As we approach Christmas it is astonishing to reflect that December 1914 was the only month in the whole of WW1 when Caius did not lose a single man.

Christmas is such a season of hope and expectation and one story from the Memorial leaps to mind. Robert Bulmer Sanderson (1915) is the only Caian listed there who did not die. Born in Cardiff in 1896, R B Sanderson was a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Garrison Artillery who then joined the Royal Flying Corps. Robert also served in WW2 in the RAF and died in 1979. At the end of the WW1 (when the lists were being drawn up) he became confused with Roy Broughton Sanderson. Both were 2nd Lieutenants in the Royal Garrison Artillery and both were Cambridge men. Robert is Caius version of the Pandora’s Box myth, our story of hope.

The men of Caius did not only serve in the army. A small number served in the Royal Navy and they must have approached Christmas 1914 with some trepidation. Winter at sea is not pleasant and this photograph was sent back home as a postcard, dated Christmas Day 1914. It was taken at sea on HMS Falmouth, a battle cruiser that went on to fight at the Battle of Jutland in 1916 and was torpedoed as she limped home to Bridlington.

HMS Falmouth sinking in 1916