

PYMENT Desmond Arthur

Name: Desmond Arthur Pymment

Born: 29 August 1920

Rank: Staff Sergeant

Service Number: 1944555

Regiment: Royal Engineers

Died: 25 January 1999



Pre-War:

Desmond was born in Chipping Campden, the only child of Harold and Ethel Pymment. His father, Harold, served in the Gloucestershire Regiment and then the Royal Flying Corps in WW1. Desmond was a third year architectural student, before he was called up.

Wartime experience:

Desmond was with the Royal Engineers, Malaya Command, and was a member of an official evacuation to Java on 6 February 1942 (WO361/2192). That was as far as he got and was captured when Java fell on 8 March 1942. He was initially held at Tandjong Priok Camp and due to his background in architecture, Captain Ray Watts asked him to take over the building of the small church there. He designed and project managed the building of this Church, which is depicted in the Java windows, on display in the FEPOW Building at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas.

Then, on 22 September 1942, he was shipped to Singapore on the Nagara Maru as part of Java Party 2, arriving on 26 September 1942. On 9 October 1942, Desmond was included in a party of 1,886 men who sailed from Singapore on the Hiteru Maru to Kuching in Borneo, arriving there on the 13 October 1942.

Desmond spent 3 years in Kuching, until he was liberated by the Australian Forces in 1945. It came to light after the liberation, that all POWs and internees were to be sent on a 17 mile march, from which they were not expected to survive.

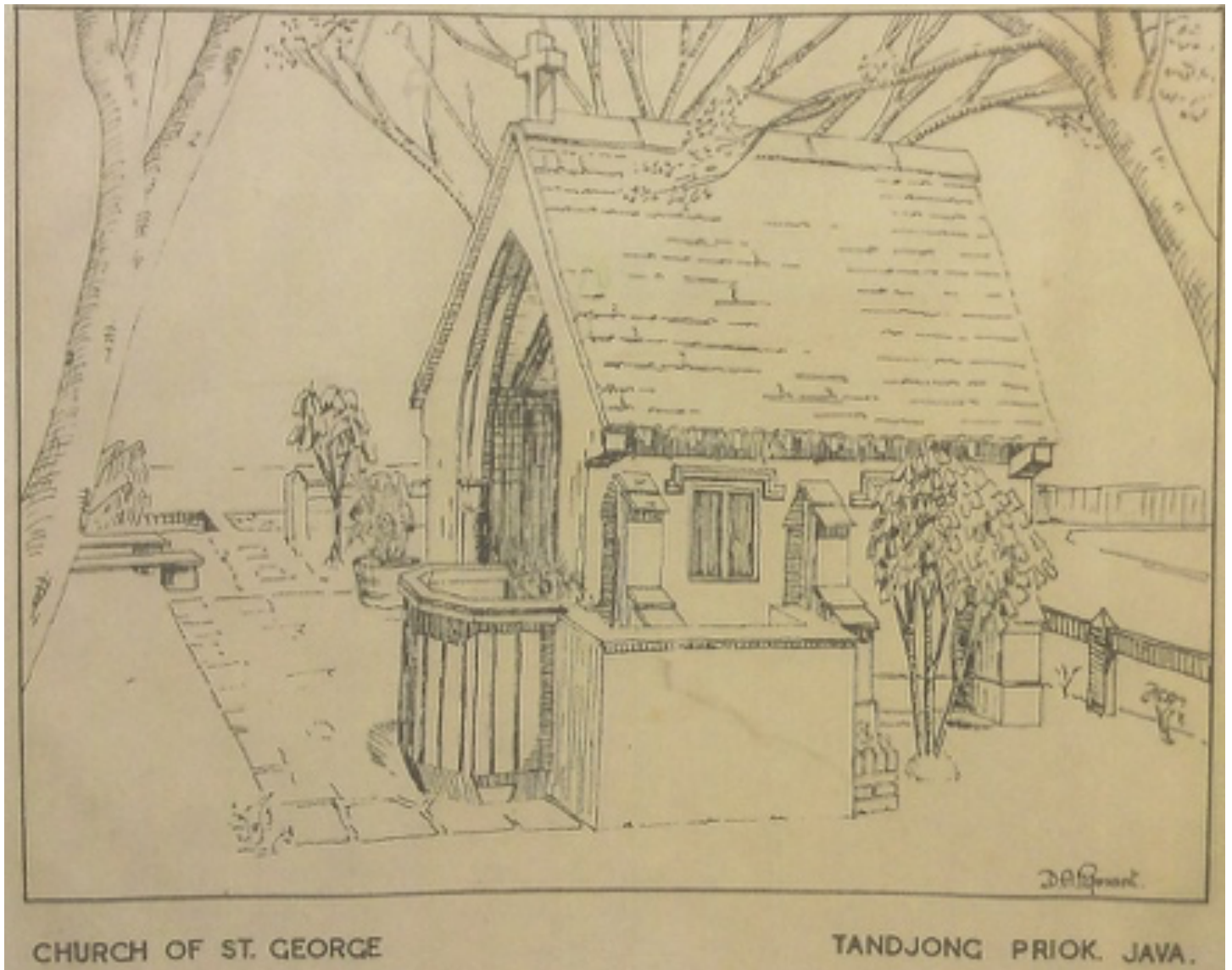
Civilian life after return:

Desmond completed his training as an architect after the war then worked in Reading, Berkshire until his retirement and returned to Chipping Campden when he retired in 1983. Sadly, Desmond passed away on 25 January 1999, aged 78.



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Copy of the sketch of the church in Tandjong Priok, Java - designed and built by Desmond.



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