

Captain HARRY OSBORN DILLON RICKETTS

70589, 2/5th Bn., Leicestershire Regiment

who died age 31 on 22 December 1943,

Son of William Dillon Ricketts, and of Mary Isabel Ricketts, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

Remembered with honour in the SANGRO RIVER WAR CEMETERY, Italy

Captain Ricketts was the son of the former Headmaster of *Trinity Primary School* during World War I, who died in 1922.

His obituary in the Register reveals something of a hero:



CAPT. H. O. DILLON RICKETTS: DIES OF WOUNDS.

We regret to learn that **Capt H. O. Dillon Ricketts**, elder son of Mrs W. Dillon Ricketts, of 3 Bournside Road, Cheltenham, and the late Mr W Dillon Ricketts, of Tewkesbury, has died from his wounds in Italy. Captain Ricketts was educated at Dulwich, Bromsgrove, and Sandhurst, he saw service in India, and later was for two years in Iceland. He was taken prisoner in Tunisia, and was a prisoner of war in Italy, when the Armistice was signed. Then, with others, he made his escape, and after some months reached the allied lines. Whilst crossing from enemy territory, he was badly injured by a mine explosion, and unhappily his wounds proved fatal.

He was a very keen and all-round sportsman, and gained his "blue" at Sandhurst, for Rugby Football, and was a regular playing for Gloucester Rugby Football Club.

When in India, he successfully captained his Regimental

rugby fifteen on tour.

Captain Ricketts was, therefore, unlucky enough to be twice in the wrong place at the wrong time. When taken prisoner in Italy, this was the prelude to the defeat of **Rommel's Afrika Korps** by the British 8th Army and the Americans on 13 May 1943.

Taken to Italy was a P.O.W., the Allies then invaded Sicily on 10 July 1943, crossing into Italy on 3 September 1943 when **Mussolini** was deposed.

He evidently escaped in the confusion at that time but, subsequently, Italy was invaded by German forces that held up the allied advance until 1945.

Why did he not win a medal?

