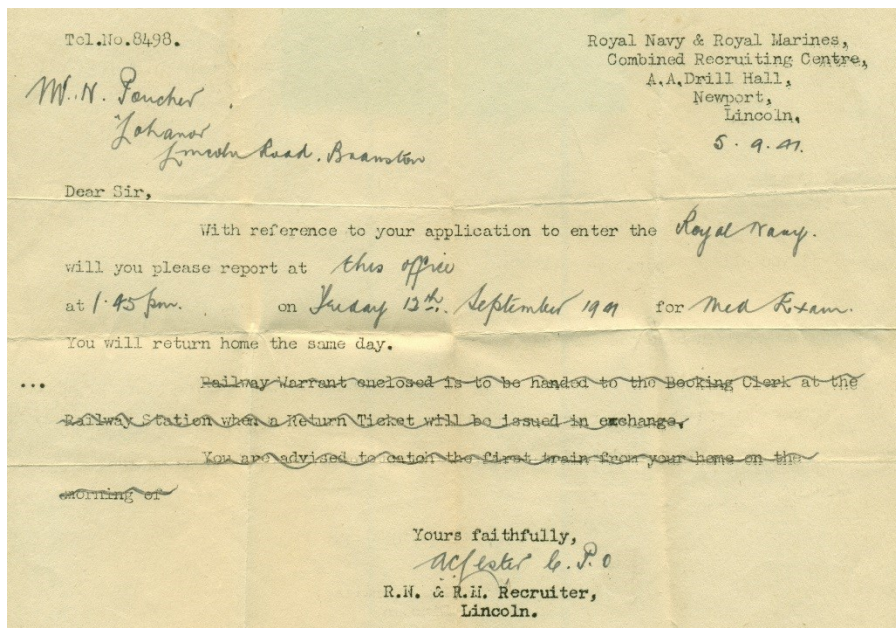
## The Life and Times of Norman 'Nodge' Poucher of Branston



Norman 'Nodge' Poucher was born in Lincoln in 1923 and lived with his parents Emma and Harry 'Cherry' Poucher, and his two older brothers Lol Horner and Harry 'Tid' Horner. (Both of these brothers were born to Emma during her first marriage.) In 1937 the family moved to Lincoln Road, Branston where they became involved in the usual village activities.

Photo of Emma & Harry Poucher

Shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War, Nodge's brother 'Tid' enlisted in the Royal Navy, and in 1941 at the age of 18 years Nodge himself applied to join the Royal Navy and was accepted, and was subsequently posted to H.M.S. Ganges for initial training.



Letter requesting attendance for medical examination

Tel.No.8498.

Mr. N. Poucher,  
"Lohanor",  
Lincoln Road,  
Branston. Lincs.

Royal Navy & Royal Marines,  
Combined Recruiting Centre,  
A.A. Drill Hall,  
Newport,  
Lincoln

29th September,1941.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your application to be considered as  
an Ordinary Seaman. in the Royal Navy, for the  
period of the present emergency, I have to inform you that a  
nomination has been received for you to enter the Royal Navy  
on Monday the 6th of October,1941.

Will you please report at this office at 9.15 a.m. on the  
morning of Monday the 6th of October,1941. bringing  
with you the following articles:-

National Health Insurance Card  
Record Card  
Medical Card  
Unemployment Book  
National Registration Card  
Civilian Ration Book  
Civilian Anti-gas Respirator  
Form N.S.124. (see instructions below)

- x. If you are married will you please bring your Marriage Certificate  
and Birth Certificates of any children.  
x. Will you please complete part A of the attached form N.S.124.  
... This form must be correctly completed.

Yours faithfully,

*ac Foster*  
R.N. & R.M. Recruiter,  
Lincoln.

C.P.O.

Encls.

94M3193-2 D/d.127 250 7/40

Letter confirming  
acceptance into the  
Royal Navy

His period of service that he undertook was not defined in years but was stated to be 'for the period of the present emergency'.



Photo taken November 1941 H.M.S. Ganges Chatham  
 Norman Poucher 3<sup>rd</sup> row down 3<sup>rd</sup> from left

After completing his initial training he was then posted to various locations for further training on H.M. ships Pembroke, Northney, Northney 11, Queen Emma, Princess Josephine Charlotte, and Quebec. This further training was in relation to Combined Operations and involved being at 'action stations' on ships used in the transportation of assault troops, including commandos, for amphibious landings, and the use of landing craft of various types for carrying out attacks on enemy held beaches. After completion of his training he was designated as an Able Seaman and then was posted to H.M.S. Copra. During these times he and his brother 'Tid', who was serving on H.M.S. ESKIMO, a Tribal Class Destroyer (75) were often in touch with each other by letter regarding various matters, especially their shore leave and what they had been up to during their forays ashore.

Nodge, like many other veterans, rarely spoke of his wartime service, but he did once speak of the occasion when he was at sea having recently left port, and H.M.S. ESKIMO was passing in the opposite direction. He requested permission to send a message to his brother 'Tid' who he was aware was on board H.M.S. ESKIMO but this was refused on security grounds.



Sometime later on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1943, off the island of Sicily, H.M.S. ESKIMO was attacked by German dive bombers and a bomb penetrated two fuel oil tanks causing a massive explosion which killed 19 men and injured 22 others. Sadly one of those killed was 'Tid'. The ship had to be towed to Malta and then to England for repairs.



Harry "Tid" Horner

Charges to Pay  
.....d.  
RECEIVED

POST OFFICE  
TELEGRAM

No. ....  
OFFICE STAMP

Prefix Time handed in Office of Origin and Service Instructions Words  
12: 3 11 12 29

From To

W. G. Pouchen to Emma Brandt  
Deeply Regret to Report  
death of your son  
H. Horner. CI/X 203939  
on War Service letter.  
follows. Commander Royal Navy.

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by the form and if possible the envelope 51-5087

Telegram informing Emma of the death of her son Harry

21/10/44

If a copy of this Form is required,  
Form S. 1243 is to be used.

S.—459 (Revised—August, 1939).

### CERTIFICATE of the Service of

<b>SURNAME</b> (In Block Letters)	<b>CHRISTIAN NAME OR NAMES</b>
<b>POUCHER</b>	<b>Norman</b>

in the Royal Navy.

NOTE.—The corner of this Certificate is to be cut off where indicated if the man is discharged with a "Bad" character or with disgrace, or if specially directed by the Admiralty. If the corner is cut off, the fact is to be noted in the Ledger.

Port Division	Latham	Man's Signature on discharge to Pension
Official No.	JX 315253 / 913.	
Date of Birth	24 March 1923	Nearest known Relative or Friend (To be noted in pencil)
Where Born	Town or Village	Relationship :
	County	Name :
Trade brought up to	Factory Worker	Address :
Religious Denomination	Church of England	

All Engagements, including Non-C.S., to be noted in these Columns			Swimming Qualifications		
Date of actually volunteering	Commencement of time	Period volunteered for	Date	Qualification	Signature
1	6 Oct 41	For the period	18 Oct 41	P.P.Y (G)	M.M. Rop
2		of the present	2		
3		emergency	3		
4			4		
5		Stops No 4705905 issued. 4/3/46			
6		(Volunteer)	6 NRid	TJCY 38-3	

**Medals, Clasps, &c. L.S. and G.C. Gratuity (see also page 4).**

Date received or forfeited	Nature of Decoration	Date received or forfeited	Nature of Decoration

Description of Person	Stature			Colour of			Marks, Wounds, and Scars
	Feet	Ins.	Chest In.	Hair	Eyes	Complexion	
On Entry as a Boy	5	7 3/4	34 1/4	Brown	Hazel	Pale	Nil.
On advancement to man's rating, or on entry under 28 years ...							
On re-engagement or re-entry for C.S. or for Non-C.S. after at- taining 28 years							
Further description if							

Service Record Norman Poucher

Name Norman Pouches

Quebec

✓ Confirmed

Revised  
Blair H.  
35126.

Date	Wounds received in Action and Hurt Certificate; also any meritorious Service, Special recommendations, Prize or other Grants; temporary advancements to local (acting) ratings, with inclusive dates.	Captain's Signature
6 Oct '44 27 Oct '45	WSI(3) WSI 4 years.	J. Soule [Signature]
<div data-bbox="378 1541 938 1556" style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">             PAYMENT OF WAR GRATUITY AND P.W.C.           </div>		

In 1946, after being demobbed from the Royal Navy Nodge returned to Branston and joined the Post Office and was appointed as postman in his own village area. This was fortuitous as it was here that he met his future wife Muriel, who came from Metherringham, and who was working in Branston Post Office. They married in 1950 and lived with Nodge's parents for a time until they took up residence in a bungalow next to his parents' home on Lincoln Road where they spent the rest of their lives.



Photo of Muriel & Norman Poucher

During his work as a postman, which lasted until his retirement, Nodge was regarded as a very diligent person who always had time to stop and converse with householders.

Whenever he found anyone to be downhearted about any matter he was always willing to listen and reassure them, and if he discovered anyone had any official documents or forms to fill in which they did not quite understand he would help them to complete them. During his time, the use of letters and postcards as a means of communication was far more prevalent than

today and Nodge would often inform a householder of the brief details of a postcard before handing it over, such was his relationship with residents.

Nodge's mother Emma was a prolific organiser and supporter of events in Branston and her enthusiasm and hard work in these matters was recognised in a letter of commendation she received from her local member of parliament, Mr Joseph Godber, M.P.

Nodge seems to have followed in his mother's footsteps in this respect for he was a great supporter of The Home Guard Club and was chairman of the committee for a number of years. He was also a staunch supporter of The Royal British Legion Branch, serving as a committee member, also as secretary, and he acted as Standard Bearer. Through his work as postman and his involvement in community activities he was recognized as one of the most well-known and respected residents of Branston.

Sadly his wife Muriel passed away on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 at Canwick House Care Home. This loss affected Nodge very deeply and on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 he too suddenly passed away at Woodview Care Home at Branston.

Obituary written by Fran Whitaker in December 2010

**DEC 2010**

**BRANSTON**  
Frances Whitaker  
01522 791310

Obituary: The funeral of Norman Poucher was held at Lincoln Crematorium and was conducted by Canon Bryan Barrodale and Reader Nigel Dickin. The hymns were I vow to the my Country and Jerusalem.

The British Legion was in attendance and the Standard raised and lowered by Brian Lazenby - chairman of the Washingborough and District Branch which includes Branston.

Mr Poucher was always known as Nodge. He was a good postman and time was when he and his fellow worker knew everyone in the village. He was born in Lincoln in 1924. He had two brothers Lol and the late Tid. The family lived in the City until 1937 when Nodge's mother bought a plot of land on Lincoln Road Branston and built a house there.

With the coming of the war Nodge managed to get himself into the Navy at an early age. He served mainly in the Mediterranean; on one occasion he narrowly escaped with his life when the ship was struck by a tornado. He took part in the landings at Salerno.

On demob he returned to Branston and joined the Post Office in 1946 and was appointed postman for his home village. Muriel who was to become his wife in 1950 was Branston postmistress. They married in the chapel at Metheringham where Muriel's father was a lay minister.

In early married life they lived with Nodge's parents at in Branston and later they had their own home nearby. The wages paid by the Post Office were very poor (around thirty shillings a week) and consequently the couple had to work extra hours to make ends meet.

Nodge as village postman kept up with the lives of everyone. He would read post cards and know details of family lives. This was not nosiness - he genuinely had a real affection for his customers and a lively interest in the happenings.

He was famous for little deeds of kindness. A typical example is the time plants were delivered to a home where he knew the occupants to be away. He planted the plants in the garden and watered them until the family returned. When thanked he could not understand what the fuss was about - to him he was just acting as a good neighbour would act.

Of course he encountered dogs in his job and one animal was so frustrated at trying to get to the postman it charged straight through a plate glass door and tried to catch the disappearing Nodge.

Years ago post was delivered on Christmas Day - returning home having shared a glass or two on his rounds he settled to rest in his chair putting his Christmas tips in his boots, his favourite hiding place.

Often his wife Muriel would have a share of the tips unbeknown to Nodge.

Over the years Nodge played a significant part in village life. He was chairman of the Home Guard Club and long time committee member and secretary of the Royal British Legion Branch. He and Muriel went to the Albert Hall three times to take part in the National Festival of Remembrance.

In retirement the couple enjoyed holidays overseas.

They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary but sadly Muriel (known as Mu) died in February this year.

Life was never the same again and Nodge's own health began to fade quickly. He looked back over his life with gratitude and humour. He was admitted to Woodview Nursing Home where he died on December 1st.

Thanks are expressed to Canon Barrodale for supplying the information for this article. In concluding the service he said - 'We are laying to rest one of Branston's true characters - a man of simple needs, free from envy or any aspirations for wealth or position. He was honest, hard working and straightforward. Being unassuming he tried his utmost to love his fellow man.

He will be sorely missed.

Donations in lieu of flowers were for the Royal British Legion. He leaves behind his brother Lol; nephew Alan Horner and niece Gillian Duncan and their families.

Thanks are expressed for the messages of sympathy.