

Long Lane Memorial

The stories of men from the Long Lane and district who fought and died in the Great War 1914 – 1918



photo: Paul Crofton

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Introduction

This booklet has been put together to commemorate the centenary of WW1 and to make real the names on the Long Lane Memorial. They were young men, from the then small village of Heald Green and surrounding areas, who left their cottage homes to defend our freedom and never returned. We must remember them.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the following:

- John Hartley for allowing us to share with us his research on Stockport Memorials (More than a Name).
- Manchester Central Library and its staff for all the help they gave us.
- The Cemetery and Memorial information and photographs are taken from the CWGC (Commonwealth War Graves Commission).
- Find a Grave web site.
- Frank Robinson and Family in providing information on Isaac and Tom Ratcliffe
- Malcolm Clark in providing information from Census records.

This document is split into two parts:

- The stories of the men who died
- The Cemeteries and Memorials where they are buried and remembered

The plan is to further update this booklet, part of which will be to include the four names of the fallen in WW2. Should you have any further information about those listed and would like it to be included then please use the contact details below.

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John AMBROSE

Rank & Number: Gunner (1903)
Unit: 122nd Brigade ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY
Date of Death: 21 August 1918
Age: 24
Cemetery: Bagneux Cemetery, Gezaincourt, Somme, France
Address: 122 Wilmslow Road

John was the son of John & Kate Ambrose of 122 Long Lane (later Wilmslow Road) and had been born in Gorton, Manchester. He was the older brother of Alfred who is also commemorated on the Long Lane War Memorial. Before the war, John worked in his father's corn milling business.

He joined the army in March 1915, enlisting at Stockport. The town of Albert was at the heart of the fighting on the Somme throughout the war. On 21 August 1918, the allies launched a major offensive here and recaptured the town. John was seriously wounded (most probably by enemy shellfire) and had to have a leg amputated. Bagneux Cemetery was extensively used by Casualty Clearing Stations (field hospitals), so it seems likely that his operation only prolonged his life for a little while.

Alfred C. AMBROSE DCM

Rank & Number: Lance Corporal (267507)
Unit: 1/6th Battalion SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS
Date of Death: 20 July 1918
Age: 22
Cemetery: Soissons Memorial, Aisne, France
Address: 122 Wilmslow Road

Alfred was the youngest son of John & Kate Ambrose of 122 Long Lane (later Wilmslow Road), and the brother of John Ambrose who is also commemorated on the Long Lane War Memorial.

Hundreds of men with Scottish ancestry wanted to form Manchester Scottish battalions of the "Pals" units being recruited in 1915. This idea did not find favour. Many potential recruits travelled to Scotland to enlist. Subsequently, a number of Battalion recruiting officers travelled to Manchester and this is probably why Alfred was a member of a Highland Regiment. He probably joined the Seaforths in April 1916 (original service number 5144).

He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and promoted to Lance Corporal in 1918. The London Gazette, 3rd September 1918, gave his citation:-

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during an enemy attack. His section leader becoming a casualty, he assumed command of the section and a party of stragglers and by fine powers of leadership, he controlled this party splendidly and inflicted severe losses on the enemy."

Alfred's bravery is not specifically mentioned in his Battalion's War Diary, so it is impossible to establish exactly where and when his act occurred. It is probable, however, that it was some during the German offensive, known as the Battle of Estaires, 9 - 11 April 1918.

In the early morning of 19 July 1918, the Battalion was near the village of Oger, some 30 miles south of Reims, in the Champagne region of France and was ordered into a reserve position. They reached the designated spot, near a wood, by dawn on the 20th and remained there until 1pm whilst an attack was carried out by neighbouring units. They then moved forward, still in reserve, throughout the afternoon. At 5.30pm, they received orders to take over the front line, but it was not until 4am the next day that they reached this position as their guide lost his way. Over the previous 24 hours, 9 men, including Alfred, had been killed, most probably by enemy shellfire. Alfred will have been buried by his comrades but, presumably, due to the front line moving quite quickly, knowledge of its precise location may have been lost. He is commemorated on a Memorial to the Missing.

Albert ARROWSMITH

Rank & Number: Private (27192)
Unit: 2nd Battalion SOUTH LANCASHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 16 February 1917 (possibly 17th)
Age: 25 or 26 (based on 1901 Census information)
Cemetery: Tancrez Farm Cemetery, Hainaut, Belgium
Address: 244 Wilmslow Road

Albert Arrowsmith was born at Handforth and lived his life in the area until he enlisted in the army at Warrington in early 1916.

In 1901, when a national census was taken, he was living at 244 Wilmslow Road with his mother, Jane and his younger sister, Nellie.

Tancrez Farm Cemetery was next to a First Aid Post so it appears likely that he died of injuries recently received.

The Battalion had been withdrawn from the front line for a couple of days rest but went back into the trenches on 15th February. At 3.15am on the 16th, the enemy shelled the South Lancashires' positions for about 40 minutes. British artillery retaliated silencing the German guns. There were no reports of any casualties. During the morning, British artillery continued to shell the enemy positions with very little retaliation.

The 17th was a dull, misty Saturday. The weather had started to improve and, with the thaw, water was now collecting in the trenches. During the morning, British artillery heavily shelled the enemy front line. The Battalion's War Diary notes that "at intervals during the day, men were seen looking over the enemy's parapet – one apparently an officer using field glasses – they were dispersed by our snipers." The afternoon and evening were reported to be very quiet. The Diary notes that three men had been wounded during the day. It is probable that one of these was Alfred. He would have been taken from the trench to the Aid Post, just behind the front line, where he would have been seen by the Battalion's Medical Officer. Presumably, nothing could be done to save him.

The lack of any mention of casualties on the 16th, in an otherwise comprehensive War Diary suggests his official date of death may not be accurate.

Alfred ATKINSON

Rank & Number: Private (28354)
Unit: 7th Battalion KING'S SHROPSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY
Date of Death: 2 September 1918
Age: 27
Cemetery: H.A.C. Cemetery, Ecoust St Mein, Pas de Calais, France
Address: 147 Wilmslow Road

Private Atkinson was the eldest son of Samuel and Minnie Atkinson, 151 Wilmslow Road (formerly Long Lane), Heald Green. The family originated from Knutsford, Cheshire. The 1901 Census shows the family living at 147 Wilmslow Road. Alfred and his older sister, Lucy and younger siblings, Harry and Florence had been born in the Knutsford area. The family must have come to live in the Long Lane area around 1898/99 as his two youngest siblings, Samuel and Mabel had been born there.

Alfred had been employed for about 10 years at Robert Clay's Demmings Bleachworks, Cheadle, when he enlisted into the army at Stockport. When he joined up, he was originally allocated to a Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment. His original service number, 206840, was not issued until after the beginning of 1917 and is consistent with him serving with the 4th (Territorial) Battalion. At some point, probably after recovering from wounds or illness, he was transferred to the Shropshires.

Throughout most of August 1918, Alfred will have been in action. For the last week of the month, the battalion had been withdrawn from the attack to re-organise and for the soldiers to clean-up and have some rest. On 2 September a further advance, to become known as the Second Battle of Bapaume, was ordered. At 5.30 am, the Shropshires advanced to attack heavily defended enemy positions on high ground near the village of Lagnicourt. They advanced some 4000 yards - a considerable feat and reached their objective well before other units. However, the battalions on either side of them failed to make progress and the Shropshires could not hold their position and had to withdraw some way to consolidate. Alfred was one of about 40 killed in the attack. Another local man, Peter Wright, was also killed.

Joseph BEARD

Rank & Number: Private (50359)
Unit: 9th Battalion CHESHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 17 April 1918
Age: 25
Cemetery: Mendinghem Military Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgium
Address: Handforth

Private Beard originated from Handforth, Cheshire. After the war, his parents, J & Alice Beard, had moved to 11 Joseph Street, Denton, Manchester.

Joseph enlisted at Chester. The German offensive, which would become known as the Battle of the Lys, opened on 9 April 1918. There had been little indication of a possible attack and Joseph's Battalion was in Brigade reserve. Late in the day, it had become clear that this was a major offensive and the Battalion was ordered forward to take up positions at Nieppe, near to the French/Belgium border. They were in position by 2pm on the following day. Throughout the day, the battalion found itself under serious attack.

Around dawn on 11th April, the Germans broke through the British front line, just to the north of the Cheshires and it was forced to withdraw. As it did so, the men came under machine gun fire which caused many casualties until the gun was captured by troops of the Border Regiment. In spite of the difficulties, the withdrawal was carried out in an orderly way. The fighting over the next 24 hours was particularly heavy and, by late afternoon, the 9th Cheshires were withdrawn for a short rest.

On 15th April, the Battalion moved back into the front line, taking over defences at Kemmel near Ypres (now Ieper). Their line was heavily shelled over the next two days. It is likely that this is when Joseph will have been wounded. He will have been evacuated from the trenches and taken to a casualty clearing station, but, presumably, his wounds were too severe for anything to be done to save him. He is buried in the adjacent cemetery.

He is probably the J Beard commemorated on the Denton War Memorial.

John BENNETT MM

Rank & Number: Corporal (9384)
Unit: 2nd Battalion ROYAL WELSH FUSILIERS
Date of Death: 1 September 1916
Age: 28
Cemetery: St Paul's Churchyard, Portwood, Stockport
Address: 30 Hanover Street, Portwood, Stockport.

He was one of at least three sons of John & Mary Bennett, 30 Hanover Street, Portwood, Stockport. All three served in the War and none lived to see the end of it.

In his youth, John had been active in the Boys Brigade. When he left school, he went to work as a spinner in one of the local mills but, aged just over 19, he joined the army in 1907. His service papers show him to have been 5' 9" tall and weighing 166 pounds. He had a fresh

complexion with brown hair and eyes. After training, he spent the next seven years with the Battalion in India. Whilst abroad, he was promoted to Lance Corporal but lost his rank when, on 13 April 1908, he was found guilty of "breaking out of barracks and returning drunk". He was in trouble again on 6 May when he was found to be again drunk. This time he was fined two shillings and six pence and confined to barracks for seven days.

On 20 March 1914, he was transferred to the Army reserve and returned to the Stockport area. On his service file was noted that he had served for 12 months in the regimental police. His discharge summary also recorded that his conduct was "Very good. Honest, trustworthy, hard-working and intelligent. He has been employed as a nursing orderly at station hospital at Quetta during past two years."

John used his nursing skill to get a job at Cheadle Royal Hospital and, no doubt, looked forward to spending many years as a civilian. However, just a few months later, he was mobilised to re-join the colours on 5 August, the second day of the War. The 2nd Battalion landed in France a few days later on 11 August. John will have been involved in the very early battles of the war, when the British Army was continually forced to retreat.

On 1 December, he was promoted back to lance corporal and was lucky to retain the rank when on 30 January, he received 28 days Field Punishment for an unknown offence.

John is very possibly the Corporal Bennett referred to in the Battalion's History "The War The Infantry Knew" by J C Dunn. Corporal Bennett and a Lieutenant Mostyn regularly went on patrol into No Man's Land at night to gather intelligence by trying to listen to the Germans or to see if defences were being improved. The book describes one incident on 7 August 1915. "At night Mostyn and his corporal companion went to search for a German listening post which had been reported. The idea was to go out with a party next night and rush it. They approached its whereabouts in file. Mostyn leading, and hoping the post would fire or do something to show just where it was. They had crawled quite close to it, probably they had been spotted and allowed to get closer, when a shot was fired which wounded Mostyn in the left arm. He sank into the long grass and lay doggo while the firing continued. Only when the post got up to come out for him did he and Bennett open fire. That sent their assailants scurrying back to their line, from which flares were sent up. The lair was examined at leisure and then the patrol went home."

On 18 May 1916, John was promoted to corporal but on 6 July, he was wounded in action. This was most probably by shrapnel as the Battalion was in the process of being relieved from the front line and this was a favourite time for enemy shelling. He was treated at a Field Ambulance unit and then evacuated to 8th Stationery Hospital at Wimereux. By late July 1916, he was being treated at Lake Military Hospital, Ashton under Lyne, where he seems to have been making initial good progress towards recovery. The Stockport Advertiser, 27 July 1916, published a letter from him. He wrote "If only the munition workers will forfeit their holidays, it will mean a lot to the boys at the front. Keep on working and I am confident that we won't be long before we all have a glorious holiday."

Clearly, John must have taken a turn for the worse and he died a few weeks later. He was buried at St Paul's Church, Portwood, Stockport. The newspaper at the time reported that several hundred attended his funeral which was conducted with full military honours. A "firing

party" was formed by guards from Handforth Camp whilst two buglers sounded the "Last Post".

St Paul's Church was demolished many years ago. The graveyard still remains but there are no gravestones in place. At one end of the grassed site is a war memorial to the men of Portwood. At the other end, is a special memorial from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission commemorating 8 soldiers, including John, who are buried there. It reads "The soldiers honoured here died in the service of their country and lie buried in this churchyard."

The London Gazette, 10 October 1916, confirmed the award of the Military Medal to John. His act of bravery is not recorded, but it was most likely for some action between the opening of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July and his wounding six days later.

John's family will arranged for his name to be inscribed on the Stockport War Memorial, where it appears amongst those who served with Welsh Regiments. It would appear that his employers at Cheadle Royal also wanted to remember him and they must have arranged for his commemoration on the nearby Long Lane Memorial. His brother, William, believed to be this man, died on 28 August 1917 and his other brother, Herbert, on 10 October 1918. The Bennetts were one of several Stockport families to lose three sons in the War.

Walter BROWN

Rank & Number: Private (17600)
Unit: 9th Battalion CHESHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 27 December 1915
Age: 23
Cemetery: St Vaast Post Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais
Address: Moss Nook

Private Brown was the son of James & Betsy Louisa Brown of Moss Nook (now the part of Heald Green immediately adjacent to Manchester Airport). He enlisted in Stockport, in the autumn of 1914. After training in England, the 9th Cheshires left to go on active service in July 1915.

The Battle of Loos opened on 25th September. For Walter and his mates, this was their first experience of a major attack. The Cheshires formed part of a diversionary assault on the Germans, north of the village of Givenchy. They were supporting the 9th Battalion of the Welch Regiment, but they were unable to make any progress as they were held up by uncut barbed wire and machine gun fire.

The next couple of months would have been a quiet time for Walter, with period spent away from the front line. On 23 December, they went into the front line, near Neuve Chappelle (north west of the town of Bethune, in France), relieving the 9th Battalion, Royal Welch Fusiliers. On 26th December, 239 soldiers joined as reinforcements making up for the losses of previous weeks. The next day, the Welch Fusiliers relieved the Cheshires. However, on their way out of the trenches and back to billets, they were shelled by the Germans. Unluckily, Walter was the only one killed

Thomas Henry CHANTLER

Rank & Number: Sapper (67016)
Unit: 131st Field Company ROYAL ENGINEERS
Date of Death: 11 December 1918
Age: 33
Cemetery: Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria, Greece
Address: 141/143 Wilmslow Road

Alfred and Caroline Chantler had at least five children. By the time of the 1901 Census, Alfred had died. The family was living at 141/143 Wilmslow Road, Long Lane where Caroline ran a grocery shop – this later became the Post Office (opposite side of the road to The Griffin Pub). The children at home were Frank (then 27), Thomas (17), Edith (15), Alec (14) and Gladys (7). Thomas was an apprentice joiner and would, no doubt, use those skills when he was assigned to the Royal Engineers. In 1909, he married Florence Mabel Paxton in a civil ceremony registered at Stockport.

Royal Engineers Field Companies were attached to the various Divisions of the British Army. Their tasks included the maintenance of roads and water supplies; the design and construction of fortifications and gun emplacements. It would include craftsmen such as carpenters, painters and plumbers and all would be equipped as rifle carrying infantrymen. Thomas' Company was attached to 26th Division which spent all of the war in the Salonika region of Greece.

A number of military hospitals operated around Kalamaria. Thomas did not die until after the Armistice so it can be assumed that he fell ill, suffered an accident or died of wounds received earlier.

His name is engraved on to his parents' grave stone at the United Reform Church (Long Lane Church) on Wilmslow Road.

Joseph DEARDEN

Rank & Number: Able Seaman (J/11858)
Unit: HMS Defence ROYAL NAVY
Date of Death: 31 May 1916
Age: 22
Cemetery: Plymouth Naval Memorial
Address: 167 Wilmslow Road

Joseph was the son of Samuel and Susannah Dearden of 167 Long Lane (later Wilmslow Road), Cheadle and the older brother of Samuel (also commemorated on the Long Lane Memorial). He was born locally on 22 December 1893. He was killed at the Battle of Jutland.

Another brother, William, also served in the armed forces and appears to have survived the War.

Samuel DEARDEN

Rank & Number: Private (27559)
Unit: 4th Battalion SOUTH WALES BORDERERS
Date of Death: 15 March 1918
Age: 20
Cemetery: Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq
Address: 167 Wilmslow Road

Samuel was the younger brother of Joseph Dearden (also commemorated on the Long Lane Memorial) and lived with his parents, Samuel & Susannah, at 167 Long Lane (later Wilmslow Road), Cheadle. Another brother, William, also served in the armed forces and appears to have survived the war

He enlisted at Stockport. Official records describe him as having "died", which suggests natural causes, rather than injuries sustained in battle.

George Richard FEATHERSTONE

Rank & Number: Private (34148)
Unit: 10th Battalion SOUTH WALES BORDERERS
Date of Death: 18 August 1917
Age: 36
Cemetery: Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgium
Address: 153 Wilmslow Road

Private Featherstone lived with his wife and four children at 153 Wilmslow Road (formerly Long Lane) Heald Green. He worked at Cheadle Royal Hospital as a coachman.

Although it cannot be said with absolute certainty, he is probably the man listed on the 1901 Census living nearby at 60 Church Road, Gatley with his father, William and sister, Elizabeth. This man had been born in Derbyshire and was working on a farm as a cattleman.

He enlisted in June 1916, at Stockport and went on active service on 8 November that year. On 31 July 1917, George would have seen action on the first day of the Third Battle of Ypres (commonly called Passchendaele). On 16 August, the Battalion was back in the front line for a failed attack that was later called the Battle of Langemarck. The troops had advanced across the deep mud of No Man's Land, but found that the barbed wire, supposedly cut by the artillery, was still in place. There was no option but to return to their own trenches. The Borderers were withdrawn to Stoke Farm Camp. The next day, George was mortally wounded.

A now unknown officer of the Battalion wrote to his widow on 7 September:-

"I write to offer you our deepest sympathies in the sad loss you have recently sustained by the death from wounds of your husband on the night of August 17th. It was about 10.30pm when a German plane flew over our camp and, under cover of darkness dropped some bombs, one falling immediately on our Transport lines and mortally wounding your husband.

Every attention was given and having bandaged him conveyed him to the Casualty Clearing Hospital [Note: 61A Casualty Clearing Station] close by, where he succumbed to the wounds within a few hours for most part of which he was unconscious. The next day we buried him and two of his comrades who were killed by the same bomb in the military cemetery besides the hospital whither he was borne by a party of his own friends from the Battalion."

Raymond Hayes GRIMSHAW

Rank & Number: Corporal (11821)
Unit: "B" Company, 19th Battalion MANCHESTER REGIMENT
Date of Death: 1 July 1916
Age: 20
Cemetery: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
Address: Wilmslow Road

Raymond Grimshaw was the son of Raymond & Mary of Laburnum Cottage, Wilmslow Road, Handforth. The couple are believed to have married in the mid-1890s. It was Mary's second marriage and she already had five children. The future soldier is thought to have been the old child of the new marriage. They had moved to Handforth from Wilmslow, where Raymond had been landlord of the Bulls Head.

Young Raymond was a committed Christian and a member of the church choir. He worked at the warehouse of J & N Philips Ltd, 35 Church Street, Manchester. Raymond is commemorated in the Company's entry in the Manchester City Battalions Book of Honour and was included on the Company's Memorial at the warehouse. The warehouse was demolished some years ago but the Memorial was saved and is now fixed to the wall of a nearby multi-storey car park. He was also a keen sportsman in his spare time, playing for local Cricket, tennis and football clubs.

He enlisted in Manchester into the fourth of the "Pals" Battalions recruited during September 1914 and was assigned to No. 6 Platoon in "B" Company. Some details of the recruitment and training period can be found here. They went overseas on 7 November 1915, arriving at Le Havre the following day. They continued to train and receive instruction in trench warfare and took over a section of the front line, on their own account, for the first time on 8 January 1916.

Over the next few months, Raymond spent tours of duty in the front line for two or three days, alternating with similar periods in reserve. Occasionally, the Battalion was withdrawn further into reserve, when the men would be engaged on road building or the movement of stores.

During the night of 30 June, battalions moved into the assault positions for an attack the next day that was to become known as the First Day of the Battle of the Somme. The 19th Manchesters were in the front line of the attack on the part of the battlefield that was to capture the village of Montauban. Their task was to capture an enemy stronghold called the "Glatz Redoubt", roughly halfway between the German front line and the village. Its capture was key to the success of the whole of 30th Division's attack on the village. They had spent days away from the front line training in every detail of the attack. At 5am, the men were

given a breakfast of dry bread, cheese and water and were told to fill their water bottles. At 6.45, they were given the daily tot of rum.

For days, the enemy positions had been constantly shelled and this intensified in the final minutes before the whistles blew. Raymond and his "Pals" left the protection of their trenches at 7.30am on a front some 300 yards wide. "A" and "C" Companies led the way, with "B" and "D" companies following about 100 yards behind. Almost immediately, the troops were subjected to fire from a machine gun on their left. This single gun would account for many hundreds of deaths and injuries that day.

They advanced slowly, keeping behind the British artillery barrage which was creeping forward in front of them and by 8.26am, they were starting to enter the Redoubt. With a few minutes, it had been captured. "B" Company had been lucky and had only suffered about 15 casualties. It is probable that Raymond was one of them. The Battalion now turned its attention to defence and the men started deepening the trenches and sandbagging the parapets. Other battalions now leap-frogged them to capture the village in one of the few successes along the 17 mile battle front that day. 61 members of the 4th Pals had been killed. Included in the roll call of the dead were two other local men, Percy Harper and Wilfred Larmour.

His pal, Private Rigby, wrote to the family saying that Raymond had been killed instantly. Reporting his death, the Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser (edition of 15 July 1916), noted that he had three brothers undertaking munitions work and another who was expecting to go on active service very soon. This brother was serving with what was described as the "heavy motor gun section". This was, actually, the tank section -still a very top secret and the tanks would not make their first appearance on the battlefield until mid-September 1916.

William MOORE

Rank & Number: Private (25256)
Unit: 10th Battalion CHESHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 24 August 1916
Age:
Cemetery: Blighty Valley Cemetery, Somme, France
Address:

William had been born in Wilmslow, Cheshire. He lived locally and enlisted at Stockport. The Battle of the Somme opened on 1 July 1916. William will have been in trenches for the first half of the month, but the Battalion did not take part in any of the "set piece" attacks until the 14th. On that day, there were many casualties, but the Battalion still undertook two attacks on the enemy positions at Ovillers. The Regiment's Official History notes that the position was captured but the Cheshires only had 100 men unharmed and they had to withdraw.

Mid-August found the Battalion at Authille, a village in the middle of the battlefield. The Battalion's War Diary indicates this was a comparatively quiet time, with no major offensive or defensive engagements. The men were kept occupied by undertaking fatigue and carrying work. It may have been comparatively quiet but it was by no means safe. On 20

August, the Diary reports "Very heavy shelling by our gunners. Enemy retaliated and put a lot of shell over Wood Post and vicinity."

The next day "Very heavy bombardment of enemy trenches, but it only lasted a short while. Enemy retaliated - 6 killed and 14 wounded." The next day, the Germans continued to shell the Cheshires' position, doing considerable damage, which had to be repaired under cover of darkness.

On the 24th, the Diary continues "A good deal of fatigue work carried on and we had 8 killed and 19 wounded. Heavy shelling by the enemy day and night." William had been one of those to have lost his life.

Tom RATCLIFFE

Rank & Number: Private (40310)
Unit: 7th Battalion SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS
Date of Death: 29 May 1918
Age: 20
Cemetery: La Kreule Military Cemetery, Hazebrouck, Nord, France
Address: 191 Wilmslow Road

Tom was the son of William Ratcliffe. He lived with him and his stepmother, Alice, at 191 Long Lane (later Wilmslow Road). He enlisted at Manchester, probably quite early in the war as his original service number was 2635.

Tom was wounded in action and would have been brought to one of the three Casualty Clearing Stations that were operating adjacent to the cemetery where he is buried. Presumably, nothing could be done to save his life.

It is not possible to establish exactly when Tom was injured but, prior to 25 May 1918, the Seaforths had been away from the front line for some time. On the 25th, it returned to action, taking over a section of the front line at Le Thieushouk, in northern France, close to the Belgium border. The Battalion War Diary describes the area in front as "broken by shell-struck houses and hedges with the trenches cut through fields of wheat or beans". It was not possible for the soldiers to easily move during the day as they could be observed by the enemy in trenches in nearby Meteren.

During the night of 25/26 May, patrols were sent out to try and establish exactly where the enemy was. In each case, they found that the Germans were much closer than they had been advised and the patrols were shot at. One man was wounded. During this time, the enemy also shelled the Battalion's positions with several men being wounded.

Shelling continued during the afternoon of the 26th, including an attack of mustard and phosgene gas. This particularly affected "C" Company who were occupying low lying ground in the second line of trenches. Again, several men were badly affected.

At lunchtime on the 27th, the enemy again shelled with gas and 11 men were injured. The Battalion would remain in the trenches until the end of the month but, by then, Tom had already died.

Isaac RATCLIFFE

Rank & Number: Private (18810)
Unit: 2nd Battalion BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 12 October 1916
Age: 38 (based on 1901 Census)
Cemetery: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
Address: Heald Green

When the Census was taken, the Ratcliffe family was living in Heald Green where Thomas Ratcliffe had a business as a market gardener. His three younger sons worked in the business – Thomas and John working directly with the crops. Isaac worked as a teamster and will have undertaken the deliveries of the produce. The eldest son, Sam, was a coat dealer. Mother was called Elizabeth.

There is no mention of the business in the 1914 edition of Kelly's Directory and it is possible that Thomas had died by then and the sons had gone their separate ways. This might explain why, when War was declared, Isaac enlisted at St Albans into the local Regiment.

It has not been possible to establish when Isaac joined up, but a soldier with a service number only four away from his was reported killed in 1915. It certainly seems likely, therefore, that he would have seen action during the opening engagements of the Battle of the Somme in July 1916. During September, the Battalion was in billets away from the front line, at Vignacourt (Northwest of Amiens). The Official History notes that they enjoyed their stay there although the billets were not very good, nor were the inhabitants very friendly. During this time, they trained for the next attack. There was also an inter-battalion football competition. They beat the 19th Liverpools 1-0 and drew 1-1 against the 17th Liverpools

By 12 October, the Battalion was back in the front line, near the village of Flers, a little way north of the area of the July fighting. It was scheduled, with others, to assault the enemy positions, known as Gird and Bite Trenches. Zero hour was set for 2.05pm. The plan was that "C" and "D" Companies would form the first wave; "B" would follow acting as "moppers-up" and "A" Company would be in reserve.

About 11am, a party of about 50 Germans appeared in Gird Trench, without weapons and made signs that they wanted to surrender. 2nd Lt Fyson went out and spoke to one of the German officers who then went back into his trench. Just as he did, someone shot at him. It is not recorded if the shot came from the British or German side. It is, however, not surprising that the Germans did not come over.



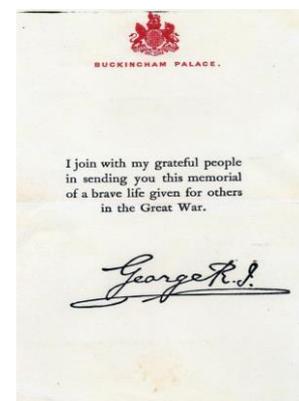
On schedule, the leading companies advanced and all went well until a small ridge was reached some 60 yards in front on the British trench. At this point, the enemy opened up with heavy rifle and machine gun fire from the left. Around this time, Lt Harold Fyson was killed. "D" Company suffered many casualties and were unable to move either forwards or backwards due to the fire. They would have to stay out in the open, with no cover until nightfall.

By 2.30, over 100 of the Bedfordshires had become casualties, but "C" Company had made progress, passing over Gird Trench and into Bite Trench. They were unable to go further due to very heavy machine gun fire and started to make the trench deeper and prepare for a counter attack. "A" Company was also digging-in at Gird Trench and tried to dig a trench out to where "D" Company was still in No Man's Land.

The Battalion proved to be the only one in the whole of the Corps that had been able to secure its advance, but it had been at high cost. The Bedfords had suffered 250 casualties of whom 96, including Isaac, had been killed. The gain was some 200yards of Bite Trench and 70 yards of Gird Trench.

The Memorial Plaque

Isaac's parents received The Memorial Plaque (see photo below with his name on it) which was issued after the First World War to the next-of-kin of all British and Empire service personnel who were killed as a result of the war. The Memorial Plaque was accompanied with a Certificate signed by King George V (see phot below).



The 5" diameter plaques (more strictly described as plaquettes) were made of bronze, and hence popularly known as the "Dead Man's Penny", because of the similarity in appearance to the somewhat smaller penny coin. 1,355,000 plaques were issued, which used a total of 450 tonnes of bronze, and continued to be issued into the 1930s to commemorate people who died as a consequence of the war.

Additional Notes:

Isaac's brother Thomas was also killed in first world war. Isaac's sister was called Elizabeth Anne Ratcliffe. Elizabeth Anne Ratcliffe is Grandmother to Frank Robinson's and Frank's Sister, Wendy Robinson (ex St Catherine's Rose Queen). Isaac lived in Northenden as a child and attended St Winifred's Church where a memorial plaque can be found inside the church with his name on it, along with many others of the parish.

John F SHAW

Rank & Number: Lance Corporal (15605)
Unit: 8th Battalion SOUTH LANCASHIRE REGIMENT
Date of Death: 3 July 1916
Age: 17
Cemetery: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
Address: 347 Outwood View, Handforth

John had been born at Hall Lane, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. His parents, John & Fanny, had moved to 347 Outwood View, Handforth. According to the 1901 Census, he had two older brothers, Frank and Henry and an older sister, Elsie

He enlisted at Stockport, originally into the Cheshire Regiment (service no. 17382) before transferring regiments, presumably quite quickly. The official age for active service overseas was 19, so John must have lied about his true age in order to enlist.

1 July had seen the opening of the Battle of the Somme, but John and his Battalion had been in reserve and not seen action. On 2 July, they left Hedauville and went into trenches south of Thiepval in the heart of the Somme battlefield. They were to act in support of other battalions of the Brigade who carried out an attack on the German line at 6.15am. The Battalion's official War Diary gives no further details, but John was one of 22 members of the Battalion killed that day.

George V SWIFT

Rank & Number: Private (25807)
Unit: 2nd Battalion CHESHIRE Regiment
Date of Death: 3 October 1915
Age: 30
Cemetery: Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
Address: 6 Holme Street Cheadle

George was the son of George & Jessie Swift and had been born at Reddish, Stockport. The 1901 Census records that the family was then living in Stockport Etchells (now the area of Gatley and Heald Green). George Swift is not recorded on the Census and may have already died. Jessie was then 42. George is recorded, aged 18, working as a general labourer. His brothers and sisters are also noted - Arthur (7), Ida (3), Jack (6) and Jessie (14).

He lived at 6 Holme Street Cheadle with his wife, Alice and their four children. After the war, Alice moved to 14 Hyde Grove, Sale.

For the previous 17 years, George had worked at Cheadle Royal Hospital and was the foreman gardener. By all accounts, he was a noted grower of violas.

On 29 March 1915, he went into Stockport and enlisted, going to France on 30 July 1915. he was killed in action at the Battle of Loos just two months later.

Cemeteries and Memorials

The Thiepval Memorial

Names:

Corp. Raymond Grimshaw
Private Isaac Ratcliffe
LC John Shaw

Country: France

Locality: Somme

Identified Casualties: 72194

Location Information:

The Thiepval Memorial will be found on the D73, next to the village of Thiepval, off the main Bapaume to Albert road (D929).



Each year a major ceremony is held at the memorial on 1 July

Historical Information

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.

In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918.

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

The memorial, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, in the presence of the President of France, on 1 August 1932 (originally scheduled for 16 May but due to the death of French President Doumer the ceremony was postponed until August).

The dead of other Commonwealth countries, who died on the Somme and have no known graves, are commemorated on national memorials elsewhere.

La Kreule Military Cemetery, Hazebrouck

Name: Private Tom Ratcliffe
Country: France
Locality: Nord
Identified Casualties: 575

Location Information:

La Kreule is a small hamlet 2 kilometres north of Hazebrouck, on the road to St Sylvestre-Cappel and Steenvoorde.

Historical Information:

La Kreule Military Cemetery was opened in April 1918 by the 1st and 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Stations, which came back from Outtersteene ahead of the German advance, and the 17th, which arrived from Lijssenthoek. These three stations, known collectively as "Ana Jana Siding", were posted to the north of La Kreule, but in the middle of April they withdrew to Blendecques, near St. Omer, and the cemetery was then used by heavy artillery and fighting units. In October 1918, the 17th Casualty Clearing Station returned with the 8th and the 64th and the cemetery was closed at the end of the month.

The cemetery contains 576 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 11 German war graves. The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.



Bagneux British Cemetery, Gezaincourt

Name: Gunner John Ambrose
Country: France
Locality: Somme
Identified Casualties: 1371

Location Information:

Gezaincourt is a village situated 2 Kms to the south-west of the town of Doullens.



Bagneux British Cemetery lies to the south of the village.

Historical Information

At the end of March, the 3rd, 29th and 56th Casualty Clearing Stations moved to Gezaincourt, where they were joined for a short time in April by the 45th. They remained until September. The cemetery was begun in April 1918, after the close of the German offensive in Picardy. The 3rd Canadian Stationary Hospital, in the citadel at Doullens, also buried in this cemetery in May and June 1918, and the 2nd Canadian Division in April and May. The graves in Plot III, Row A relate to a bombing raid over Doullens on 30 May 1918.

There are 1,374 servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery. The cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Soissons Memorial

Name: Lance Corporal Alfred Ambrose
Country: France
Locality: Aisne
Identified Casualties: 3876

Location Information:

The town of Soissons stands on the left bank of the River Aisne, approximately 100 kilometres north-east of Paris.

Names are listed on the memorial by Regiments in order of precedence, under the title of each Regiment by rank, and under each rank alphabetically.



Historical Information

The original British Expeditionary Force crossed the Aisne in August 1914 a few kilometres west of Soissons, and re-crossed it in September a few kilometres east. For the next three and a half years, this part of the front was held by French forces and the city remained within the range of German artillery.

At the end of April 1918, five divisions of Commonwealth forces (IX Corps) were posted to the French 6th Army in this sector to rest and refit following the German offensives on the Somme and Lys. Here, at the end of May, they found themselves facing the overwhelming German attack which, despite fierce opposition, pushed the Allies back across the Aisne to the Marne. Having suffered 15,000 fatal casualties, IX Corps was withdrawn



from this front in early July, but was replaced by XXII Corps, who took part in the Allied counter attack that had driven back the Germans by early August and recovered the lost ground.

The Soissons Memorial commemorates almost 4,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom forces who died during the Battles of the Aisne and the Marne in 1918 and who have no known grave.

The memorial was designed by G.H. Holt and V.O. Rees, with sculpture by Eric Kennington. It was unveiled by Sir Alexander Hamilton-Gordon on 22 July 1928.

Tancrez Farm Cemetery

Name: Private Albert Arrowsmith
Country: Belgium
Locality: Comines-Warneton, Hainaut
Identified Casualties: 327

Location Information:

Tancrez Farm Cemetery is located 17 Kms south of Leper town centre, on a road leading from the Rijselseweg N365, which connects Leper to Wijtschate and on to Armentieres.



Historical Information

The commune of Ploegsteert remained under Allied occupation for much of the First World War, but was in German hands from 10 April to 29 September 1918.

Tancrez Farm Cemetery stands behind a rebuilt farm house which during the war housed an aid post. It was begun in December 1914 and was carried on by field ambulances and fighting units until March 1918.

The cemetery now contains 333 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. Six of the burials are unidentified but there is a special memorial to one casualty known to be buried among them. There are also two German war graves.

The cemetery was designed by Charles Holden.

H.A.C. Cemetery, Ecoust-St. Mein

Name: Private Alfred Akinson
Country: France
Locality: Pas de Calais
Identified Casualties: 826



Location Information:

Ecoust-St. Mein is a village between Arras, Cambrai and Bapaume.

Historical Information

The enemy positions from Doignies to Henin-sur-Cojeul, including the village of Ecoust, were captured on 2 April 1917, by the 4th Australian and 7th Divisions. This cemetery was begun by the 7th Division after the battle, when 27 of the 2nd H.A.C., who fell (with one exception) on the 31st March or the 1st April, were buried in what is now Plot I, Row A. After the German counter-attack near Lagnicourt on the 15th April, twelve Australian gunners were buried in the same row. Rows B, C and part of D were made in August and September 1918, when the ground had been recaptured by the 3rd Division after five months enemy occupation. The 120 graves thus made were the original H.A.C. Cemetery; but after the Armistice graves were added from the battlefields of Bullecourt and Ecoust and from a number of smaller burial grounds.

There are now nearly 2,000, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over half are unidentified and special memorials are erected to 17 soldiers from the United Kingdom and 14 from Australia, known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of 34 soldiers from the United Kingdom, buried in other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.

The cemetery covers an area of 5,801 square metres and is enclosed by a low red brick wall.

Mendinghem Military Cemetery

Name: Private Joseph Beard
Country: Belgium
Locality: Poperinge, West-Vlaanderen
Identified Casualties: 2383

Location Information

Mendinghem Military Cemetery is located 17 Kms north-west of Ieper town centre on the N308 connecting Ieper to Poperinge and on to Oost-Cappel.



From Ieper town centre the Poperingseweg (N308), is reached via Elverdingsestraat then directly over two small roundabouts in the J. Capronstraat. The Poperingseweg is a continuation of the J. Capronstraat and begins after a prominent railway level crossing.

On reaching the ring road of Poperinge R33 Europalaan, the left hand clockwise route circles the town of Poperinge and rejoins the N308 towards Oost-Cappel. 6.5 Kms after joining the N308 lies the village of Proven. The cemetery is located 500 metres beyond the village of Proven on the left hand side of the road (which at this point is called Roesbruggestraat).

Historical Information

Mendinghem, like Dozinghem and Bandaghem, were the popular names given by the troops to groups of casualty clearing stations posted to this area during the First World War.

In July 1916, the 46th (1st/1st Wessex) Casualty Clearing Station was opened at Proven and this site was chosen for its cemetery. The first burials took place in August 1916. In July 1917, four further clearing stations arrived at Proven in readiness for the forthcoming Allied offensive on this front and three of them, the 46th, 12th and 64th, stayed until 1918. From May to July 1918, while the German offensive was at its height, field ambulances were posted at Proven. The cemetery was closed (except for one later burial) in September 1918.

There are now 2,391 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in this cemetery and 52 German war graves.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

St. Vaast Post Military Cemetery, Richebourg-L'avoue

Name: Private Walter Brown

Country: France

Locality: Pas de Calais

Identified Casualties: 793

Location Information:

The cemetery lies near the village of Richebourg-l'Avoue which is 9 kilometres north-east of Bethune.



Historical Information

The village of Richebourg-L'Avoué was held by British forces from the autumn of 1914 until it was overrun by German units advancing west during the great Spring Offensive in April 1918. It was recaptured by Commonwealth soldiers in September 1918 and remained in Allied hands until the end of the war. The village was less than two kilometres from the front-lines trenches and was routinely shelled by German artillery.

During the Battle of Festubert in May 1915, British soldiers began burying their fallen comrades in an old orchard near a forward dressing station which was located at the terminus of a trench tramway between the hamlet of Richebourg St. Vaast and La Croix Barbet. The cemetery was used by fighting units serving in the front-line and field ambulances until July 1917 and is the final resting place of over 70 men of the South Downs Pals battalion who were killed at the Battle of Boar's Head on 30 June 1916. In April and May 1918, the Germans buried 90 of their dead in the south-east end of the cemetery and in September and October 1918, 18 British soldiers killed during the final Allied advance were

laid to rest in Plot V. There are now almost 800 soldiers of the First World War buried or commemorated at St. Vaast Post, including over 90 German burials. Special memorials have been erected to three British soldiers buried in the cemetery whose graves cannot now be traced.

The South Downs Pals and the Battle of Boar's Head

Major logistical preparations for the Anglo-French Somme Offensive had been ongoing for much of the first half of 1916. In order to disguise the exact location of the offensive and prevent the German forces from sending reinforcements to the Somme, the British High Command decided that a number of diversionary operations should be staged elsewhere along the front just before and during the main battle. One such attack took place early in the morning of 30 June and focused on the German lines opposite Richebourg L'Avoué, including the Boar's Head salient. The salient had been formed during the Battle of Aubers Ridge in 1915 and gave the Germans a vantage point from which they could bombard the British forward positions with trench mortars and rifles grenades and fire on patrols and wiring parties working in no man's land. The British units selected for the attack were the 11th, 12th, and 13th Battalions of the Royal Sussex Regiment, otherwise known as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd 'South Downs Pals'. Few of the officers and men had any experience of combat on the Western Front and they would be facing a well organised and determined enemy.

The date of the attack had to be delayed due to the brief postponement of the main Somme offensive further south, but the Sussex men finally left their positions at zero hour just after 3.05 am on 30 June and advanced through the smoke and half-light towards the German positions. The men of the 12th and 13th battalions led the attack and immediately came under heavy rifle and machine gun fire. Some of them nonetheless managed to fight their way through the German wire and occupy the front-line trenches. They held this captured territory for about four hours before they were forced to return to their own lines in the face of fierce German counter attacks. Over the course of less than five hours of fighting the three South Downs Pals battalions suffered approximately 1000 casualties, over 360 of whom had been killed.

Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria

Name: Sapper Thomas Chantler

Country: Greece

Identified Casualties: 1797

Location Information:

Mikra British Cemetery is situated in the Municipality of Kalamaria in the city of Thessaloniki just off Konstantinou Karamanlis Street between the army camp of Ntalipi (pronounced Dalipi) and the Kalamaria Greek Communal Cemetery.



Historical Information:

At the invitation of the Greek Prime Minister, M.Venizelos, Salonika (now Thessalonika) was occupied by three French Divisions and the 10th (Irish) Division from Gallipoli in October 1915. Other French and Commonwealth forces landed during the year and in the summer of 1916, they were joined by Russian and Italian troops. In August 1916, a Greek revolution broke out at Salonika, with the result that the Greek national army came into the war on the Allied side.

The town was the base of the British Salonika Force and it contained, from time to time, eighteen general and stationary hospitals. Three of these hospitals were Canadian, although there were no other Canadian units in the force.

The earliest Commonwealth burials took place in the local Protestant and Roman Catholic cemeteries, and the Anglo-French (now Lembet Road) Military Cemetery was used from November 1915 to October 1918. The British cemetery at Mikra was opened in April 1917, remaining in use until 1920. The cemetery was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from a number of burial grounds in the area.

MIKRA BRITISH CEMETERY now contains 1,810 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, as well as 147 war graves of other nationalities.

Within the cemetery will be found the MIKRA MEMORIAL, commemorating almost 500 nurses, officers and men of the Commonwealth forces who died when troop transports and hospital ships were lost in the Mediterranean, and who have no grave but the sea. They are commemorated here because others who went down in the same vessels were washed ashore and identified, and are now buried at Thessalonika.

Plymouth Naval Memorial

Name: A.B. Joseph Dearden

Country: United Kingdom

Locality: Devon

Identified Casualties: 23207

Location Information:

The Memorial is situated centrally on The Hoe which looks directly towards Plymouth Sound. It is accessible at all times. Copies of the Memorial Register are kept at the Tourist Information Office at Island House, 9 The Barbican, Plymouth, PL1 2LS, and also in the Naval Historical Section at Plymouth Library.



<http://www.webrarian.co.uk/rnwm/>

Historical Information

After the First World War, an appropriate way had to be found of commemorating those members of the Royal Navy who had no known grave, the majority of deaths having occurred at sea where no permanent memorial could be provided.

An Admiralty committee recommended that the three manning ports in Great Britain - Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth - should each have an identical memorial of unmistakable naval form, an obelisk, which would serve as a leading mark for shipping. The memorials were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, who had already carried out a considerable amount of work for the Commission, with sculpture by Henry Poole. The Plymouth Naval Memorial was unveiled by HRH Prince George on 29 July 1924.

After the Second World War it was decided that the naval memorials should be extended to provide space for commemorating the naval dead without graves of that war, but since the three sites were dissimilar, a different architectural treatment was required for each. The architect for the Second World War extension at Plymouth was Sir Edward Maufe (who also designed the Air Forces memorial at Runnymede) and the additional sculpture was by Charles Wheeler and William McMillan. The Extension was unveiled by HRH Princess Margaret on 20 May 1954. A further unveiling took place on 11 November 1956, when panels honouring those who died on shore, but who had no known grave, were unveiled by Admiral Sir Mark Pizey.

In addition to commemorating seamen of the Royal Navy who sailed from Plymouth, the First World War panels also bears the names of sailors from Australia and South Africa. The governments of the other Commonwealth nations chose to commemorate their dead elsewhere, for the most part on memorials in their home ports. After the Second World War, Canada and New Zealand again chose commemoration at home, but the memorial at Plymouth commemorates sailors from all other parts of the Commonwealth.

Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery

Name: Private Samuel Dearden

Country: Iraq

Identified Casualties: 4454

Location Information:

Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery is located in a very sensitive area in the Waziriah Area of the Al-Russafa district of Baghdad.

Historical Information

In 1914, Baghdad was the headquarters of the Turkish Army in Mesopotamia. It was the ultimate objective of the Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' and the goal of the force besieged



and captured at Kut in 1916. The city finally fell in March 1917, but the position was not fully consolidated until the end of April. Nevertheless, it had by that time become the Expeditionary Force's advanced base, with two stationary hospitals and three casualty clearing stations.

The North Gate Cemetery was begun In April 1917 and has been greatly enlarged since the end of the First World War by graves brought in from other burial grounds in Baghdad and northern Iraq, and from battlefields and cemeteries in Anatolia where Commonwealth prisoners of war were buried by the Turks.

At present, 4,160 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War are commemorated by name in the cemetery, many of them on special memorials. Unidentified burials from this period number 2,729.

The cemetery also contains the grave of Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Maude, Commander-in-Chief of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, who died at Baghdad in November 1917 and the memorial to the 13th Division which he commanded. A memorial to the 6th Battalion Loyal (North Lancashire) Regiment was brought into the cemetery from the banks of the Diyala River in 1947.

During the Second World War, Baghdad was again an objective of Commonwealth forces. The 20th Indian Infantry Brigade reached the city from Shaiba by the Euphrates route on 12 June 1941 and the 21st Indian Infantry Brigade, part of the 13th Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers, together with the 157th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, arrived on 19 June via the Tigris. An advanced base was established later near the city and remained in use until 1946.

Most of the 296 Commonwealth servicemen of the Second World War buried in the cemetery died of illness or by accident when serving with PAIFORCE. Again, a number of the graves were brought in from other burial grounds.

Within the cemetery is the Baghdad (North Gate) (Khanaqin) Memorial, commemorating 104 Commonwealth servicemen, 437 Polish soldiers and 3 Arab Legionnaires of the Second World War buried in Khanaqin War Cemetery which, owing to difficulty of access, could not be properly maintained. The North Gate Cemetery also contains 127 war graves of other nationalities from both wars, 100 of them Turkish, and 41 non-war graves.

Dozinghem Military Cemetery

Name: Private George Featherstone

Country: Belgium

Locality: Poperinge, West-Vlaanderen

Identified Casualties: 3240

Location Information:

The cemetery is located to the north-west of Poperinge near Krombeke.



Historical Information:

Westvleteren was outside the front held by Commonwealth forces in Belgium during the First World War, but in July 1917, in readiness for the forthcoming offensive, groups of casualty clearing stations were placed at three positions called by the troops Mendinghem, Dozinghem and Bandaghem.

The 4th, 47th and 61st Casualty Clearing Stations were posted at Dozinghem and the military cemetery was used by them until early in 1918. There are now 3,174 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery and 65 German war graves from this period. The cemetery also contains 73 Second World War burials dating from the Allied withdrawal to Dunkirk in May 1940.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

Blighty Valley Cemetery, Authuille Wood

Name: Private William Moore
Country: France
Locality: Somme
Identified Casualties: 491



Location Information

Authuille (now Authuille) and Aveluy are villages 4 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert.

Historical Information

Blighty Valley was the name given by the Army to the lower part of the deep valley running down South-Westward through Authuille Wood to join the river between Authuille and Aveluy; a railway was carried along it soon after July, 1916, and it was for some time an important (though inevitably a dangerous) route. The upper part of the valley was called Nab Valley. Blighty Valley Cemetery is almost at the mouth of the valley, a little way up its northern bank. It is partly in either commune.

Blighty Valley Cemetery was begun early in July 1916, at the beginning of the Battle of the Somme, and used until the following November. At the Armistice it contained 212 graves but was then greatly enlarged when 784 graves were brought in from the battlefields and small cemeteries to the east. Most of these concentrated graves were of men who died on 1 July 1916.

The cemetery now contains 1,027 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 536 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 24 casualties known or believed to be buried among them, and to five others buried by the Germans in Becourt German Cemetery in the spring of 1918, whose graves could not be found on concentration.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

Loos Memorial

Name: Private George Swift
Country: France
Locality: Pas de Calais
Identified Casualties: 20616

Location Information

The Loos Memorial forms the sides and back of Dud Corner Cemetery.

Loos-en-Gohelle is a village 5 kilometres north-west of Lens, and Dud Corner Cemetery is located about 1 kilometre west of the village, to the north-east of the D943, the main Lens to Bethune road.



Historical Information

Dud Corner Cemetery stands almost on the site of a German strong point, the Lens Road Redoubt, captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division on the first day of the battle.

The name "Dud Corner" is believed to be due to the large number of unexploded enemy shells found in the neighbourhood after the Armistice.

The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay. On either side of the cemetery is a wall 15 feet high, to which are fixed tablets on which are carved the names of those commemorated. At the back are four small circular courts, open to the sky, in which the lines of tablets are continued, and between these courts are three semicircular walls or apses, two of which carry tablets, while on the centre apse is erected the Cross of Sacrifice.

The memorial was designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Charles Wheeler. It was unveiled by Sir Nevil Macready on 4 August 1930.

Cheadle Royal Hospital

This is a photograph of a WW1 Memorial in the Priory Hospital, Cheadle Royal, Cheadle, Cheshire. A wooden panel with a delicately carved border with names of staff members of Cheadle Royal Hospital who fell in WW1.

