

Gunner John Faramus WWI and WWII



Gunner John Marie Francis Faramus 1019211 Royal Artillery, who was born in 1894 in Jersey, the son of Francois and Jeanne Faramus. He apparently ran away from home in order to join the Army and enlisted on 31 January 1912 joining the Royal Artillery where he would have trained at Woolwich, after which he was subsequently posted to the Royal Horse Artillery where he became a gifted horseman.

He was posted after training to India in 1913 and here we see a photograph of the Royal horse Artillery at leisure in 1913 and a more formal one during the same period and who knows one of the soldiers in this photograph might very well be John Faramus. He remained in India until 1917 when he deployed on operations to Mesopotamia. The Royal Artillery records are somewhat sketchy but it would seem that he deployed with V battery Royal Horse Artillery in early 1917.

He was involved in the second Battle of Kut which was captured in February 1917. (Figure 1) we see a photograph of members of the battery with John marked by a cross and circled taken at Kut.



Figure 1 - Photo of John and members of his battery

The calamitous first Battle of Kut had been avenged. The Army then pressed on to Baghdad which was captured on 11 March after a short battle and (Figure 2) shows the troops entering Baghdad.



Figure 2 - Troops entering Baghdad

According to the records John Faramus remained in Mesopotamia until 1919 and he is likely to have taken part in some if not all of the battles shown in (Figure 3).

Second Battle of Kut	Opened 13 December 1916
Battle of Khadairi Bend	Opened 9 January 1917
Battle of Nahr-al-Kalek	Opened 26 February 1917
Capture of Baghdad	Opened 11 March 1917
Samarrah Offensive	Opened 13 March 1917
Seizure of Falluja	Opened 19 March 1917
Battle of Jebel Hamlin	Opened 25 March 1917
Battle of Shiala	Opened 11 April 1917
Battle of Istabulat	Opened 21 April 1917
Battle of the Boot	Opened 30 April 1917
Battle of Ramadi	Opened 28 September 1917
Capture of Tikrit	Opened 5 November 1917
Battle of Sharqat	Opened 29 October 1918

Figure 3 - Campaign Battles

After Mesopotamia his records are equally unclear regarding the post-war period but he was stationed in India for much of this time and having married Jessie he was accompanied by her during his postings. One of his sons was born in India and during the hot summer months when training was taking place the wives departed for the cooler climates in the hills. This slide is a photograph of the Royal horse Artillery at leisure. However during this period in the 1920s it was not all play and he took part in operations against the Pathans on the North-West Frontier. At some stage his ability as a horseman was clearly recognised and he became part of the Viceroy's escort which was a ceremonial role and (Figure 4) shows him in that role.



Figure 4 - Gunner Faramus Viceroy's Escort

In 1931 he was struck down with illness and was returned to Britain where he was discharged probably for medical reasons from the Army on 21 January but such was his enthusiasm for the Army that he immediately re-enlisted the following day which in present times would be virtually impossible but it seems the Army and the Royal Artillery turned a blind eye and he returned to his work with horses. He was stationed in Deepcut and in 1937 General Schreiber took command of the Artillery Brigade in Deepcut and it must have been at this time that John Faramus became associated with the General. The following year Gen Schreiber was appointed to command the Artillery Brigade of Southern Command and took up residence in Howard's House with John Faramus looking after him and John moved his family into Holt Cottage where they remained for many years. These houses were rented by the Army and John Faramus had to pay a rent of three shillings and sixpence a week. Schreiber was promoted to command the Corps Artillery of the 2nd Corps and moved with the BEF to France in September 1939. John Faramus moved with him and was a valuable member of his staff as he was a fluent French speaker. Schreiber returned to the UK to command an infantry division and it seems that it was at this point he parted company with John Faramus who then took up an appointment at Porton Down as the commanding officer's groom. He continued to live in Teffont and bicycled daily to Porton some 18 miles on his trusty Hercules bicycle and 18 miles back at the end of his working day. He could I am sure have given Bradley Wiggins a run for his money.

Having survived the battles in Mesopotamia and the Pathans of the North-West Frontier as well as the BEF in France he was tragically killed on the 15th July 1942 in a freak accident while exercising his horse when some tree cutters were taking down a tree as he was riding past and he was killed with his fine horse.



Figure 5 - Gunner Faramus and Horse

He is buried in the Magna graveyard along with his wife and two sons (Figure 6).



Figure 6 - Teffont Magna War Grave

Here is the War Graves commission certificate (Figure 7).

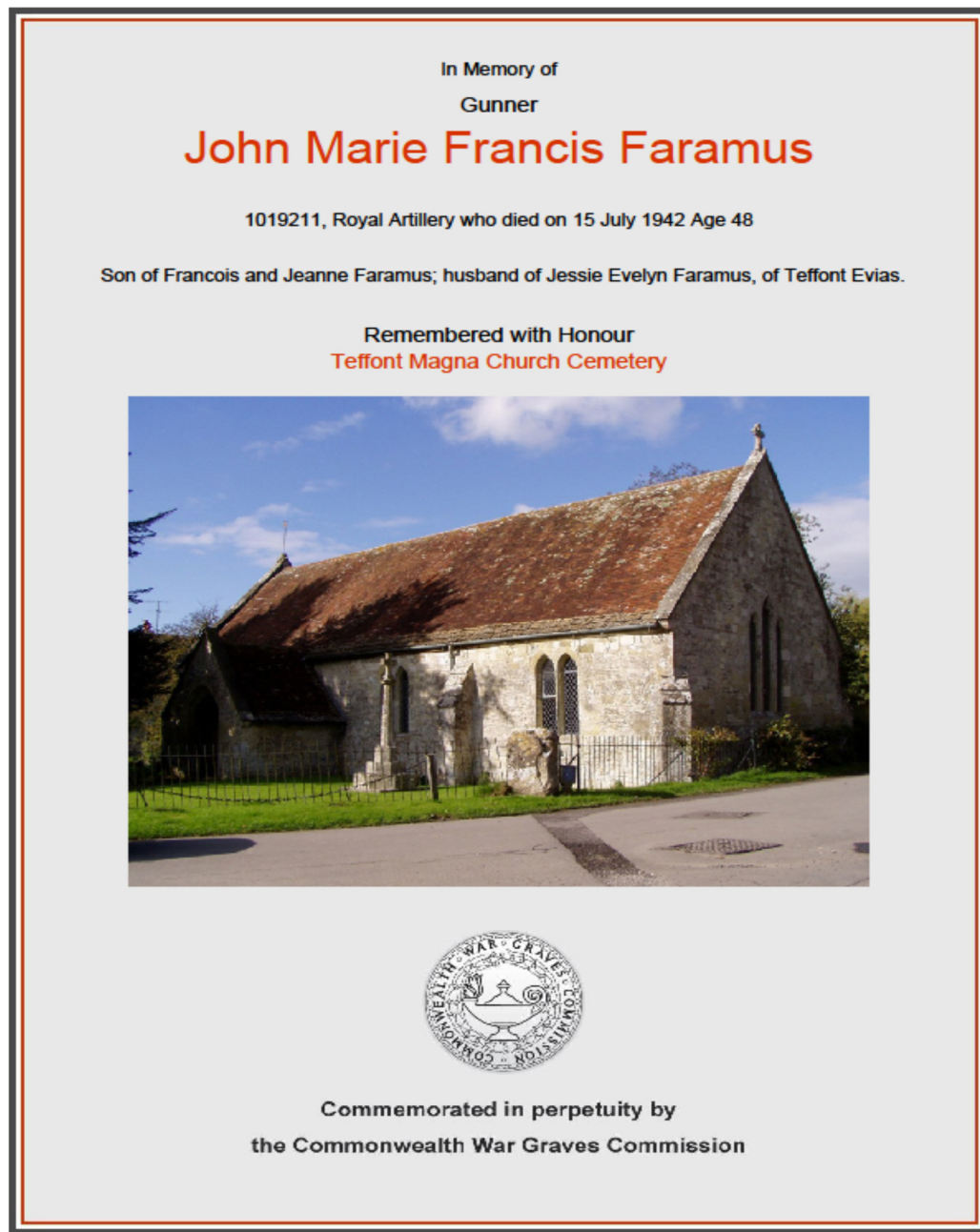


Figure 7 - War Grave Certificate