

A silhouette of a winged figure, possibly a personification of Victory or Liberty, holding a sword aloft. The figure is set against a bright blue sky with a sun visible behind its wings. The figure's right arm is raised, holding a sword vertically. Its left arm is extended downwards, holding a wreath. The figure is mounted on a dark, tiered pedestal.

Researching Staffordshire's Great War Memorials

Staffordshire &
Stoke on Trent
Archive Service

Locations Featured

This map refers to the places in the historical county of Staffordshire that are featured as images or documents relating to the local war memorial.



LEGEND

- *Image*
- *Document*
- *Image & document*

Contents

Introduction.....	page 5
Local Memorials pre-1914.....	page 6
Types of War Memorial.....	page 9
War Memorials in Public Spaces....	page 15
War Memorials Elsewhere.....	page 31
War Memorials at Risk.....	page 40
War Graves.....	page 44
Researching Soldiers.....	page 52
Researching Other Services.....	page 60
Those Not Listed on Memorials.....	page 63
Researching Women who Served...page	74
Researching a Soldier's Family.....page	79
Other Locations for Research.....page	81
Later Memorialization	page 85
Conclusion.....	page 86
Useful Websites.....	page 87
Further Reading	page 88
Index.....	page 89
Acknowledgements.....	page 91



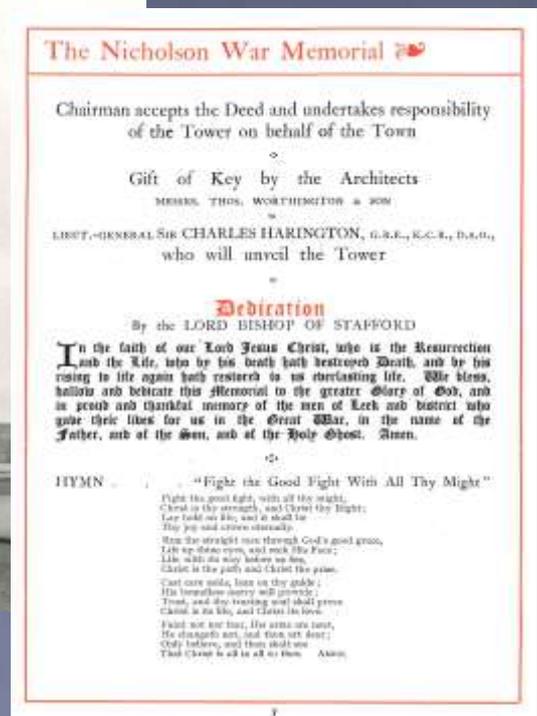
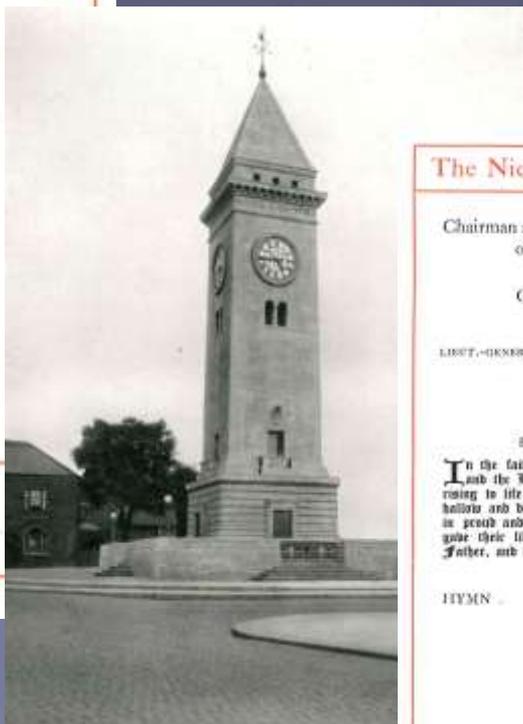
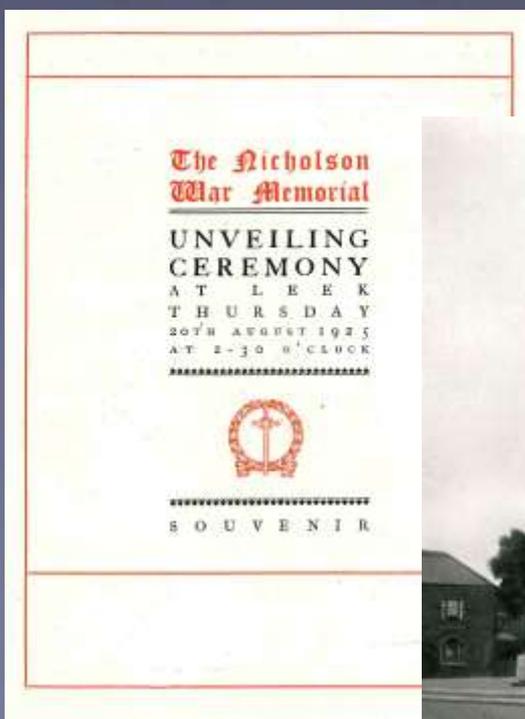
Preface

Visit any settlement or community in Staffordshire today and, chances are, you will encounter at least one reminder of a conflict that broke out one hundred years ago. The Great War (1914-1918) devastated Europe and touched the lives of millions around the world. For communities of all sizes, the war affected their lives in a number of ways. The most significant, and longest lasting, effect was that wrought on the men and women who left home to serve their country, and those they left behind.

Some of those who left died in service, leaving grieving families to cope with their loss. Others returned home physically disabled whilst others were left mentally scarred for life, a traumatic experience for themselves and those around them. Even those who came back unscathed often had painful memories which they never shared with friends or family. Communities found themselves permanently altered in the wake of the Great War, and sought to find a way both to celebrate victory but at the same time to pay tribute to those who had sacrificed so much to achieve it.

This book looks at the result of this desire to commemorate the war, the numerous memorials that can be found across the county in a surprising variety of forms. From roadside crosses in village streets to looming clock-towers in town squares, simple plaques on a church wall or glowing stained glass memorial windows, sculpted soldiers in mourning or triumphant winged Victories, each community chose its own form of commemoration to remember the sacrifices they made in the Great War.

Every name recorded on a memorial tells a story, and this book also looks at the many and varied avenues of research that can lead the present day investigator to find out more about the men and women who served, and who often gave their lives in that service.



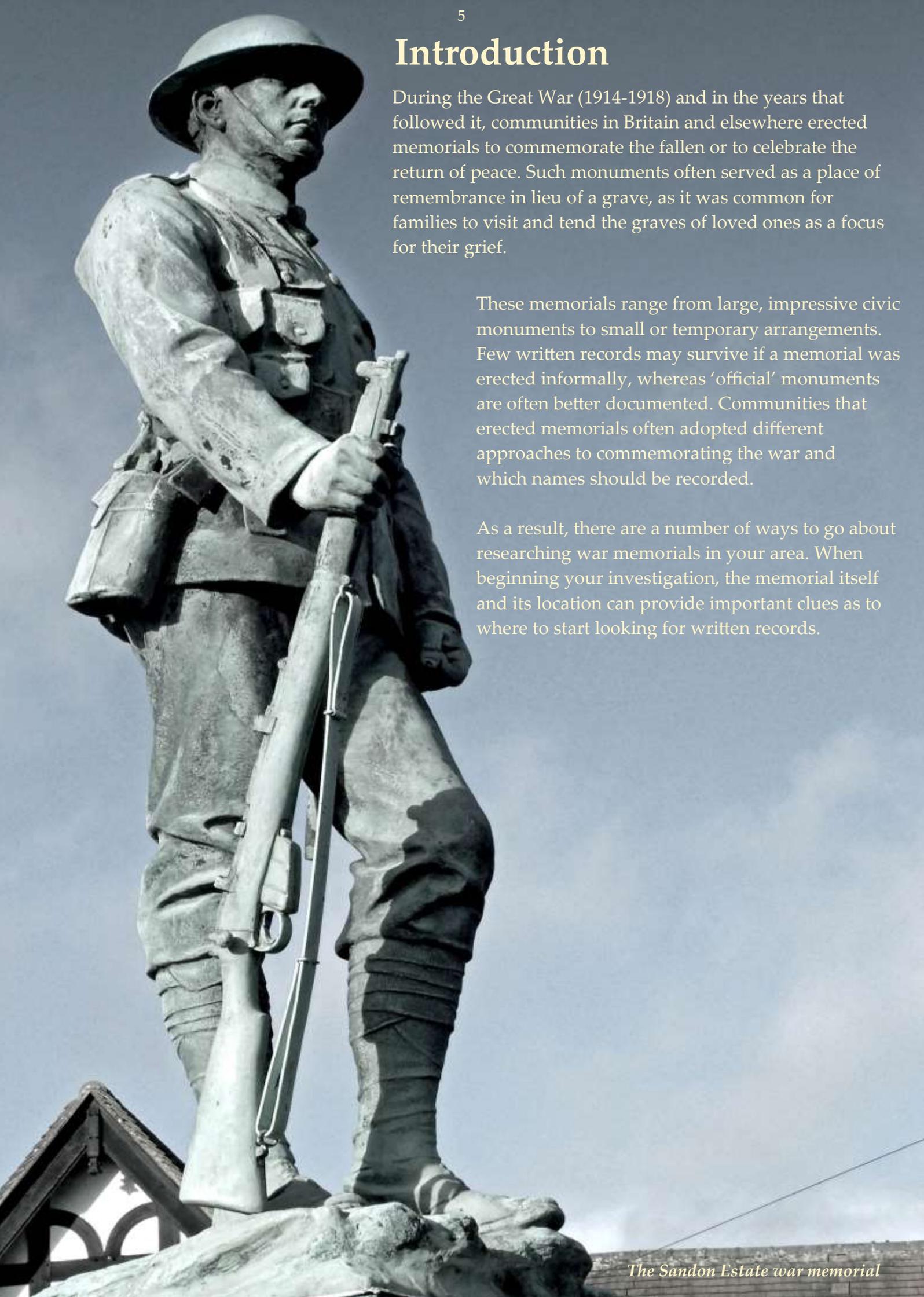
*Souvenir programme from the unveiling of Leek's Nicholson War Memorial in August 1925.
(SRO D3359/49/4/1)*

Introduction

During the Great War (1914-1918) and in the years that followed it, communities in Britain and elsewhere erected memorials to commemorate the fallen or to celebrate the return of peace. Such monuments often served as a place of remembrance in lieu of a grave, as it was common for families to visit and tend the graves of loved ones as a focus for their grief.

These memorials range from large, impressive civic monuments to small or temporary arrangements. Few written records may survive if a memorial was erected informally, whereas 'official' monuments are often better documented. Communities that erected memorials often adopted different approaches to commemorating the war and which names should be recorded.

As a result, there are a number of ways to go about researching war memorials in your area. When beginning your investigation, the memorial itself and its location can provide important clues as to where to start looking for written records.



Local Memorialization pre-1914

Whilst many of the memorials that can be found across the county commemorate those who served and fell in the Great War, local public monuments have existed for centuries. These were erected to commemorate a number of subjects, including notable individuals, events (including wars, battles and local disasters) and achievements. Some of these memorials were contemporary, others erected or restored at a later date.

Many of the forms and traditions created by previous public commemorations were drawn upon by the designers of the Great War memorials, and it can help to understand the influences on these memorials by considering some local monuments that had been erected by previous generations.



Replica Roman military tombstone, National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas. Some of the earliest identifiable sculptural commemorations in Britain were left by the Romans in the form of ornate tombstones, such as this replica example to a deceased cavalryman, shown trampling a native enemy underfoot. Some allegorical Roman monumental design elements – such as a defeated foe underfoot and the winged figure of Victory – would be re-used in Great War memorials.

Replica 'Anglo-Saxon' sculptural cross, National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas. Staffordshire has a number of surviving examples of these 10th or 11th century stone crosses, often standing in churchyards. Their precise function remains unclear, although they certainly served as a visual and public form of reminder. In some instances such crosses were reused to commemorate events or individuals of later centuries, whilst the 'Saxon Cross' design was also used for some of the new memorials of the Great War.



Lord Audley's Cross on the battlefield of Blore Heath. The cross was originally set up to commemorate Lord Audley's death in the battle of 1459. The memorial was restored and a new inscription added in 1765. The medieval cross partially survives on the top of the monument. Crosses were to feature prominently in the selection of memorial forms for those of the Great War. (WSL 323/45/1/190/80)



An 18th century plaque in Dam Street, Lichfield, commemorating the death of Lord Brooke during the siege of 1643. Memorial plaques and tablets would become a common feature of Great War commemorations.



Freestanding memorial in St Michael's Chapel, Lichfield Cathedral, to the officers and men of the 80th (South Staffordshire) Regiment who fell in the Sutlej Campaign of 1845-6. Officers are listed first, followed by other ranks, starting with non-commissioned officers, reflecting the social order of the day that continued even after death. The memorial features an emblem on top—in this case, the sphinx associated with the regiment—draped flags and a bas-relief of mourning soldiers, all design elements that would be reused in a number of more ornate war memorials. The commanding officer's framed medals, however, are a rather more unusual feature of this monument.

Memorial tablet in Lichfield Cathedral to 368 officers and men of the 80th (South Staffordshire) Regiment who died on active service in Burma 1852-3. As was the custom at the time, officers are listed first, with only other ranks mentioned by name if they were killed in action—in this case only 10 such men are named, as the remainder died of disease. The design of the tablet can be found echoed in examples from the Great War.



Brass memorial plaque in Lichfield Cathedral to Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Petit, of the 50th Queen's Own Regiment, who died in 1852. This large, ornate plaque (the figure is life-sized) was erected by his fellow officers and is the forerunner to the privately erected memorial plaques to individual officers who fell in the Great War and can often be found in local parish churches.



An example of a monument to a civilian tragedy, this 'Saxon Cross' design memorial in Longton Cemetery commemorates the 1889 Mossfield Colliery disaster, in which 64 men were killed. The memorial lists the names of those who died in the disaster on the plinth, and is strongly reminiscent of numerous war memorials of the Great War. Unlike these memorials, however, the Mossfield monument also serves as a grave marker for some of the victims.



This unusual memorial to the soldiers of the 80th (South Staffordshire) Regiment who fell in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 can be found in Lichfield Cathedral. Using imitation Zulu shields as its plaques, it lists the men who fell battle by battle, giving the highest rank at the top, then privates listed more or less alphabetically below, a feature that is often found on Great War memorials.



The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), often referred to at the time as 'The War in South Africa' produced the greatest number of war memorials prior to the Great War, largely due to the high number of casualties suffered by British Imperial forces. The selection of memorials here—all from Staffordshire—reflects the increasing variety of memorials, as well as the full listing of all those who died in service. These memorials are the direct predecessors of those set up in the Great War and share a number of features.

Memorial stained glass window in Lichfield Cathedral, one of a series placed by their comrades, commemorating men of the 3rd Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment who fell in South Africa. The names of those who died are listed on the window, with higher ranks first and private soldiers listed alphabetically. The dedication of memorial windows would continue during the Great War.



To the Glory of God & in memory of those who laid down their lives in the S. African War 1901-2 their comrades in the 3rd Bn. 5. Stafford Regt. dedicate this window. Cf. Sgt. H. Hadley. Sgt. J. Cope. Cf. J.T. Smallwood. also. Pts. G. Bull. G. Bates. Sgt. H. Butler. J. Burke. S. Brown. W. Cole. A. Chilton. Sgt. P. Clarke. S. Giles. E. S. Gould. W. H. Griffiths. M. Hill. T. Leach. T. Morris. B. Mason. J. M. Farlane. F. Mole. J. Porter. W. Reid. S. Roberts. J. Turner. J. H. Withers.

Brass memorial plaque in St Mary's Collegiate Church, Stafford, to the men of the 3rd Battalion of the Prince of Wales' (North Staffordshire) Regiment who fell in South Africa or died en route. Of the 15 men listed alphabetically (a feature of Great War memorials), 12 died of disease.



A brass memorial plaque to an individual killed in South Africa, Private H. Johnson, erected by the officers and men of his company in the North Staffordshire Regiment in St Edith's parish church, Tamworth, presumably as their only loss in the war. Such memorials to private soldiers are relatively rare in the Great War.



A series of three stone tablets in St Michael's Chapel, Lichfield Cathedral commemorate the men of the 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment who died on active service in South Africa. A dedicatory inscription is followed by a list of all those who fell, a feature often found on Great War memorials of similar design.

Another example of civilian commemoration, this bronze memorial statue to E.J. Smith, captain of the 'Titanic', stands in Beacon Park, Lichfield. Unveiled in 1914, it echoes many of the bronze sculptural memorials that would come to commemorate the Great War. The work of Lady Kathleen Scott (who later worked on figures for war memorials), the subject of the statue was controversial and the figure had to be erected in Lichfield as Hanley (Smith's birthplace) declined it.



Types of War Memorial

One of the first things to note when studying local memorials to the Great War is just how much designs vary. There was no single national pattern or government directive as to how a memorial should look and what it should include. The design of each memorial depended on the intentions of the committee, organization or individual erecting it, what finances were available to them and the restrictions of the location chosen to site it.

Some local war memorials include lists of those who served and those who fell, others record only those who fell. Sometimes, full first names are given, in other cases only initials. Rank is sometimes included, sometimes it is not, as is the case with age and date of death. On some memorials, names are listed purely alphabetically, others are divided into separate listings under the various branches of the armed services. Women who served and civilians may or may not be included. Even the length of the Great War is a matter of debate—some memorials record the end as 1918 (the Armistice), others date it to 1919 or even 1920 (when formal peace treaties were signed).

To give some idea of the great variety of war memorial forms, a selection of examples from across Staffordshire is included in the following pages.



The plain cross is a commonly found form of war memorial, although height and details of the design vary considerably. Some crosses are completely plain, whilst others have architectural features on the shaft or head of the cross. This example can be found at Trentham cemetery in the gloomy shadow of the Sutherland Mausoleum.



The Saxon or Celtic cross motif is another commonly found form of war memorial. This form usually includes a circle around the head of the cross, with the arms protruding to a greater or lesser degree. Some memorials – such as this example in the churchyard of St Chads, Hopwas – also include elements of carved knot-work, a feature commonly found on the original crosses upon which they are based.

The Calvary—a cross with the figure of Jesus Christ—is a common sculptural motif in Catholic countries and also appears in a number of war memorials in Britain. This may reflect the message of self-sacrifice conveyed by images of the crucifixion in Christian Tradition with the sacrifices made by all those who served (and fell). This example stands by the main Armitage –Handsacre road.





The Cross of Sacrifice was the design of Sir Reginald Blomfield for the Imperial War Graves Commission and appears in most Commonwealth military cemeteries. It features a white Latin cross with a downward pointing bronze sword fixed to the arms, a design that was widely imitated in local war memorials to a greater or lesser degree. The examples here show its use in Staffordshire—that on the left can be found in Hanley Cemetery and commemorates the servicemen who are buried in the main civil cemeteries of the Potteries. That on the right stands in the Broadhurst Green Great War military cemetery on Cannock Chase.



The obelisk is another popular form of local war memorial and takes its inspiration from the monuments of Ancient Egypt. Like crosses, the exact design can vary in height, width and ornamentation. This example at Knutton includes a sculpted wreath on the obelisk itself and an inscription with a list of those who served engraved on the plinth below.



The cross with figures at the base is another variation on the common cross memorial form, although this type is not seen so often. There may be one or more figures placed at the foot of the cross, carved from the same stone or made from another material. The cross may be plain, or it may be a Calvary (as is the case with the war memorial at Blythe Bridge). This example at Maer has a plain cross but two stone figures, representing a soldier and a sailor standing with backs to the cross.

A single stone statue on top of a plinth is one of the more common forms of memorials with figures, although such figurative monuments are less often found than crosses or obelisks. The design and sculpting of statues varies considerably, some having a highly realistic finish and others being more stylized. In this example from Madeley Heath, the red sandstone figure shows a 'Tommy' standing at ease.



The most ornate examples of local war memorials are those that feature multiple bronze figures, such as in this example from Burton-upon-Trent. The allegorical figure of Victory stands on top of a plinth bearing a dedicatory inscription to those who fell (but not their names). Victory holds a laurel wreath and a downward-pointing sword, whilst allegorical figures of Peace (holding a dove) and War (in the guise of St George with broadsword) flank the base of the plinth. The memorial was the work of sculptor H.C. Fehr, who designed very similar examples in Leeds (West Yorkshire) and Colchester (Essex).



Another more commonly found type of figurative memorial is the single bronze statue. Usually mounted on a plinth, the statue can represent a serviceman (often a soldier) or, as in this case from Hanley, an allegorical female figure representing Victory or Peace. The figure here, dressed in classical-style armour, holds the wreath of victory aloft on a sword, whilst trampling a snake that represents a vanquished foe.



The multiple stone statue memorial is less commonly seen, and designs can vary as to where the figures are placed. In this example in Cannock, a soldier and a sailor firmly clutch a billowing standard on top of a plinth on which are inscribed the names of the fallen. Both figures are unusual—sailor statues are less often found in land-locked Midland counties, whilst the soldier appears to be a cavalryman rather than the more regularly depicted infantryman.

The most commonly found form of war memorial is the metal plaque, usually in bronze or brass. The plaque may be plain, or, as in this example from Upper Tean, feature figures or ornaments in relief. The example here lists those from the parish who served and fell, but similar plaques can commemorate individuals (such as Captain John Jenkinson in Tamworth) or entire Regiments or Divisions (such as the 59th North Midland Division memorial plaque in Stafford).





The stone tablet is another widespread form of commemoration, as part of larger memorials or in its own right. Inscribed stone tablets are some of the most commonly found memorials in churches, and, like their metal equivalent, can record the fallen of an entire parish or an individual soldier. This example, with crucifix at the top, is located in Hanbury Parish Church.



Tamworth has an example of a memorial wall. In this case, it forms part of a free-standing structure but elsewhere, the wall of an existing building has been turned into the memorial. Such walls may only hold a single inscription—as is the case with the Tamworth memorial—or they may be inscribed with the names of those who served and /or fell on active service.



A form of memorial most often found in churches, chapels and cathedrals is the commemorative stained glass window. These can be dedicated to an individual or to the members of a congregation or parish. This example from St Luke's church, Cannock, shows soldiers of the Great War taking communion.



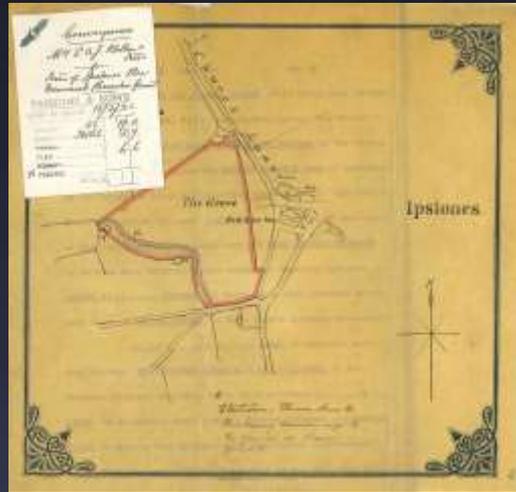
A number of war memorials take the title 'cenotaph', from the Greek term for 'empty tomb', representing the commemoration of those who are buried elsewhere. Some examples of cenotaphs—such as the famous one in London—feature an ornamental sarcophagus on top of a column or pedestal. Other examples vary in design, from a free-standing, chapel-like structure to a simple, unadorned pedestal. The cenotaph at Longton (above) includes a gated interior where memorial plaques are sited.

A more unusual war type of memorial takes the form of a medieval shrine, as with this example outside Penkrige parish church. Names are listed above an 'altar' form, with an ornate carved canopy covering a stone crucifix. Shrine type memorials can be found occasionally inside churches, and may reflect the temporary 'war shrines' that were set up before the more permanent memorials.





The memorial bench—familiar as a form of commemoration today—was also used in the remembrance of those who served in the Great War. This design for a memorial bench comes from Hoar Cross, and, unusually, is given in gratitude for those that returned home safely. Whilst the bench can be seen today, the lamp was not erected. (SRO D861/E/8/18)



In some places, it was decided to commemorate those who had fallen with a practical form of memorial. This can take the shape of a memorial Recreation Ground, with ground donated or bought for this specific purpose. Sometimes a plaque would be placed at the edge of such land to explain its purpose. This map shows the area proposed for Ipstones in 1921. (SRO D1134/18/3)

The pillar or column form of memorial, often having four or more sides, lends itself to lists of names and dedicatory inscriptions, often on separate faces. This four-sided example from Cheadle is plain, but other examples have carved reliefs or serve as a pedestal for a statue which may have been added at a later date.



Memorial gates were installed in some localities to commemorate the Great War. Features include ornate ironwork on the gates themselves, often including lettering or motifs, and gateposts bearing engraved plaques that list those that served or died. In some cases, the gates form the entrance to a memorial garden, park or recreation area, whilst in others, the gates themselves are the main memorial. This fine example can be found at Heath Hayes.



In some instances, the local war memorial takes the form of an architectural feature added to an existing building or created as part of a new one. Features might include inscriptions (such as dedications or listings of names) and sculptural elements. In this example, at the church of St Peter, Marchington, a statue of St George (and accompanying dragon) is flanked by dedicatory inscriptions that list the fallen above the West door.



A more unusual version of the memorial cross can be found at Uttoxeter. Here, the town's war memorial takes the form of an ornate medieval-style 'Eleanor Cross', inspired by the 13th century memorials erected by Edward I to his dead wife.



A memorial garden can act as the setting for a formal monument or serve as the memorial itself. Such gardens can provide a tranquil space in a busy town or occupy a quiet spot in a more rural location. They may be located in the very centre of a community or near a local landmark, as is the case with the example here in Lichfield, which sits in the shadow of the ancient cathedral.



A memorial feature that may be found occasionally at churches is that of the memorial lychgate, the traditional roofed entrance to the churchyard. The example here can be found at St John's church in Marchington Woodlands. Above the gates is the inscription 'In memoriam', whilst the six names of those who fell and a dedicatory inscription can be seen on panels inside the lychgate.

Clock towers commemorating those that served in the Great War may occasionally be found. In some cases, the clock or tower has been added to an existing structure (such as a church), whereas elsewhere a tower has been specially built. The particularly impressive example here is the Nicholson memorial in Leek, donated to the town by the Nicholson family as a memorial to their son, Basil, who was killed.



Another memorial feature that can be found as part of a larger structure or as a commemoration in its own right is the memorial lamp. In the example here from Fazeley, the lamp is the central feature of an ornate stone pedestal that features urns and memorial plaques. In other places, the lamp is mounted on a traditional iron post or, as can be seen in Leek, forms part of a larger memorial.

War Memorials in Public Spaces

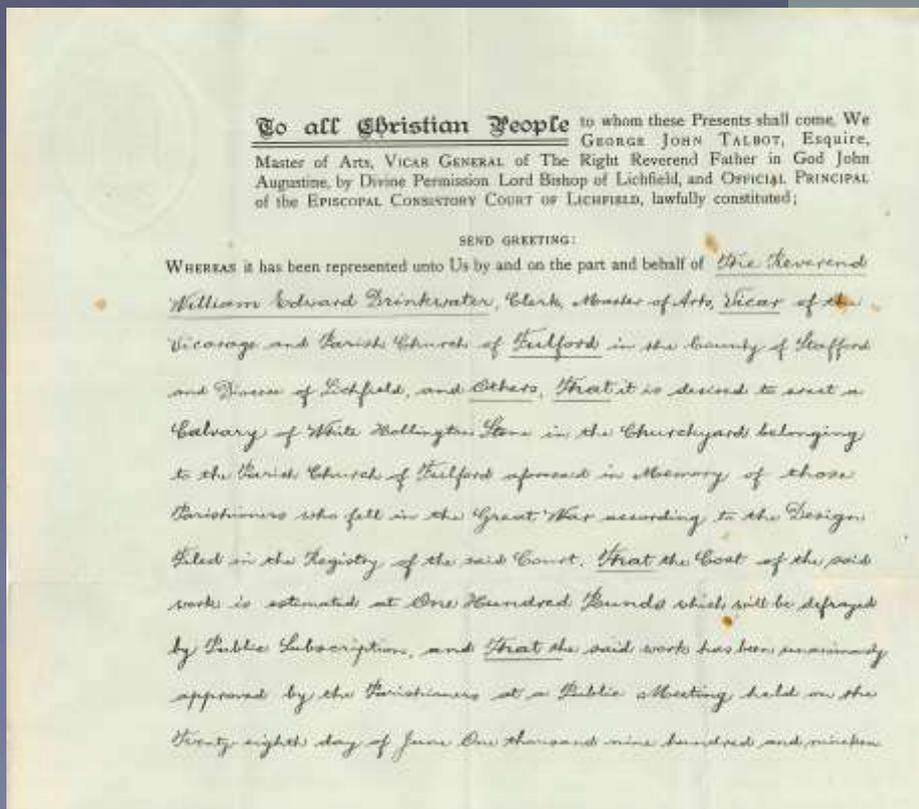
By their very nature, war memorials erected in public spaces—both externally and internally—are the most visible and accessible form of commemoration. They are also the most immediate form of remembrance, reminding passers-by of the sacrifices made by a particular community as a result of conflict. Ironically, because of their prominent position, such memorials may be so familiar to regular passers-by that their significance becomes over-looked.

War Memorials in Churches

As existing centres of community worship and remembrance, local churches were often chosen as the location for private and public war memorials. This reflected a tradition of parish church-based commemoration in the form of memorial plaques, statues, structures and windows stretching back centuries.

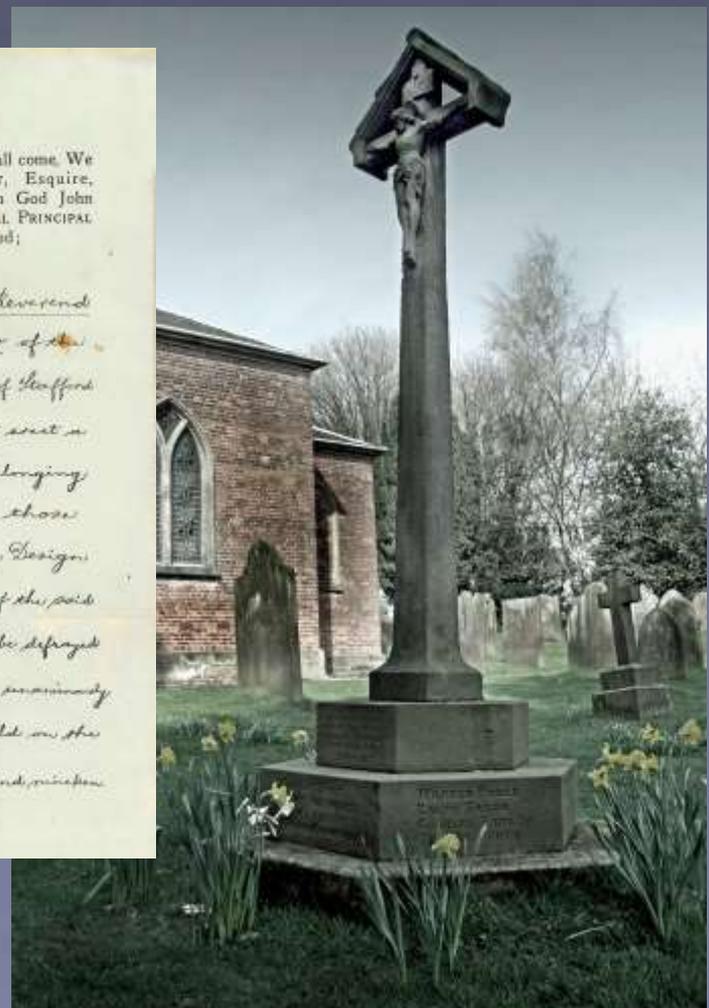
Most alterations and additions to Anglican church buildings were completed with the consent of the overseeing diocese, which in the case of Staffordshire is that of Lichfield. Known as *faculty records*, the documentation created in this process can vary but will usually include description and dates of the work to be carried out, contractors employed and details of how the work is to be funded.

Amongst these faculty records, it is often possible to find details of community memorials erected on church property. Material relating to community memorials may include details of the wording used in inscriptions or dedications, which in turn may mention specific information such as a single name or a description of its purpose.

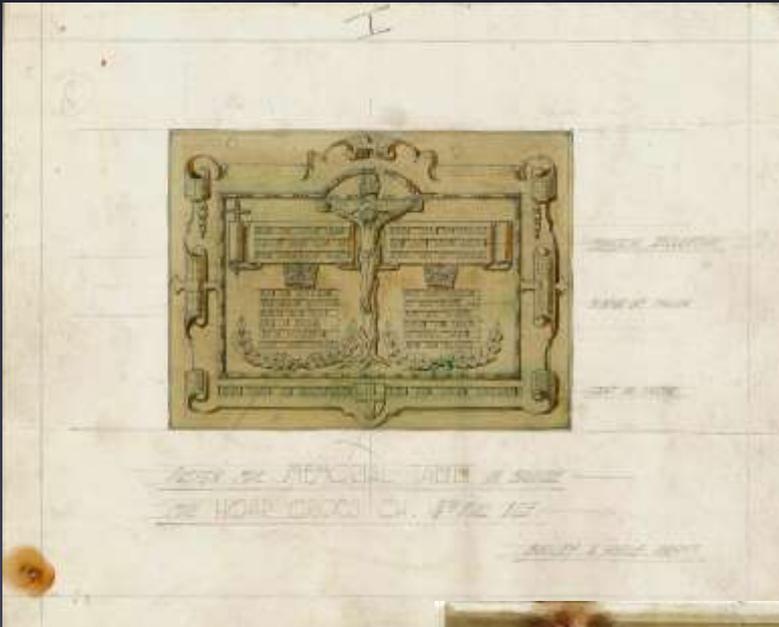


Faculty dated 1919 for a Calvary to be erected as a war memorial in the churchyard at Fulford (SRO D4587/3/7)

Right—the Fulford Calvary as it stands today



Case study: From Initial Design to Finished Memorial



This case study shows the three main stages in the creation of a war memorial, once it had been decided what form it should take.

In this instance, it was decided to erect a bronze memorial in Holy Angels church, Hoar Cross, in memory of the local men who fell in the Great War. At each stage of the design, various changes have been made to the appearance and inscriptions, giving an idea as to the number of alterations local memorials underwent before reaching the final versions that can be seen today.

The initial design is laid out on paper by Bodley & Hale, Architects (above). This is to give an idea of basic layout, and details of inscriptions and names are yet to be added. The main elements are the crucifix in the centre, flanked by the inscription and lists of names on a scrolled background.

The maquette (right) shows the expansion of the wreaths to encircle the names on each side and the raising of Christ's head on the crucifix.



Between the maquette and the final bronze plaque that was erected in the church, further alterations have been made.

The names in the wreaths have been transposed, so that they now appear even more out of alphabetical order. Additionally, the dates of the war have been amended from 1914-1918 to 1914-1919.

The initial sketch and photograph of the maquette are held at Staffordshire Record Office (SRO D861/E/8/18), whilst the finished plaque can still be seen in the church at Hoar Cross.



Private memorials may also be mentioned in faculty records. These often relate to a single person and were erected by family members, local examples including the memorials to John Jenkinson and Robert Nevill at St Editha's Parish Church, Tamworth. These records may be more specific, including individual names, date and place of death, details of a battle or ship as well as identifying family members who may have paid for the memorial.

In many cases, faculty records include the original designs for private memorials submitted to the diocese for approval. The largest concentration of local faculty records is currently located at Lichfield Record Office (being the Diocesan Record Office), but counterpart documents may be found amongst the records of individual parish churches, many of which are held today at Staffordshire Record Office in Stafford. In some cases, these counterparts may be the only surviving record of the work.

Whilst most community memorials were erected between 1919 and 1922, dates for private memorials in churches are more varied, reflecting both the lives of the serviceman and those they left behind. One example of the ongoing commemoration of a local soldier's family can be found in the parish church of St Mary, Tutbury. An initial memorial was erected upon the soldier's death in 1916, with a second tablet added to record the accidental death of a relative in 1927.



Left: A private memorial plaque erected to the memory of Captain John Jenkinson by his parents in St Editha's parish church, Tamworth. The plaque gives details of date and place of death, as well as recording that Jenkinson lived in Hopwas (near Tamworth) whilst his parents lived in Godalming, Surrey.



Right: Faculty for the church at Norton in the Moors, with descriptions of two proposed memorial plaques. The first is a memorial to all the men of the parish who died in the Great War; the second is a private memorial to 19-year-old Flight Sergeant Arnold Bean, killed in 1918 and commemorated by his parents. (SRO D3525/3/1)

Case study: Documenting a War Memorial

ESTATE OFFICES,
LITTLE INGESTRE,
STAFFORD.

26th. Nov. 1920.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged for your letter of the 5th inst., and I have heard from Beckett, and no doubt you are anxious in carrying the beam through to the side walls, but Mr. Bradbury has left me the size of 7' x 5' for the beam.

I think before you absolutely decide, although that may be the figure on Mr. Bridgeman's original plan, it is for a much shorter beam, I think you really ought to consider whether 7' x 5' is handson enough for the Church. If you will put up a small model of 7' x 5' across the Church, I think you will think it looks like a string. I really don't think the beam should be less than 15" x 12", but still I leave it for your approval.

Yours sincerely,

Cecil Gardner

Rev. H. Smith.



ESTATE OFFICES,
LITTLE INGESTRE,
STAFFORD.

19th. Nov. 1920.

Dear Sir,

We have cut the beam out and it looks awfully well.

I am just a little disappointed that when we had to reduce the size from 10' to 8' that on the back side of the beam there is a small rotten knot appeared, which did not show originally at all, but I think a good deal of it will disappear in the working of the beam.

I am sending it today down to Mr. Bradbury.

This letter is signed on my behalf as I am just off to London.

Yours sincerely,

Wm. Cecil Gardner

TELEPHONE NO. 26.

Robert Bridgeman & Sons,

*Quonians,
Lichfield,
Staffs.*

March 4th. 1921.

*Rev. Harold Smith,
Tixall Rectory,
Stafford.*

Memorial Rood.

Rev Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 26th ult. We much regret your previous letter was not replied to.

We quite agree with your suggestion of having the figure rather higher. We will have this set out for your approval, and at the same time give you an estimate of the cost.

We note you require the figure in Oak. In our estimate we quoted for the Cross in Oak and the figure in Limeswood. We did not mean to infer that Oak and Limeswood were the same price. Oak is of course more durable and harder to work.

We regret we have not had time to put this work in hand yet, as we are still choked up with work, after Easter we hope things will be a little easier.

Yours faithfully,

pp S. Bridge

Rev. H.

To the Worshipful GEORGE JOHN TALBOT, Master of Arts, Vicar General of the Right Reverend Father in God JOHN ADJUSTINE, Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Official Principal of the Consistory Court of Lichfield.

THE PETITION of the undersigned Harold Smith of Tixall Rectory, Near Stafford, Clerk in Holy Orders, Rector of Tixall,

SHEWETH as follows:-

1. It is desired to erect and place in the Parish Church of Tixall as a Memorial to those Parishioners who fell in the Great War a Rood Beam with Crucifix and Attendant Figures according to the designs of Messrs. Bridgeman and Son of Lichfield sent herewith. It is proposed to erect the Beam and Crucifix at once and to add the remaining two figures at a later date. It is further desired to affix to the wall of the said Church a Brass Memorial Plate with the following inscription:- "The Rood in this Church is dedicated to the Memory of George Gill, Northumberland Fusiliers, Henry Victor Ellement, S. Staffs Regt. Edward Walker, N. Staffs Regt. Who fell in the Great War, 1914-1918.
2. The cost of the said work is estimated at £85. The said cost has been defrayed by voluntary subscriptions.
3. The said work has been approved by the Parishioners and a Vestry Meeting held on the 23rd day of February 1921. the following resolution was passed unanimously:- "That application be made to the Consistory Court for a Faculty authorising the erection in the Church of a Rood Beam with Crucifix and Attendant Figures as a Memorial to those who fell in the Great War and also authorising the fixing in the Church of a Memorial Plate bearing the names of the fallen".
4. The work will involve no removal of pews or ornaments nor will it occasion any interference with windows or monuments and Divine Service will not be interrupted.

Wherefore your Petitioner prays your Faculty or Licence for the said work.

Dated this First day of March 1921.

THE DEDICATION.

Then, the Congregation all standing, the Bishop shall solemnly dedicate the Rood and Tablet saying:-

We Bless + Hallow + and Dedicate + this Rood to be used in the worship of Almighty God, and for the service of His House. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

We Bless + Hallow + and Dedicate + this Tablet, which has been placed here in loving memory of the brave men who fell in the Great War. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Into Thy hands most merciful Father we commend Thy servants, our brethren, fallen in the service of our Country----

Henry Victor Ellement.
George Gill.
William Harrison.
Harry Towers.

Edward Alfred Walker.

beseeching Thee to rest their souls in Thy Holy keeping and

THIS SERVICE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED BY THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY AND YORK FOR USE UNDER PROPER AUTHORITY.

Service
at
Dedication and Memorial
for those who were
Killed in Action
or Died of Wounds or Sickness
during the Great War.

November 7th, 1920
BEING THE SUNDAY PRECEDING
THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF
ARMISTICE DAY.

The Collection of other offerings at the Service on this day are asked, by the sanction of the Archbishop, for the Service Candidates' Orphanage Fund, which is responsible for training two thousand officers and men for the Service for the Ministry.

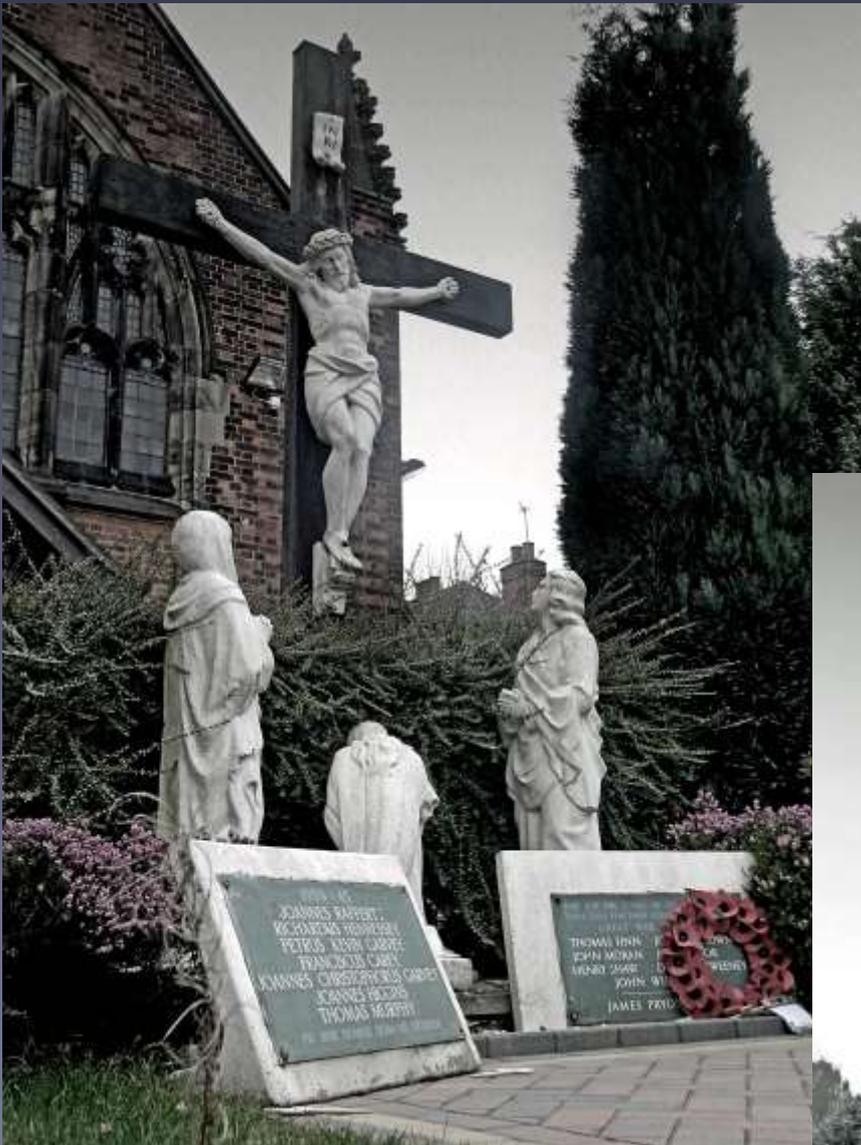
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,
LONDON: 5, St. Martin's Place, W.C.2.
BIRMINGHAM: 120, North Street. BATH: 28, Gay Street.

This case study demonstrates a selection of correspondence generated in the process of erecting a war memorial. In this case, the material relates to a rood beam and brass plaque installed in St John's church, Tixall. (SRO D3380/4/2 & D3380/8/2)

2020/11

Many churches altered and made additions to Great War memorials following World War II, and this is also reflected in surviving faculty records of both diocese and parish church. These records can provide more details about the Great War memorial if earlier material is unavailable. Additionally, they may give information about any changes or movement of the original monument, such as in the case of Ogley Hay Church, where the decision to move the Roll of Honour was made in 1946.

Of course, not all servicemen (and women) were Anglican and memorials to Roman Catholic and Nonconformist casualties of war can also be found. Staffordshire is part of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, the archives of which (located at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham) hold most material relating to local Roman Catholic churches and their congregations. In some cases, material remains with the individual church. More information can be found by visiting the archdiocesan website www.birminghamarchdiocesanarchives.org.uk/.



Calvary erected outside St John the Evangelist Roman Catholic church, Kidsgrove, to commemorate members lost in the Great War. A subsequent plaque records those lost in World War 2. Interestingly, the men's first names— a number of whose surnames suggest Irish heritage—are recorded in their Latin form on the World War 2 plaque, which was not the case for their Great War predecessors.



Another Calvary—this time Anglican—erected in the churchyard of St Chads, Pattingham, as a private memorial to two grandsons of the Reverend W.G. Greenstreet who were killed in the Great War. Their names, place and date of death are recorded on opposite sides of the base.

Nonconformist congregations established memorials within chapels and meeting houses, although surviving records can be limited. Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds a varied (but incomplete) range of material relating to Nonconformist chapels, amongst which may be found occasional documents that relate to the commemoration of fallen members. One example is a national Roll of Honour in printed booklet form issued at the Wesleyan Methodist Conference (London) in 1917. This records the name of every Wesleyan Methodist serviceman killed in action since the previous conference of 1916 (SRO D4800/15/2) - see page 21.

An online guide to Nonconformist sources held by Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service is available at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives. Other resources are held at the National Archives, Kew (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) and at the John Rylands Library, Manchester (www.library.manchester.ac.uk), although the quantity and content of material may vary considerably.

WHEREAS it has been represented unto Us by and on the part and behalf of *The Reverend* *Rodgar Burford, Clerk, the Vicar of the Parish of Alrewas with Trasley in the* County of Stafford and *Business of Lichfield Henry Willis Brierley and George Henry Lord, Churchwardens of Alrewas and Frank Beeds and Robert Smith Gates, Wattleton, Churchwardens of Trasley* aforesaid that it is desired (1) to convert the North Aisle of the Parish Church of Alrewas aforesaid into a War Memorial Chapel consisting of an Altar and Kiddle Posts of Baywood (gilded), Two Candelsticks, Cross, and Figure of Angels for such Altar, Large Candelsticks and Credence Table of Oak, Sanctuary Lamp, Chairs, Altar Frontals and Hangings, and two Tablets of Alabaster to be placed in the North Wall of such Chapel bearing the following Inscriptions

(1) To the Glory of God and in grateful oblation of those our Men who gave their lives in the service of their Country, 1914-18 (names follow), this Tablet of Chapel given by parishioners, their name shall for ever

(2) To the Glory of God and in grateful oblation of our fallen Sons of the 1st Alrewas Troop of (R.F.) Scouts (names follow) this Tablet placed by members of the old Troop, of friends, R.F.S.

(2) To place a Memorial Tablet of Alabaster with an Alabaster Tablet on the North Wall in the Chapel

Faculty of 1928 proposing the creation of a war memorial chapel in the north aisle of Alrewas parish church. (SRO D783/3/7)

Faculty for the erection of a war memorial for Forsbrook and Blythe Bridge (SRO D4073/6/5). The memorial takes the form of a Calvary supported by a soldier.



Detail of the stylized soldier at the foot of the memorial Calvary.

To all Christian People in whom these Presents shall come, We of A.D. VICAR GENERAL of THE Right Reverend Father in God JOHN AUGUSTINE, by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of Lichfield, and OFFICIAL PRINCIPAL of the EPISCOPAL CONSISTORY COURT of LICHFIELD, lawfully constituted;

SEND OBEDIENCE;

AS it has been represented unto Us by and on the part and behalf of *The Reverend* *William Bridgwood, Clerk, the Vicar, and Robert James* *Watts and Robert Morrison, the Churchwardens of the Parish* in the County of Stafford and *Business of Lichfield* it is desired to erect a War Memorial Calvary with Inscriptions shown in the Books of Wards of Forsbrook according to the Petition and Inscriptions filed in the said Court. That the cost of the said work is estimated at *one hundred and fifty Pounds* which is to be defrayed by *subscriptions* and has been *unanimously* approved by the *Parishioners*.

And Petitioners have prayed our Licence or Faculty, for the purposes aforesaid, and that We desiring to comply with the reasonable request of the said Petitioners and Orders of Law in this case requisite having been first had and always that it shall be necessary in carrying out the said work to remove any Tombstones, or Monuments, due care shall be had thereof and any such Tombstones or Monuments shall be securely re-erected within Consecrated Ground, and be replaced in a suitable position. In Testimony whereof We have hereunto affixed this Seal of our Consistory Court, the day of the Month of *September* the Year of our Lord one Thousand Nine Hundred and *Twenty* Eight.

Robert Roddrey
Registrar



War Memorials in other Public Spaces

Whilst many war memorials were erected on church property, others set up by local secular authorities were located in more general public spaces. Across the county, memorials to those who fought and died in the Great War were erected at all levels of local government, from small Parish Councils up to the larger Town Councils and County Councils, the highest tier.

Servicemen from Staffordshire are commemorated on the County War Memorial, located on Victoria Bridge in Stafford. This memorial does not record any individuals but focusses on the county's general contribution to the war, listing some of the key battles that its soldiers took part in, such as Messines and St Quentin. The monument is topped by an allegorical winged figure of Victory accompanied by a stamping warhorse.

Material relating to the County War Memorial, including images and programmes of unveiling, along with correspondence concerning the proposed removal of the memorial to Gaol Square, Stafford in the 1970s, can be located at Staffordshire Record Office, whilst further information can be found in the collections of Lichfield Record Office and the William Salt Library.



The County war memorial on Victoria Bridge, Stafford, as it stands today (above and top right) and at its dedication in May, 1923 (right), an event commemorated in the order of service (centre). (SRO D1323/T/1/42)

War memorials at a more local level tend to be placed near the physical or social centre of a community, although in some instances they can be found situated on the edge of a parish or town area. This may have been due to factors at the time of original erection (such as the gift of land in a particular place or differences of opinion amongst the community) or as a result of being moved at a later date. Memorials are moved for a variety of reasons, sometimes due to the redevelopment of their original location sometimes for better preservation in a more sympathetic environment.

In cases where a memorial is situated by a boundary, it is also possible that these parish or town boundaries have changed since it was erected. Any surviving records pertaining to the war memorial are more likely to be found amongst the records of the council that originally commissioned it.

Consulting a map of the area in which the memorial is located can help to help identify which council may have been responsible for its creation. The Staffordshire Parish Council Association website, www.spcaonline.org.uk, has a useful map showing current Parish and Town Council boundaries, whilst older Ordnance Survey maps (available at Staffordshire Record Office and through commercial websites) can be helpful in identifying boundary changes, as can the 1917 Boundary Commission map of Staffordshire, available through the website www.visionofbritain.org.uk.



The Rugeley town memorial takes the form of a stone obelisk surrounded by railings. This memorial has been relocated twice, the second time moving it to a position nearer its original siting outside the local police station.



Another obelisk serves as the local war memorial in Cheslyn Hay, where it occupies a position by a road junction—a common feature of war memorial sites. This example consists of a rough stone obelisk and base, with names inscribed on inserted plaques.

Case study: Gathering Information for a Roll of Honour

To assist local war memorial committees in the gathering of names for Rolls of Honour (and potentially a later war memorial), returns would be sent out to local families asking for details of relatives in service. Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds two sets of examples of such returns, one for Great Wyrley, the other for Hoar Cross. Both sets of returns provide useful information for researchers, such as instances of medals awarded, wounds received and whether the serviceman had died in action.

Great Wyrley Memorial Committee

The above Committee of completing the Roll of Honour for the Parish as soon as possible. They would therefore be greatly obliged if you would send the following particulars of your soldier relative to the undersigned not later than Sept. 21st 1917

W. J. Semkin
Clerk to Council
Great Wyrley

NAME OF SOLDIER (in full) Joseph J. J. J.

RANK Private

Distinctions gained Wounded in Action

Great Wyrley Memorial Committee

The above Committee of completing the Roll of Honour for the Parish as soon as possible. They would therefore be greatly obliged if you would send the following particulars of your soldier relative to the undersigned not later than Sept. 21st 1917

W. J. Semkin
Clerk to Council
Great Wyrley

NAME OF SOLDIER (in full) John Henry the Edward Bowen Williams B Charles J

RANK Private all

Distinctions gained

Great Wyrley Memorial Committee

The above Committee of completing the Roll of Honour for the Parish as soon as possible. They would therefore be greatly obliged if you would send the following particulars of your soldier relative to the undersigned not later than Sept. 21st 1917

W. J. Semkin
Clerk to Council
Great Wyrley

NAME OF SOLDIER (in full) Hezekiah Henry

RANK 2nd South Stafford

Distinctions gained (if any) Wounded and Missing April 28th 1917

Great Wyrley Memorial Committee

The above Committee are desirous of completing the Roll of Honour for the Parish as soon as possible. They would therefore be greatly obliged if you would send the following particulars of your soldier relative to the undersigned not later than Sept. 21st 1917

W. J. Semkin
Clerk to Council
Great Wyrley

NAME OF SOLDIER (in full) George E. Keasey

RANK 2nd Lt

Distinctions gained (if any) Military Medal

SRO D4111/K/2

Hoar Cross, District of Great...

I am writing on behalf of the Hoar Cross War Memorial Committee to enquire whether you would be so good as to fill up the attached sheet to enable them to have your name in a book which is to be made up and kept in the church. The book will consist of a short history of all who have gone from the parish to join His Majesty's forces since Aug. 1914 and Nov. 1918.

A stamped envelope enclosed.

H. J. J. J.

W. Albert Latta

SRO D861/E/8/18

1. Name and surname, also names of parents.
2. Date of birth.
3. (a) Name and unit.
3. (b) Any other units.
4. When mobilised.
5. Services previous to Aug. 4th, 1914.
6. Brigade and Division abroad.
7. Training Camps.
8. Date of going overseas.
9. Theatres of War.
10. Battles.
11. (a) Wounds, number.
11. (b) " date.
11. (c) " place.
12. (a) Hospital, overseas.
12. (b) " at home.
13. Distinctions, promotions, etc.

CHURCH PARISH

1. Hezekiah Henry
2. 11.11.1872
3. (a) Private 152 Brigade Royal Field Art.
3. (b) 2nd
4. 26.2.1915
5. ...
6. 152 Brigade 24 Division
7. ...
8. 16.1.1916
9. ...
10. ...

Parochial Church Councils (local bodies under the church) also erected war memorials on sites that lay outside church property but were generally accessible to the public. A local example is that at Weeping Cross on the outskirts of Stafford, which was erected alongside the main road from Lichfield, as church property was geographically on the edge of the community.

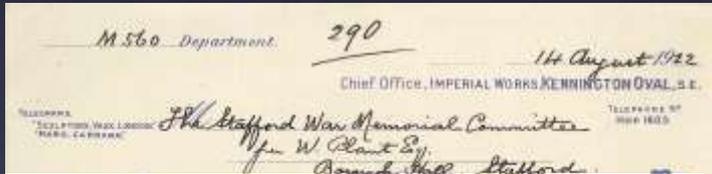
Memorials such as Weeping Cross are indistinguishable from those erected by civil Parish Councils, so when researching monuments on the edge of communities it may be necessary to check the records of both organizations. Records created by Parochial Church Councils are similar to those for memorials in churches in that they may contain correspondence, receipts, minute books, invoices and accounts. However, as their memorials were not erected on church property, no faculty records were produced.



The war memorial at Weeping Cross

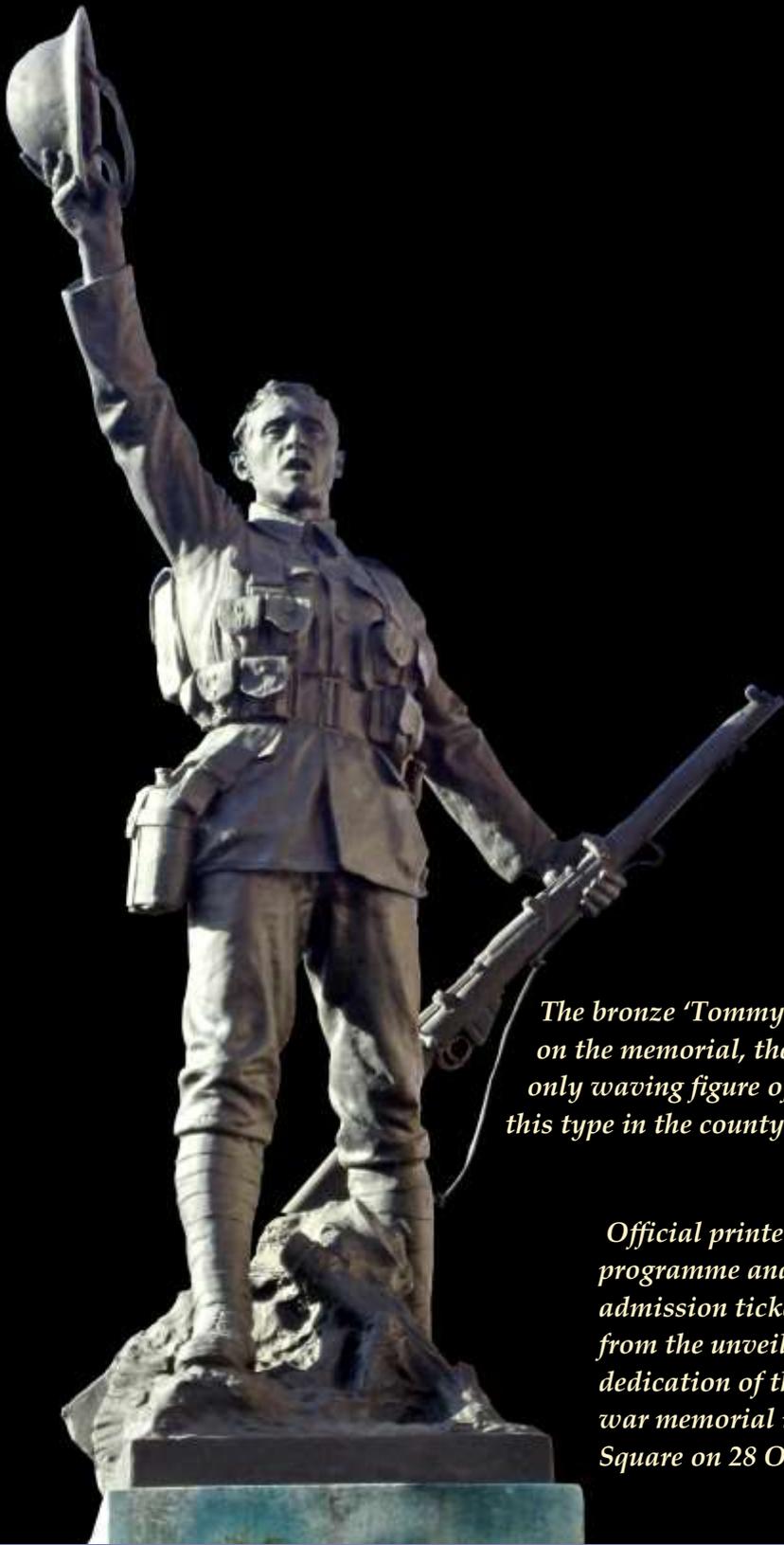
Case study: Unveiling the Stafford Borough War Memorial

The selection of material here demonstrates the variety of documentation that the erecting and unveiling of a war memorial can produce at local government level, in this case the Borough of Stafford. As county town, Stafford has a number of Great War memorials, from the County Memorial on Victoria Bridge to the plaque commemorating those who served from the local Post Office. This memorial commemorates all those who gave their lives from Stafford Borough, with their names listed on the pedestal of the statue.



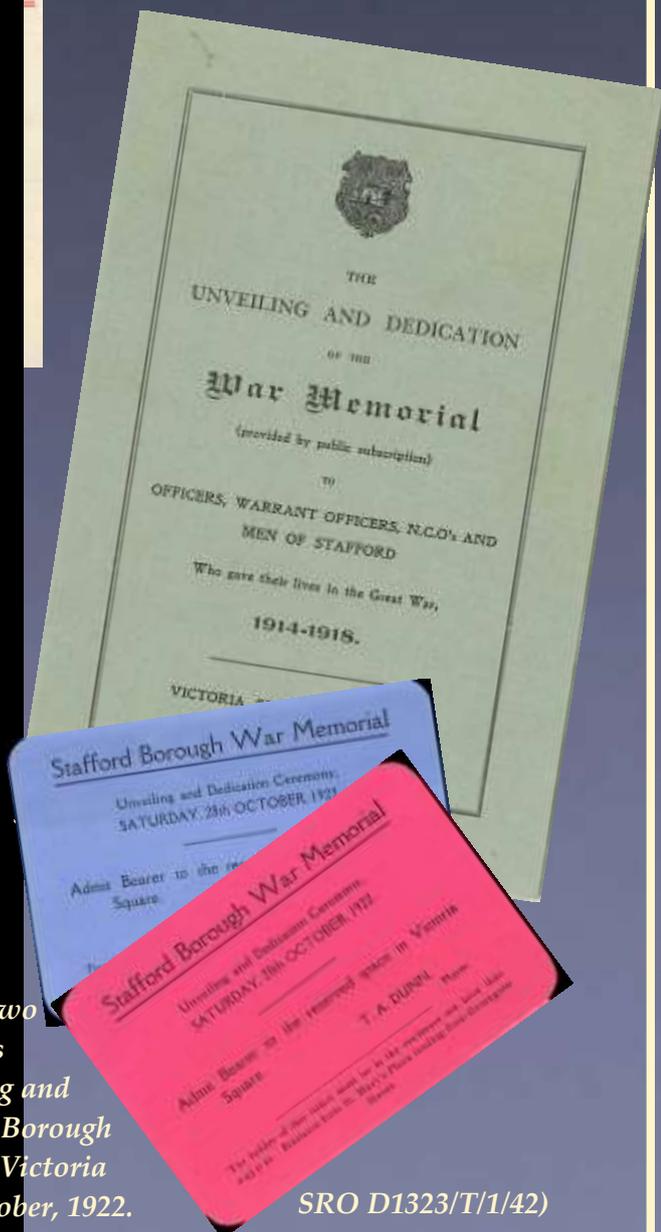
Receipt dated 14 August, 1922 from J. Whitehead & Sons, revealing that the bronze statue of the waving 'Tommy' who represents the 'Great Task Accomplished' (inscribed on the pedestal) and four accompanying bronze wreaths cost Stafford War Memorial Committee £550. This does not take into consideration the cost of the inscribed pedestal, so the Borough war memorial did not come cheaply.

(SRO D1323/T/1/42)

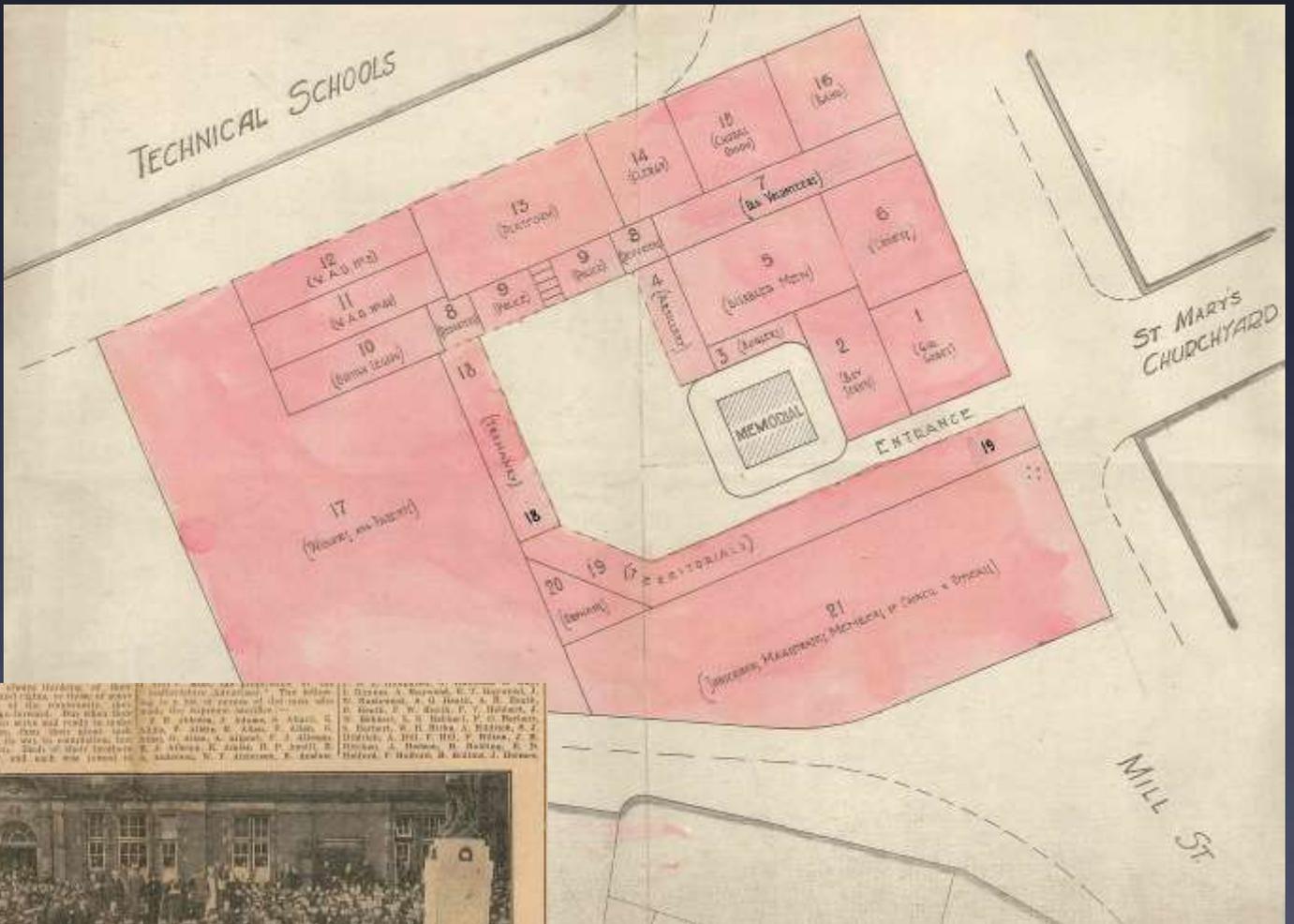


The bronze 'Tommy' on the memorial, the only waving figure of this type in the county.

Official printed programme and two admission tickets from the unveiling and dedication of the Borough war memorial in Victoria Square on 28 October, 1922.



SRO D1323/T/1/42)

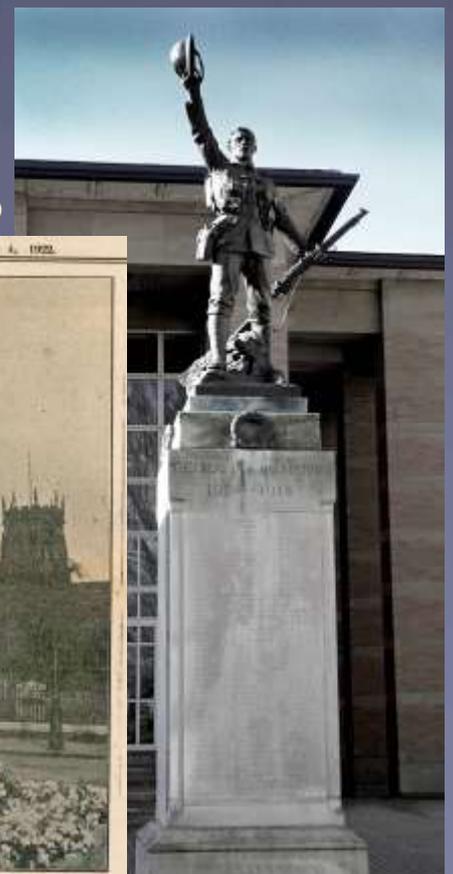


Official seating plan for the war memorial unveiling ceremony, with particular areas set aside for various groups of attendees, such as subscribers, councillors, disabled men and bereaved relatives. (SRO D1323/T/1/42)



Cutting from the Staffordshire Advertiser relating to the unveiling of the war memorial on 28 October, 1922. The photograph shows the moment of the 'general salute'. (SRO D1323/T/1/42)

The unveiling ceremony was not the end of the story for Stafford Borough war memorial. The figure was originally erected facing towards the station, from which many of Stafford's servicemen had departed (as can be seen in the newspaper photograph of November, 1922). When a new Crown Court building was erected directly in front of the memorial in the 1990s, it was decided to rotate both statue and pedestal 180° to face St Mary's church, as can now be seen.



Case study: Memorial Windows

Stained glass windows given in memory of individuals was a practice established by the Victorians and a tradition that continued into commemorations of the Great War. In some instances, memorial windows were dedicated to an individual soldier (usually an officer) by their families; in other cases, the memorial window was installed through public subscription and commemorated all who had fallen from the locality. Sometimes, such windows were in addition to a sculptural or architectural war memorial, sometimes the window served as the only memorial. The two examples here can be found side by side in Tamworth church.

The War Memorial Window in St Editha's church, Tamworth, was given by parishioners in memory of the men of the town who fell in the Great War. The window was designed by Henry Holliday and has a central religious theme in the form of Christ bearing man's sorrows. A series of allegorical figures represent bereaved family members, including a soldier who has lost his brother; a father who has lost his son; a wife who has lost her husband and her children who have lost their father; a woman who has lost her fiancé and an orphan who has lost both parents. Such images must have struck a chord with those suffering similar loss who saw them.



The Peel memorial window (left) is a good example of a window commemorating an individual, in this case Reverend The Honourable Maurice Berkeley Peel. He was the grandson of Sir Robert Peel and vicar of Tamworth, who was killed whilst serving in France as a chaplain in 1917. The window was given by Reverend Peel's family and his parishioners and is the design of Henry Holliday, who also created the adjacent War Memorial Window at Tamworth. The figure of Peel (inset) is shown in Biblical dress (rather than uniform) in one of three allegorical scenes relating to the path of Faith.

War Memorials Elsewhere

Whilst those who served in the Great War were often commemorated by their city, town or parish, it was also a common practice for businesses, academic institutions (such as schools and colleges), clubs and societies to record the contribution of their employees, students or members in the form of private memorials. These memorials would be displayed at a building used by the organization or company, internally or externally, often within public view but sometimes accessible only to those occupying the building. Because of the private nature of both memorials and the buildings that housed them, they are more vulnerable to damage or loss when businesses close, schools move, clubs fold and the premises they occupied are demolished for redevelopment.

Business War Memorials

Some businesses chose to erect memorials to commemorate employees who served in the Great War. As is the case with many memorials, some record the names of all who served, whilst others record only those who died in service. Memorials vary from a simple wall plaque (such as that for the employees of Sharp Brothers & Knight, Burton upon Trent) to elaborate painted boards or canvas (such as that for the employees of W.H. Dorman & Sons, Stafford) and occasionally free-standing sculpture (such as that dedicated to the employees of W. Butler & Co, Wolverhampton).

The uncertain nature of business has meant that these employee memorials can have a chequered history. In instances where the business continues today, memorials may be found in their original location or at least displayed in premises still occupied by that business. Post Offices are a good example of this, and in Staffordshire there are at least two instances—in Stoke on Trent and in Stafford—where memorials have been transferred to more modern buildings when older premises were vacated.

Two examples of war memorials erected by businesses. The top example is that of the London & Lancashire Insurance Company, which has been relocated to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas.

The lower example shows the Stafford Post Office war memorial, which remains in Stafford but was moved to a modern delivery office on Newport Road in 2007.



In other instances, the business that created the memorial to its employees has since closed and its premises re-used for other purposes or demolished for redevelopment, as is often the case with factory buildings. In re-used premises, the memorial may have been retained as an original feature, but in other examples, and particularly where a building has been demolished, memorials may be relocated or even lost through misplacing or destruction during the demolition process.

Records for companies can be difficult to find as they may have closed or merged. Unlike Anglican church records, there is no requirement for any business collection to be deposited with an archive, and it is quite common to find that records have been destroyed when a firm shuts down. Where firms have merged, material may be assimilated into the archives of the new company or otherwise disposed of due to lack of space or interest.



Where material does survive, it may be possible to find information about memorials and the employees they commemorate through board meeting minutes, accounts, salary books, photographs and press cuttings, depending on whether these records have been preserved for the relevant period. Some companies, such as W.H. Dorman, produced published records of their employees who served in the Great War.

To trace records that potentially relate to business memorials, it can be helpful to note later changes and relocations of the particular company to establish where its records may be held. Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds material relating to local businesses, including W.H. Dorman and Lotus Ltd of Stafford. Information about these holdings can be found through the archive's online catalogue *Gateway to the Past* (www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk), with a downloadable guide to business sources available on its website, www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives (under Our Services – Publications).

In addition, the *Access to Archives* feature on the National Archives website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a) allows users to search across the records of different institutions and archives, as some company records may be deposited in more than one place.

Top: Memorial to the employees of Lichfield Brewery who served in the Great War, still attached to the old brewery buildings in Upper St John Street, Lichfield.

Left: Two details from the Phoenix Staff Memorial, now located at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. On one side, the mourning soldiers with rifles reversed stand by a plaque commemorating the fallen; on the other side, two female figures flank a plaque commemorating those who served but returned.



Case study: The Varied Fates of Business War Memorials

Same Site, New Building

The factory buildings of Sharp Brothers & Knight, joinery manufacturers based in Burton upon Trent, closed in 1997 and were later demolished to make way for a home improvements superstore. The company had erected two memorial plaques to its employees who served in both world wars, which were removed when the buildings were taken down. However, both plaques were later placed in public view on the front wall of the new superstore, effectively returning them to the site they formerly occupied.



Stored in a Museum

W.H. Dorman & Sons engineering firm in Stafford had a long and varied history before being bought out by English Electric in the 1960s. To commemorate the employees who served during the Great War, Dormans commissioned a painted canvas in 1919 listing their names. Although the company itself no longer exists as an individual entity, their memorial canvas is now in the care of Staffordshire County Museum. Although the canvas is in storage, this image (right) can be found on the museum's online catalogue, *Gateway to the Past* (www.museums.staffordshire.gov.uk) and the *Staffordshire Past Track* website www.staffspastrack.org.uk.



Staffordshire Museum Service

Relocated to a Site Nearby

Another large Stafford Company, Lotus Ltd, produced shoes at their factory on Sandon Road until 1997, when the site closed and the buildings demolished to make way for a housing estate. Lotus commemorated those members of staff who had served in both world wars with a memorial plaque attached to the railings that surrounded their factory site. Although the railings were kept as part of the new estate, the memorial was transferred to John Wheeldon Primary School, in nearby Corporation Street. This image of the plaque in its original position (right) can be found on the *Staffordshire Past Track* website www.staffspastrack.org.uk.



Staffordshire Museum Service

Displayed in a Museum

W. Butler & Co, brewers of Wolverhampton, erected an impressive free-standing memorial to its employees, featuring a bronze statue of a 'Tommy' on a pedestal bearing the names of those who served. Further names were added following World War 2. The memorial was originally located in the yard at the Springfield Brewery site, but production ceased there in 1990 and, following the closure of the site, the memorial was moved to the Fallings Park Territorial Army Centre for its own safety. The 'Tommy' and his pedestal were subsequently moved to the Black Country Living History Museum, Dudley, where they can be seen by visitors today near the top of the open air museum site.



School War Memorials

Some schools created Rolls of Honour or erected war memorials to former pupils who served in the Great War. Where they survive, such commemorations can be useful in tracing the movements of some former pupils, as they often record those who had emigrated and died fighting with Commonwealth Forces (referred to as 'Dominion' at the time) such as Canadian and Australian units.

As with business war memorials, those erected in schools can have a varied history. Where school buildings cease to be used, memorials can risk being lost when the premises are refurbished or demolished. In other cases, the memorial is relocated to the modern setting of a successor school.

One example is that set up to commemorate 67 former pupils of Elmore Green Central School in Bloxwich who died in service. The memorial—an ornate marble plaque featuring the names of the fallen flanked by the figures of a sailor and a soldier—was moved to the new T.P. Riley Comprehensive School in Bloxwich in 1958, which in turn was demolished in 2001. The memorial subsequently disappeared, but following some detective work by local historians and others, it was found to have been put in storage at a monumental masons' workshop in Cannock. The memorial was relocated to Elmore Green Primary School, where it was rededicated with a special ceremony in 2011.

In another example, plain memorial plaques were erected between the windows of the external wall of Alleyne's Grammar School in Uttoxeter. The building now forms part of a larger site, but the plaques listing the former pupils who fell can still be seen. Whilst the Elmore Green memorial is accessible only to those visiting the primary school, those at the old Grammar school on Back Lane, Uttoxeter can be easily viewed from the street.



Above: The relocated memorial plaque at Elmore Green, Bloxwich.

Right: Memorial plaques to the 'Old Boys' of Alleyne's Grammar School, Uttoxeter, who fell serving in the Great War and subsequently.

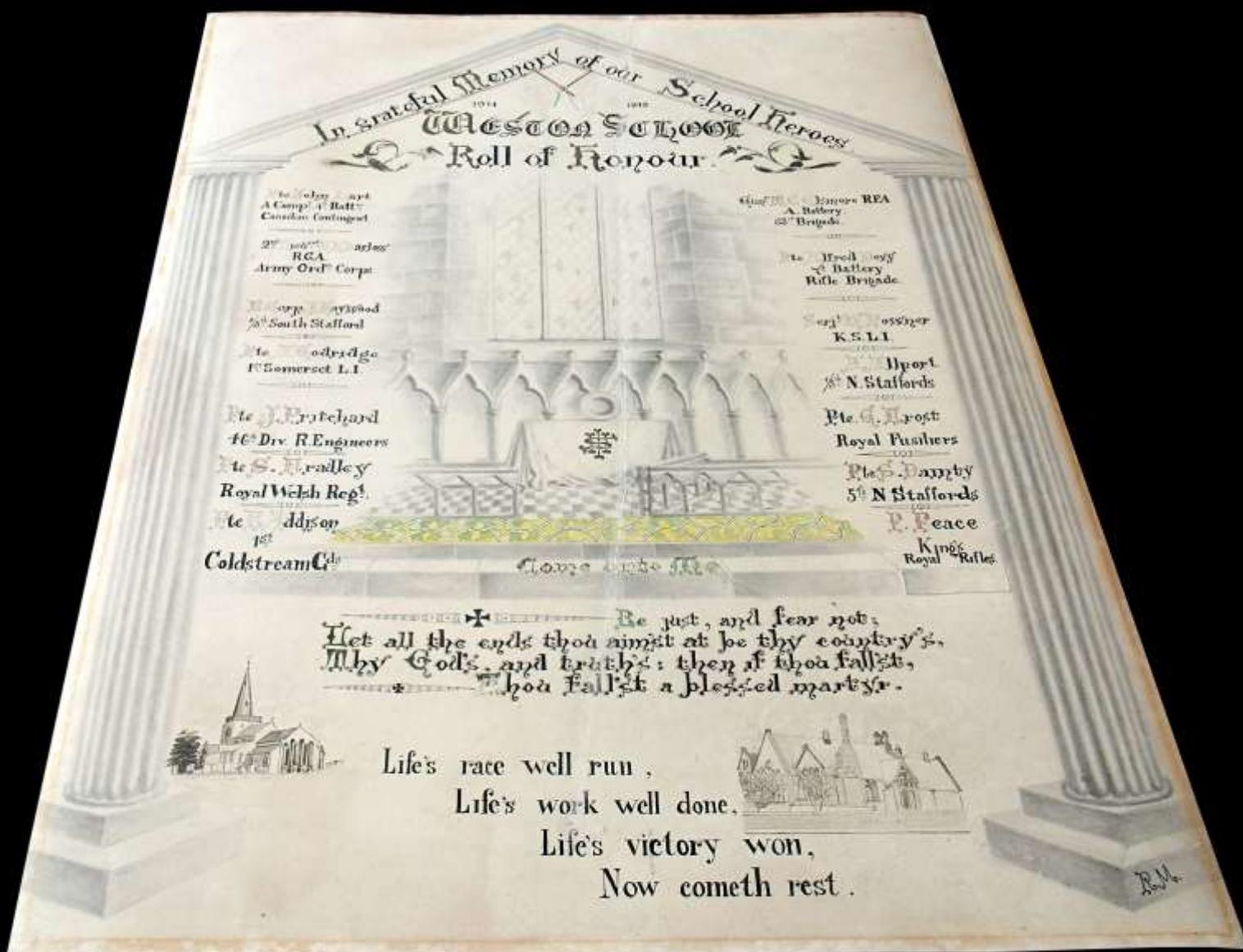


Rolls of Honour were sometimes less permanent, in some cases being little more than a painted design on card or parchment which was then framed. One such example is the Roll of Honour which formerly hung at Weston-upon-Trent School and is now held at Staffordshire Record Office (SRO D808). The design includes a list of those who fell (including their regiment or unit), with an altar and images of the local church and the school. It was originally framed and is signed "R.M.", who may have been a pupil or member of staff.

In many other cases, however, records relating to school memorials have not survived or remain with the school (or its successor) and are not generally available for public consultation. Some schools nationally are undertaking Great War centennial projects to research their own war memorials and share the information online, but this very much depends on the individual establishment.

The National Register of War Memorials (www.ukniwm.org.uk) also lists a number of school memorials, giving location and a physical description.

To see whether the records of a particular school have been deposited with Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service, it is worth checking the online catalogue *Gateway to the Past* (www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk), but bear in mind that records of Grammar Schools (establishments that tended to erect war memorials) can be patchy – Alleyne's Grammar school in Uttoxeter, for example, is only represented by a few school magazines from the 1930s.



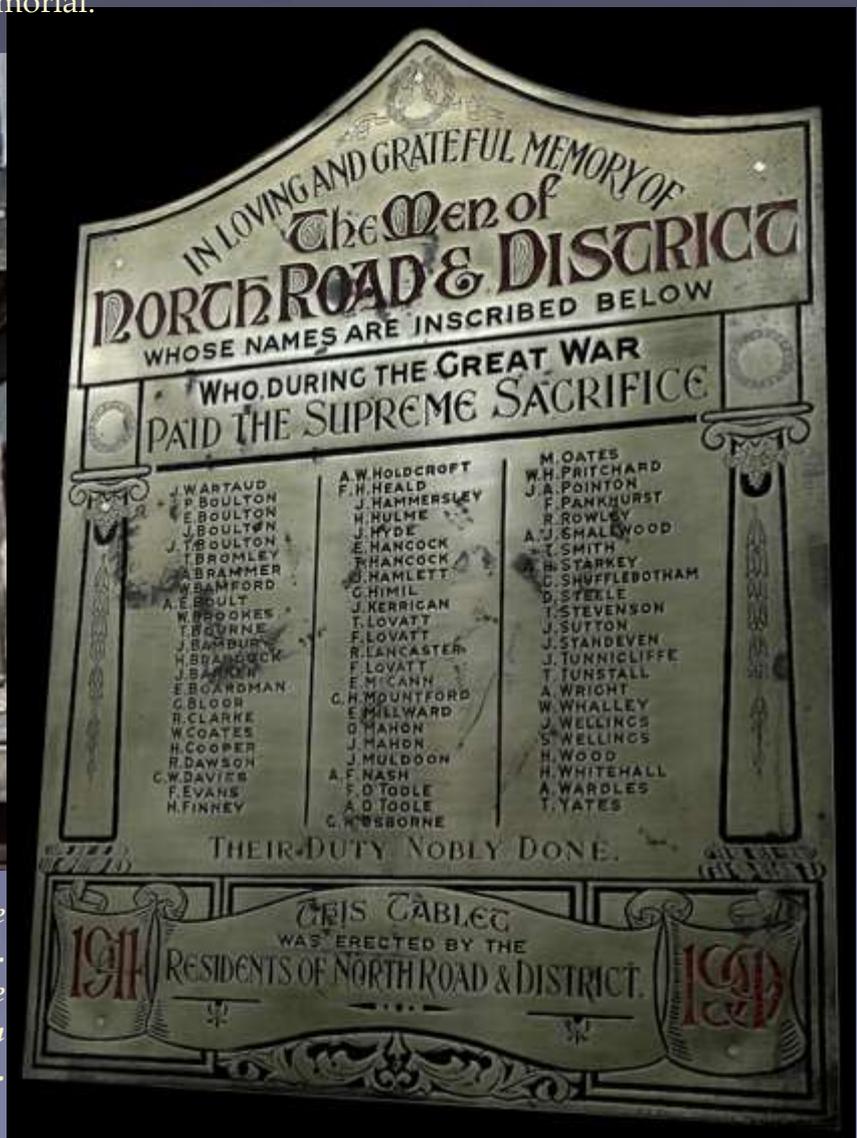
The Roll of Honour for Weston School, listing the 'School Heroes' and which units they served with (SRO D808)

Other Private War Memorials

As well as those created by businesses and schools, other private memorials were erected by societies, clubs and other groups of individuals to commemorate the contribution or loss of their members, friends or relatives made during the Great War. These memorials might be set up in meeting houses or community halls where the club or society met, and may include just a handful of names. Sometimes a garden area or similar external space is dedicated to the memory of specific individuals, a plaque or inscription recording details such as names and the date of dedication.

In other instances, individuals may be commemorated with drinking fountains, lamps, seats and a number of other features which bear an inscription informing the reader who is being remembered. As with school memorials, The National Register of War Memorials (www.ukniwm.org.uk) can be helpful in identifying such commemorations.

Two very localized memorials can be found around Cobridge, Stoke on Trent. The first commemorates the men from two adjacent streets, Hot Lane and Elder Road, who fell in the Great War. Financed and erected by neighbours and friends, the stone memorial was placed on the front wall of the Dog & Partridge pub in Hot Lane. The pub has since closed, but the plaque can still be seen on the building. A second memorial plaque, this time of metal, was erected by the residents of North Road & district to commemorate men from that area who fell in the war. The plaque was originally attached to the side of a local pub named Bennett's Tavern, but following the closure of this establishment, the plaque was relocated to Christ Church, Cobridge and rededicated in 2013. Interestingly, it contains some of the same names that feature on the Hot Lane memorial.



The two neighbourhood memorials in the Cobridge/Burslem area of Stoke on Trent. That to men of Hot Lane (above) and that to the men of the North Road area (right) were both originally fixed to the sides of local pubs.

An example of a different kind of memorial can be found in Burton upon Trent, where a plaque was set up in the Christchurch School building to commemorate the victims of a Zeppelin raid in 1916, specifically six members of the Christchurch congregation killed when a bomb fell on the neighbouring Mission Rooms. The school building was later used as community rooms and a youth centre, before being demolished to make way for an extension to a nearby infants school. There were concerns that the plaque had been lost, but it later emerged that it had been stored at the Burton Caribbean Association building, which stands on the site of the Mission Rooms, with the intention of re-erecting the plaque in the school extension.

Because of the very local and private nature of these memorials, it may be difficult to find any surviving written material that relates to their creation. If a club or society has deposited records (such as minutes of meetings) with Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service, it is worth checking further details on the online catalogue *Gateway to the Past* (www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk).



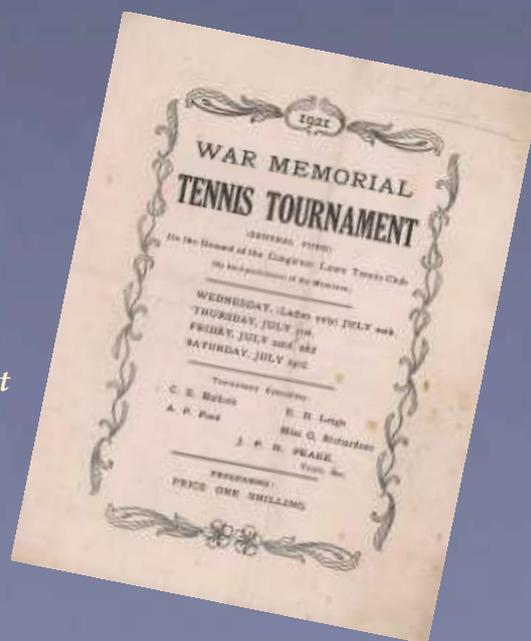
An example of a very private memorial — a brass plaque for display in the home. These would have been mass produced and are designed to be personalized by inserting a card with details of the fallen serviceman in the central 'window'. There is also a circular frame at the top to hold the Memorial Plaque ('Dead Man's Penny') issued to the relatives of the fallen. This example can be seen in the Beck Isle Museum, Pickering, North Yorkshire.



Another type of memorial can be found on the wall of the former St Chad's Schoolroom in Tipping Street, Stafford. This commemorates the use of a building during the Great War, in this case as the base for the Empire Club, serving refreshments to soldiers coming into Stafford from the training camps on Cannock Chase.

Not all commemorations were intended to leave a permanent reminder in the landscape. In the aftermath of the Great War, memorial events were held to raise money towards more permanent reminders but also to provide some financial assistance for those who were left bereaved. This document relates to a 'War Memorial Tennis Tournament' held in 1921 at Congleton, Cheshire, and is part of the Stone Tennis Club collection.

(SRO D7031/3/2/1)



Case study: Commemorating an Individual

Memorials to individual officers or soldiers could take a variety of forms, and at Endon church there are no less than three commemorations to the same man—Thomas Ernest Hulme. Born at nearby Gratton Hall, Hulme was noted as a literary critic and poet, being one of the founders of the influential Imagist poetry movement. He was killed in action on the Western Front in 1917 and was buried in Belgium under the inscription 'One of the War Poets'.



T.E. Hulme



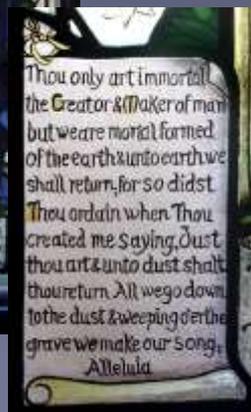
The peaceful parish church of St Luke, Endon, where T.E. Hulme is remembered in three separate memorials.



The parish war memorial, located in the churchyard of St Luke's, records Hulme only by his middle name, Ernest, and with the rank of '1st Lieutenant', a term that had fallen out of use in Hulme's unit (The Royal Marine Artillery) by the time of the Great War.



Inside the church, Hulme's memorial takes the form of a stained glass window given by his parents, Thomas and Mary. The window does not portray Hulme, but has the traditional figures of St Augustine and St Michael the Archangel, accompanied by a quote from *The Commendment of the Book of Common Prayer*, (inset) which was found written on a piece of paper in Hulme's uniform pocket after his death.



Hulme is recorded for a third time at Endon on the family vault, in the newer area of the churchyard. The inscription is almost identical to the dedication on the window.



A framed information sheet can be found next to the memorial window, giving more details about Hulme's death and the window itself. The text mistakenly records Hulme's middle name as 'Edward' rather than Ernest.

To all Christian People to whom these Presents shall come, We
 GEORGE JOHN TALBOT, Esquire,
 Master of Arts, VICAR GENERAL of The Right Reverend Father in God John
 Augustine, by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of Lichfield, and OFFICIAL PRINCIPAL
 of the EPISCOPAL CONSISTORY COURT OF LICHFIELD, lawfully constituted;

SEND GREETING:

WHEREAS it has been represented unto Us by and on the part and behalf of *Thomas Hulme*
 of *London Bank in the Parish of London in the County of Stafford*
 and Diocese of Lichfield, Gentleman, *That it is desired to remove the*
existing plain glass from a Window in the North Aisle of the Parish
Church of London aforesaid and to substitute Stained Glass according
to the Design Filed in the Registry of the said Court and with the
following Inscription on such Window.

*"To the glory of God and in loving memory of Lieut. T. E. Hulme,
 R. N. A. Son of Thomas and Mary Hulme of this Parish, killed
 in action in Flanders, 28th September, 1917, aged 34."*

That the work will be carried out free of all cost to the Church
and will not involve any interference with the architecture or with
the holding of Divine Service. That the said work has been unanimously
approved by the Parishioners in Vestry, and That the Vicar of the
said Parish, The Reverend John Simon Morris, Clerk, consents to the
proposed work.

AND WHEREAS the said Petitioner — has prayed our Licence or Faculty, for the purposes aforesaid.
 KNOW YE NOW THEREFORE that We desiring to comply with the reasonable request of the said
 Petitioner — (the due Forms and Orders of Law in this case requisite having been first had and
 observed), DO GRANT this our LICENCE, or FACULTY, to the effect and in manner hereinbefore
 mentioned, PROVIDED ALWAYS that if it shall be necessary in carrying out the said work to remove
 or disturb any Vaults, Graves, Tombstones, or Monuments, due care shall be had thereof, and any
 Bodies or Remains there may be found shall be decently re-interred within Consecrated Ground,
 under the superintendence of the Incumbent and Churchwardens for the time being, and the
 Monuments, or Tombstones replaced in a suitable position. IN TESTIMONY whereof We have
 caused the Seal of our office to be hereunto affixed this *Twenty-eighth* day of *January* —
 in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and *Twenty*.

Hubert S. Rodson:

Registrar:

The original faculty, dating from January 1920, for the memorial window to T.E. Hulme to be installed 'free of all cost to the church' in the North Aisle. The document details the intended inscription, tells us that the former window contained only plain glass and records fact that the memorial has the approval of the parishioners and the consent of the vicar. A design for the window had already been filed with the Diocesan Consistory Court of Lichfield.

(SRO D4302/4/1/4)

War Memorials at Risk

Although war memorials were set up with the idea of commemorating the sacrifice of those who served and fell in the Great War in perpetuity (*Their Name Liveth for Evermore*, as a number of memorials are inscribed), the passage of time has not always been kind to these monuments, with some becoming neglected, damaged or lost completely.

The National Register of War Memorials

The National Register of War Memorials is administered by the Imperial War Museum, London, and is available in the form of a searchable database through the website www.ukniwm.org.uk. The database can be searched by location, denomination of church (where memorials have been placed within church property), conflict commemorated, type of memorial (a surprising variety is listed), craftsmen, inscription and street address.

This database is particularly useful in identifying where memorials are currently held and previous relocations, one example being the Sharp Brothers & Knight Ltd memorial in Burton upon Trent (see page 33). The database is also helpful in identifying those currently responsible for the maintenance of the memorial (where known) and where a memorial is reported lost or stolen. It is worth noting that this database not yet complete (around 65,000 entries to date, with an estimated 100,000 monuments in the UK in total), and some memorials may not yet have been listed. The site is, however, regularly updated and welcomes additional input regarding war memorials not yet covered.

(SRO D3401/11/9)



WAR SHRINE.
Our people have been so keen and generous that we are in a position to order two Shrines and we are arranging for a Sunday afternoon unveiling ceremony by his Worship the Mayor. Due notice of the day and time will be given, and we shall look forward to a public testimony of the thoughtfulness of our people of those who are so bravely and gallantly serving their King and country, and us, in this great and terrible war.

(SRO D3401/12/1)



The demolished church of Christ Church, Stafford, provides a good example of lost memorials. The original War Shrine (as shown in the contemporary image and mentioned in the parish magazine of 1916) was a temporary wooden triptych with printed Roll of Honour, later replaced by the two Rolls of Honour (above) which were thought lost when the church was demolished in 1983. They later came to light in a London cellar and were donated to the collegiate church of St Mary, Stafford.

Case study: Sculptural Style

One of the striking features of war memorials is the variation in architectural and sculptural style, even when depicting similar forms or figures. This variation can tell us something of the particular circumstances in which a memorial was erected – the tastes of the organization or individuals erecting the monument, the finances available to them and the message they intended their memorial to convey.

Taking the sculpted human figure as an example, the realistic, stylized or simplified appearance of a statue may reveal something about the decision to use a professional, local or amateur sculptor.

A highly realistic finish may suggest the commissioning of a professional sculptor, such as the bronze figures by Albert Toft at Stone and Sandon or the three figures on the Burton memorial by H.C. Fehr, which he had used on memorials elsewhere. The work of J. Whitehead & Sons, a national monument-maker, can be seen at Stafford, whilst an example of the work of a local sculptor/stonemason can be seen in Lichfield, where the figure of St George is the work of Robert Bridgeman & Son.

At the more stylized end of the scale, we find examples of 'Tommy' figures at Forsbrook (also the work of Bridgeman's of Lichfield) and Madeley Heath, neither of which could be said to be highly realistic but each leaving the viewer in no doubt as to the identity of the figure.



Stone



Forsbrook



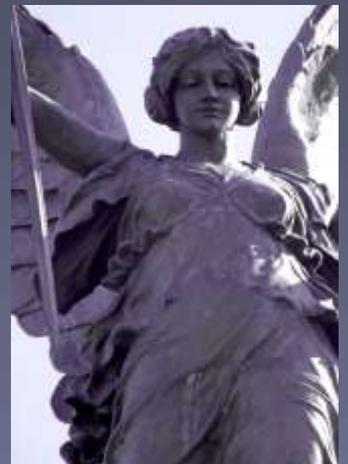
Lichfield



Marchington



Hanley



Burton-upon-Trent



Sandon



Biddulph



Madeley Heath



Stafford

Memorials at Risk

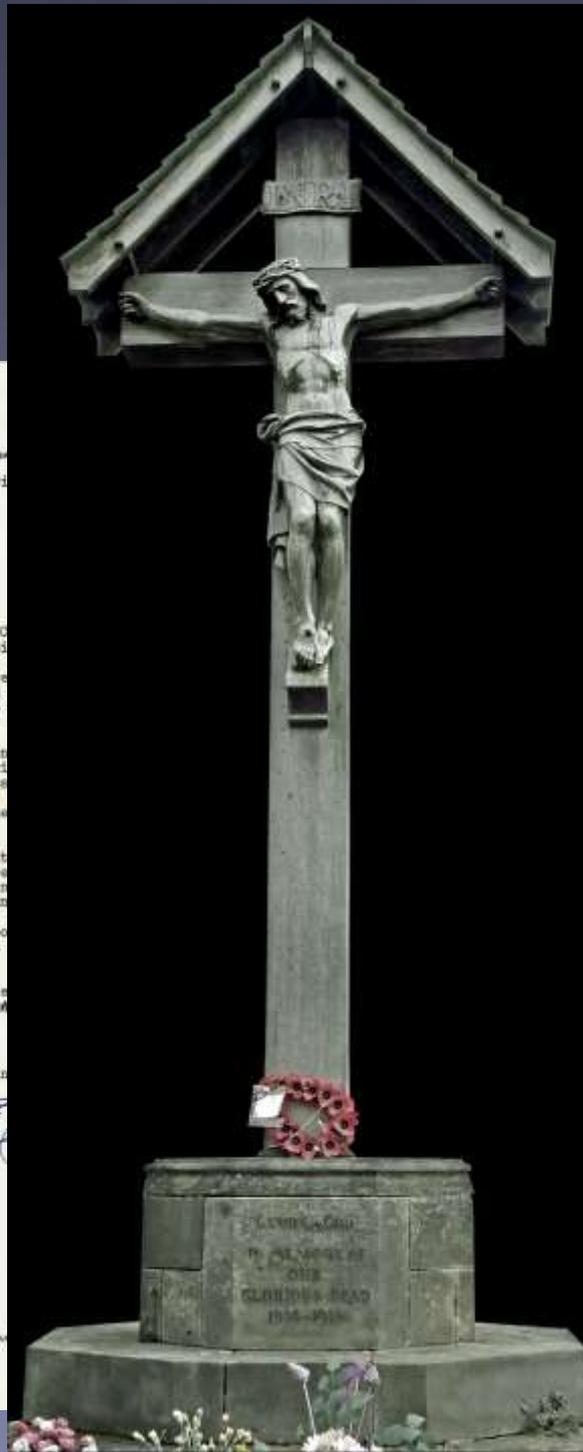
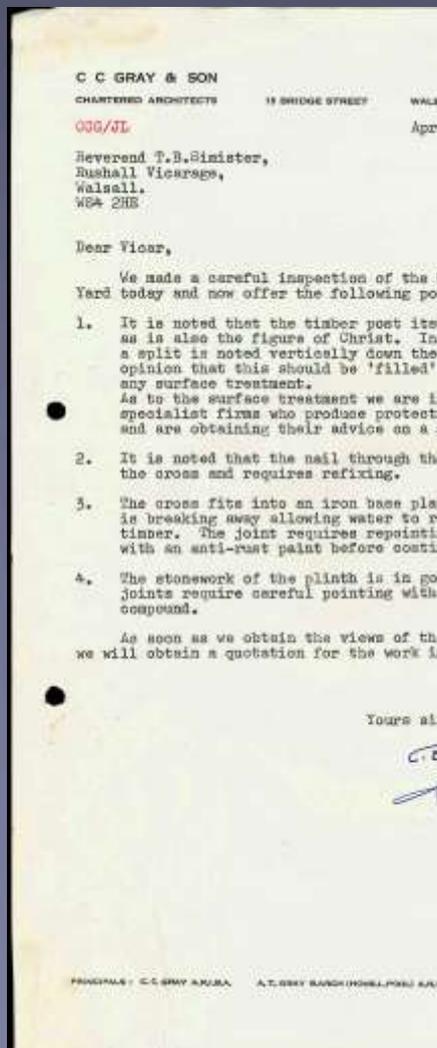
Because of their widespread and often publicly accessible nature, war memorials can be at risk of damage, loss or even total destruction. For memorials placed in public spaces, especially exterior locations, there is the unfortunate risk of vandalism or theft. Memorials have been subjected to vandalism – both political (such as anti-war protests about more recent conflicts) and mindless – for a number of years, but a recent spate of thefts has led to outrage in the popular press.

Whilst bayonets fixed to the rifles carried by monumental soldiers have often been the prize, these recent thefts were largely triggered by a sharp increase in the value of scrap metal. This led to memorials featuring metal plaques being particularly targeted. In some cases, the memorial remained standing minus some or all of its plaques (often bearing the names of those who had served or been killed), whilst in other cases the memorial was partially destroyed in order to access its metallic components or even stolen completely where the memorial was a single removable plaque. This has led to increased security – such as CCTV – being introduced in some areas where war memorials have been targets of such crime.

As we have seen earlier, memorials erected by businesses, societies and other groups can be threatened when the location they occupy is redeveloped for new purposes that may conflict with their continued preservation *in situ*.

Besides acts of deliberate vandalism, war memorials can suffer from the effects of weathering and decay, especially those made from lesser lasting material such as wood or certain metals.

This letter of 1974 relates to the decayed state of the wooden war memorial Calvary at Rushall, with a number of remedial measures being suggested. The restored memorial can be seen today in the churchyard of St Michael's, Rushall.
(SRO D6665/1/6)



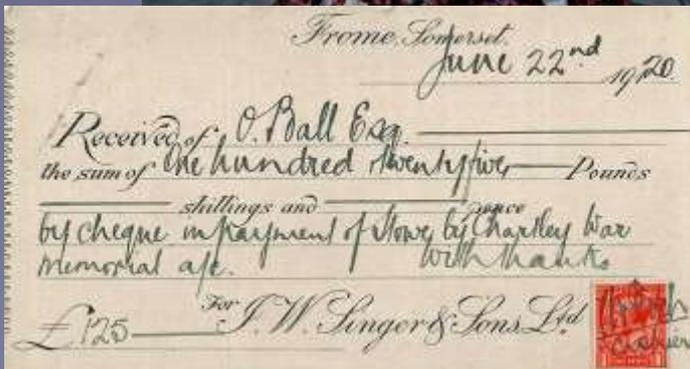
Case study: When is a Memorial not a Memorial?

The answer to this rather odd question is 'When we're not sure of its original purpose'. Whilst community war memorials leave no doubt as to their function, a lost feature of Staffordshire's Great War which was recently investigated poses more problems.

A concrete scale model of the village and battlefield of Messines in Belgium was created by men of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade at Brocton Camp, Cannock Chase, towards the end of the Great War. The model remained *in situ* after the NZRB left in 1919 and became a local visitor attraction, before becoming overgrown and neglected in later decades.

Whilst the existence of the model is not in doubt—as recent archaeological excavations proved—the reason for its construction is still unclear. It has been suggested that the model was created as a memorial by the NZRB to commemorate a major victory and remember fallen comrades. If this is the case, then the Messines model is a unique war memorial, not just in Staffordshire but nationally.

However, no evidence, either in written form or physically onsite has so far come to light to confirm this idea of model as memorial. It is quite likely that the model was built for more practical training purposes and that its post-war preservation had more to do with being 'something to see' for visitors rather than as a lasting monument to the fallen men of the NZRB.



(SRO D3869/1/4)

Three local types of war memorial—a 'slender cross' at Keele; an obelisk in Newcastle-under-Lyme; and a receipt for the memorial plaque installed in Stowe-by-Chartley parish church.



The Messines model revealed in the excavation of 2013.

A number of these 'at risk' business memorials have been collected by and relocated to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, where they can be visited by the public. A map and guidebook are available on site, whilst the Arboretum's website, www.thenma.org.uk provides further information. The relocation of such memorials continues, and a plaque commemorating men from the London & North Western Railway was recently donated by Network Rail following the redevelopment of Birmingham New Street Station.

Another organization, the War Memorials Trust, works for the protection and conservation of war memorials in the UK. This charity was formed in 1997, providing advice and financial grants to help conserve and repair neglected or damaged war memorials, information about which can be found on their website www.warmemorials.org. Their sister website www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org is aimed at teaching school pupils about war memorials but has some useful information about the various types of monument, including inscriptions and other details that might be found on them.

The War Memorials Trust also runs the *In Memoriam 2014* scheme, which aims to protect memorials at risk of damage through theft by marking metallic features such as plaques with a forensic liquid known as 'SmartWater'. This allows metal features to be traced if illegally removed, and it is hoped that the scheme will help to deter future thefts.

The Phoenix Staff Memorial, one of several business memorials considered to be 'at risk' and relocated to the National Memorial Arboretum for their continued preservation.



Fenton Town Hall war memorial, with local names listed on Minton tiles, is a good example of a memorial 'at risk'. There are concerns for its preservation as the Town Hall building has recently closed and may be sold for other uses.



Case study: The Sculptor

A number of sculptors have become particularly associated with the designs and figures found on Great War memorials throughout Britain, and Staffordshire can count one of its own artists amongst them.

Albert Toft (1872-1949) was born in Handsworth (then part of the county) to a family of Staffordshire potters. Toft himself trained at the Wedgwood pottery and furthered his education through evening classes in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Hanley before studying sculpture in London.

Toft was commissioned to create a number of memorials for the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), and was later employed to sculpt the figures for memorials of the Great War. These included the four seated figures around Birmingham's Hall of Memory and an ornate multi-figure memorial in Oldham. His most widely used figure was the bare-headed 'standing soldier' with reversed rifle which can be found on war memorials across the country.

Two examples of Toft's work can be found in his native county—the bronze 'standing soldier' tops the monument in Stone town centre, whilst another bronze 'soldier at ease' forms the focal point of the Sandon Estate memorial (below).



Three examples of the 'slender cross' type war memorial from across the county—at the top, Barton-under-Needwood; in the middle, Marlston; at the bottom, that at Brewwood.

War Graves

War graves of the Great War tend to be associated with the bloody battlefields of Western Europe, where the huge cemeteries (such as that at Tyne Cot, Belgium) and great monuments (such as Sir Edwin Lutyen's memorial arch to those missing at Thiepval, France) put the human cost of war into stark perspective. The war, however, was fought on several fronts, including the Mediterranean and the Near East, and war graves can be found across the scenes of the campaigns in these locations. A surprising number can also be located in Britain.

Commonwealth War Graves

The British Army had a long tradition of burying its dead where they fell as opposed to repatriating them, a practice that only started to change with the Falklands (Malvinas) War in 1982. For those that fell in the Great War, their final resting place (if they had one, for a significant number of casualties were never found) would be the battlefield on which they died. In the aftermath of the war, the Imperial War Graves Commission (later changed to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission or CWGC, its present title) was set up to care for the burial places of British and Commonwealth soldiers across the world. Cemeteries and headstones were designed to have a uniform appearance in the setting of a formal garden, with lawns and local plants around the graves.



A surprising number of these CWGC graves can be found on home soil, grouped together in designated cemeteries or individually in churchyards, and Staffordshire is no exception. Although the county saw no actual fighting (excluding Zeppelin raids, which were attacks on civilian targets), a number of servicemen died as a result of wounds received in action, training accidents and illness – the last especially so in 1918 as Spanish Influenza took its toll on soldiers and civilians alike.

Some of these men died in military hospitals or camps whilst others had returned home before death. This meant that their place of burial would be decided by the military or by their families depending on the location of the man's death. Whilst many of these casualties would be commemorated with the standard CWGC headstone (a white marker with a slightly arched top), those who died on home soil earlier in the war and who were buried by their families tend to have more varied tombstones reflecting the civilian tastes of the time.

A certain amount of information can be found on each standard CWGC headstone, which bears a name, number, rank, date of death, age, regimental badge and a personal inscription if the family wished it. Details such as these may be useful in conducting further research if written records relating to the soldier are limited or lost. Unlike many of the headstones on the battlefields marked simply 'A Soldier of the Great War – Known Unto God', those in Britain usually identify the person buried beneath.



The CWGC cemetery at Broadhurst Green on Cannock Chase reflects the area's use as a training centre and prisoner of war camp during the Great War. As with most CWGC cemeteries, the gravestones are identical and the site marked with a white stone 'Cross of Sacrifice'.



A number of New Zealand and British soldiers are buried in the cemetery. British soldiers have their regimental emblem carved into their gravestones, whilst the New Zealand troops are marked with a fern and 'New Zealand' inscribed beneath.

Additional information and the location of particular graves, both in the UK and abroad, can be found on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website www.cwgc.org which includes a database searchable by location, name of soldier and nationality. Some of these records detail home town and parents' names, and almost all records include a service number and regiment. The database includes Commonwealth Soldiers who are buried in CWGC graves.

In Staffordshire, a number of individual servicemen's graves – both of CWGC design and civilian example – can be found around the county's churchyards and cemeteries. In addition, the county has its very own CWGC cemetery at Broadhurst Green on Cannock Chase. This small cemetery actually has relatively few British burials – the majority are New Zealanders (men of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade) and Germans (prisoners of war), all of whom were based at Brocton Camp, one of two large training camps set up on Cannock Chase during the Great War. The majority of casualties date from late 1918, suggesting that most of these men died as a result of the Spanish Influenza outbreak that swept through the county.



Gravestone of Frank Edward Sellars in the Churchyard of Holy Trinity, Baswich.

Page 175

BURIALS in the Parish of <i>Whittington</i> in the County of <i>Stafford</i> in the Year <i>1892-1914</i>				
Name	Abode	When Burial	Age	By whom the Ceremony was performed
<i>Alfred James Robinson</i> No. 1203	<i>Military Hospital, Whittington Barracks, Leitchfield</i>	<i>5 Novr 1918</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>Clifford & Gardner S.C.S.</i>
<i>Albert Pratt</i> No. 1204	<i>Military Hospital, Whittington Barracks, Leitchfield</i>	<i>6 Novr 1918</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>Clifford & Gardner S.C.S.</i>
<i>William Sandlay</i> No. 1205	<i>Whittington House, Leitchfield</i>	<i>18 Novr 1918</i>	<i>68 years</i>	<i>Certified by J.T. Rowan (R.C. Priest)</i>
<i>Lilian Wrenford Foskett</i> No. 1206	<i>Whittington</i>	<i>19 Novr 1918</i>	<i>13 months</i>	<i>D.M. Colver</i>
<i>John Robinson</i> No. 1207	<i>Military Hospital, Whittington Barracks, Leitchfield</i>	<i>21 Dec 1918</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>Samuel Baker, C.S.</i>
<i>Armine Charles Buckle</i> No. 1208	<i>Brocton Camp</i>	<i>21 Dec 1918</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>P.P. Sawmills</i>
<i>John Bridger</i> No. 1209	<i>Highland College, Whittington</i>	<i>21 Jan 1919</i>	<i>71 years</i>	<i>D.M. Colver</i>
<i>Ann Leadham</i> No. 1210	<i>Whittington</i>	<i>27 Jan - 1919</i>	<i>76 years</i>	<i>D.M. Colver</i>

In locations where a serviceman was buried in a churchyard, there may be some information given in the burial register. This will usually include name and possibly rank, date of burial and their address (sometimes just given as a street or village). There may be further information amongst the church records that show who paid for the plot and service. Registers for the majority of Anglican churches, along with some examples of Nonconformist records, are held at Staffordshire Record Office. Some Roman Catholic registers are available at the Record Office in microfilm format, but the main collection of these records is held by the Birmingham RC Archdiocesan Archives at St Chad's Cathedral.

The burial register for St Giles parish church, Whittington, recording burials of servicemen from nearby Whittington Barracks military hospital and one from Brocton Camp on Cannock Chase in November 1918. The date suggests they may have been victims of the Spanish Influenza pandemic.

(SRO D5931/4)

Case study: Rifleman Arthur Johnson, NZRB

In one example from Broadhurst Green, that of Rifleman Arthur Dent Johnson of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade, the CWGC database reveals that he was the son of Jesse and Hannah Johnson, the husband of Marie Elizabeth and that he died on 6 November 1918 at the age of 33.

Further information can be added from details provided on an additional website, the New Zealand War Graves Project (www.nzwargraves.org.nz) which tells us that Johnson's wife lived in Wellington and that he died of disease, presumably Spanish Influenza. This website also gives us details of his date of embarkation for Britain, the name of the ship he sailed on and his peacetime occupation – a stonemason, which is perhaps fitting as we are studying his headstone.

In this instance, the website is free but other sites charge a fee or require a subscription. It is also worth noting that surviving information can vary considerably and that material relating to New Zealand soldiers may well have survived in greater quantities than that for British servicemen.



The emblem of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade, a lion grasping a pennant, under which is the Brigade's motto, 'Soyes Ferme' ('Steadfast'). Whilst Rifleman Johnson would have worn this emblem on his uniform, it does not appear on his headstone.

Rifleman Arthur Dent Johnson's grave in Broadhurst Green CWGC cemetery. The gravestone itself gives a certain amount of information—number, rank, initials and surname, unit, date of death and age at the time of death. There is no unit emblem on this gravestone, but a standard fern design used for all New Zealand soldiers buried in the cemetery.

German War Graves

Alongside British and Commonwealth burials, Staffordshire plays host to a significant number of German graves from the Great War – 2143 in total, with further burials from World War 2. Unlike the CWGC graves scattered through local churchyards, all the German burials are located on Cannock Chase in two locations.

The first (and earliest, dating from the Great War) are located in the CWGC cemetery at Broadhurst Green, sharing the site with New Zealand and British graves. The main *Deutscher Soldatenfriedhof* (German military cemetery) was constructed just behind that at Broadhurst Green in the 1960s, when it was decided to reinter most German war casualties in the UK at a single site. Cannock Chase was chosen partly due to the existing cemetery, but also because it was felt that the pine-covered landscape was reminiscent of Germany's great forests. Some information about the official opening of the cemetery in 1967 is held by Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service ([SRO C/C/PR/5/1/8a](#)).

The men buried at Cannock Chase were either prisoners of war who had died during their captivity (many of them from Spanish Influenza), or sailors and airmen who had died on British soil or in its waters. Amongst the burials are the crews from four Zeppelins shot down over Britain during the Great War, each crew marked by a single tombstone listing their names and rank.





The crews of four Zeppelins shot down over Britain during the Great War are buried in single graves.

Information about these servicemen may be found from the *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge* (German War Graves Commission) and can be accessed via their website, www.volksbund.de.

There is a database which is searchable by name, rank date of birth, date of death and unit.

However, the location is not given, so it is useful if some information about the soldier is already known. It is also worth noting that the site is largely in German, which may require the use of an online translation website for anybody who is not reasonably fluent!



The central feature of the cemetery is a tall concrete cross, with graves laid out on all sides.



A number of German prisoners of war remain buried in the CWGC cemetery nearby.



Researching Service People

Researching a local war memorial largely falls into two parts – the history of the memorial itself and the stories of those commemorated by it. Having considered the varied and complex physical nature of the memorials, the following chapters look at the ‘human element’ – the names listed on city, town and parish commemorations, and how to go about researching them. For many who take time to study a local war memorial, it is the list of servicemen – especially those that did not return – that hold a particular, poignant, fascination.

Researching Soldiers

Whilst men and women across the country served in a variety of service roles during the Great War, it is perhaps the stereotypical image of the khaki-clad infantryman, the humble ‘Tommy’, obediently going ‘over the top’ to certain death that for many people epitomizes the conflict. This idea is further enforced by the numerous depictions of soldiers (as opposed to sailors or, even less commonly for the period, airmen) on war memorials, and a good number of those commemorated did indeed serve with land-based forces. Staffordshire had two regular army regiments that recruited locally throughout the war, although not every soldier from the county served with the local regiments, and not every soldier in the regiments came from Staffordshire.



The war memorial in Burslem takes the form of a monumental pylon, with a bas-relief depicting a bare-headed, mourning Tommy with rifle reversed, reminiscent of the free-standing figure created for several war memorials (including Stone, right) by Potteries-trained sculptor Albert Toft.

Databases

In some ways, it can prove easier to trace the career of soldiers that fell in the Great War than those who returned home unscathed. The circumstances of their death and subsequent burial (where there was one) generated documentation that has in recent years been made available in database format, initially through CD-ROM and now increasingly through the ever-growing resources on the internet.

The first resources worth consulting when tracing the story of a fallen soldier are the databases for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (available through their website, www.cwgc.org – see above) and the *Soldiers Died in the Great War* listing, available on the *Ancestry* website (www.ancestry.co.uk). This is a database containing information extracted from some 80 volumes published by His Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) on behalf of the War Office in the aftermath of the conflict. Each of these original volumes covered a regiment, corps or unit of the British Army, with a separate volume listing almost 42,000 officers who died in service. The database contains information for over 703,000 soldiers, details of whom may include name, number, rank, place of birth and enlistment, address, regiment and battalion, decorations, and both the date and place of death. Additional information about individual soldiers is included in a 'notes' section of the database, which can lead to other sources of information.

Alternatively, the *Soldiers Died in the Great War* database, which is accessible free of charge at Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service through the Ancestry website or by CD-ROM, can be used to search for all the casualties who enlisted at a particular place or were born in the same parish, a useful tool when researching the names on a local war memorial.



Databases such as *'Soldiers Died in the Great War'* contain details of those commemorated on local war memorials, such as this example at Ball Haye Green, which was unveiled in November 1922 (right).

The memorial, in the form of gates leading on to a recreation ground, commemorates both those who served and those who fell in bronze plaques affixed to the gateposts.



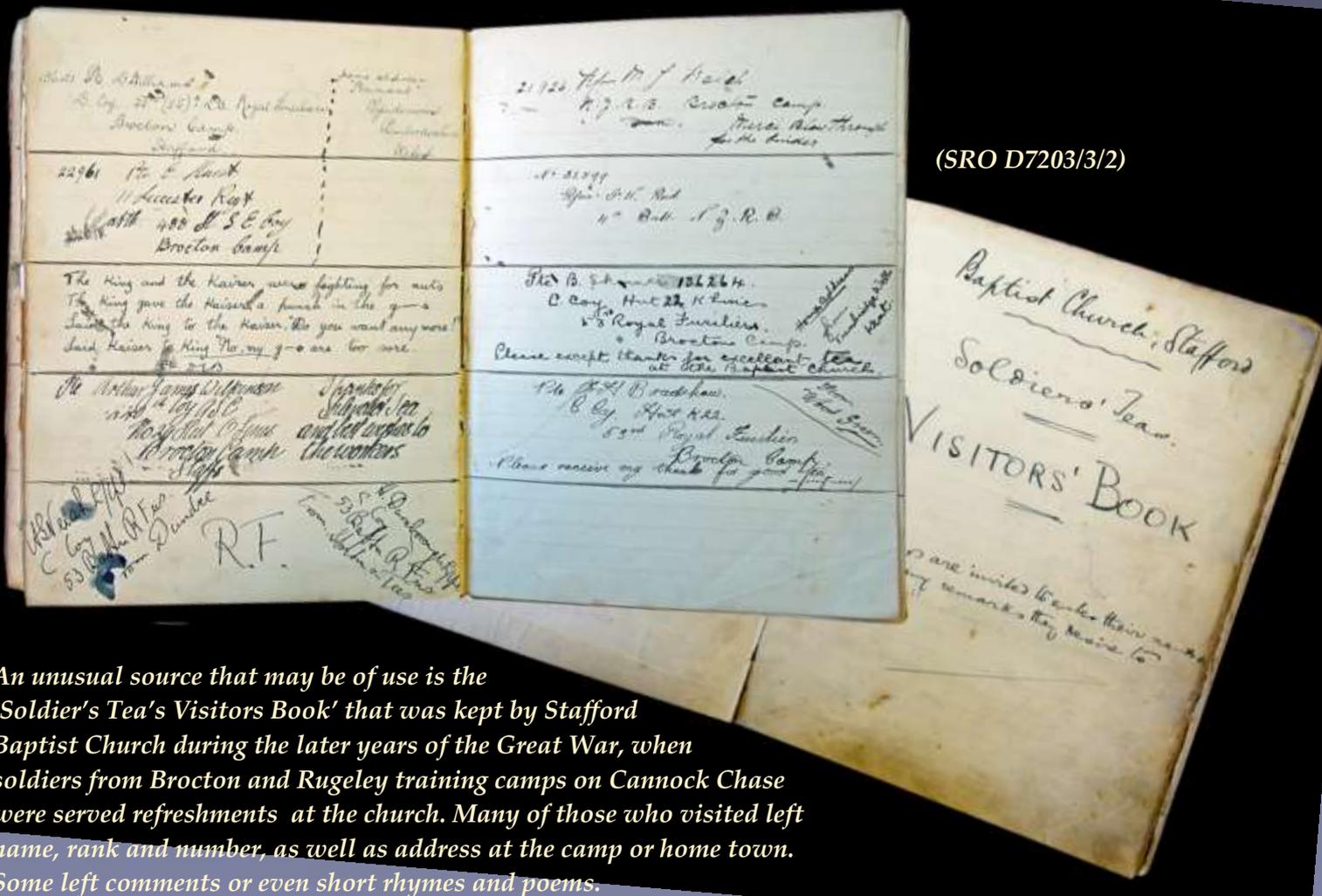
(SRO D4808/3/1/3)

Case study: Captain Robert Nevill, MC

Captain Robert Nevill, the only son of the County Court Registrar for Tamworth, was awarded the Military Cross in 1916, with a further Bar the following year. He was killed in action in 1918 commemorated by an alabaster plaque erected that same year at the parish church of St Editha (as recorded by the church faculty records, presently held at Lichfield Record Office, B/C/12/1/468). The database records that he was educated at Winchester College, which has its own website to commemorate former students who fell in the two world wars, www.winchestercollegeatwar.com.



This website not only provides us with an image of Captain Nevill in uniform (the basis of the sketch, right), but also gives details of his date of birth, education (including the years he attended the college, his school 'house' and his career intentions), his military career, the date and circumstances of his death and the recording of his name on the Ploegsteert Memorial in Belgium, where he fell, as well as his inclusion in Winchester College's own Memorial Cloister. Not every soldier is recorded in such detail – officers are more likely to have attended public schools and to be individually commemorated – nor does every school or college have such a website, but it is a good indication of material that may be potentially available.



(SRO D7203/3/2)

An unusual source that may be of use is the 'Soldier's Tea's Visitors Book' that was kept by Stafford Baptist Church during the later years of the Great War, when soldiers from Brocton and Rugeley training camps on Cannock Chase were served refreshments at the church. Many of those who visited left name, rank and number, as well as address at the camp or home town. Some left comments or even short rhymes and poems.

William Salt Library Resources

The William Salt Library in Stafford is the county's specialist local history library, holding thousands of books, pamphlets, printed manuscripts and original documents in a collection that dates back to the 19th century. The main source here for the Great War is the *Staffordshire Advertiser* (see page 58). Material can be accessed via the online catalogue *Gateway to the Past* (www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk) or a card index in the library itself. Amongst the secondary sources can be found a variety of books on local places, people and stories, including works on local military history and war memorials. Biographical works may also be useful for investigating notable families or individuals who served in the Great War .

Additionally, there are printed Rolls of Honour and Rolls of Service for some areas of the county which may be useful in identifying individuals who served during the conflict. These rolls may list name, rank, unit or regiment and a home address, offering a more complete view of those who served from particular locales. The library holds a number of published and privately produced books, articles and essays about the lives and careers of individual soldiers or units. One such example is an article entitled *Trevor, Our Young Soldier* in the November 2007 edition of *Staffordshire Life Magazine*, looking at the story of a soldier from Abbots Bromley killed in the Great War.

No.19 Eastgate Street, Stafford, was the second building to house the William Salt Library collection. The library moved in during the final months of the Great War but had trouble removing a tenant due to the severe post-war housing shortage.



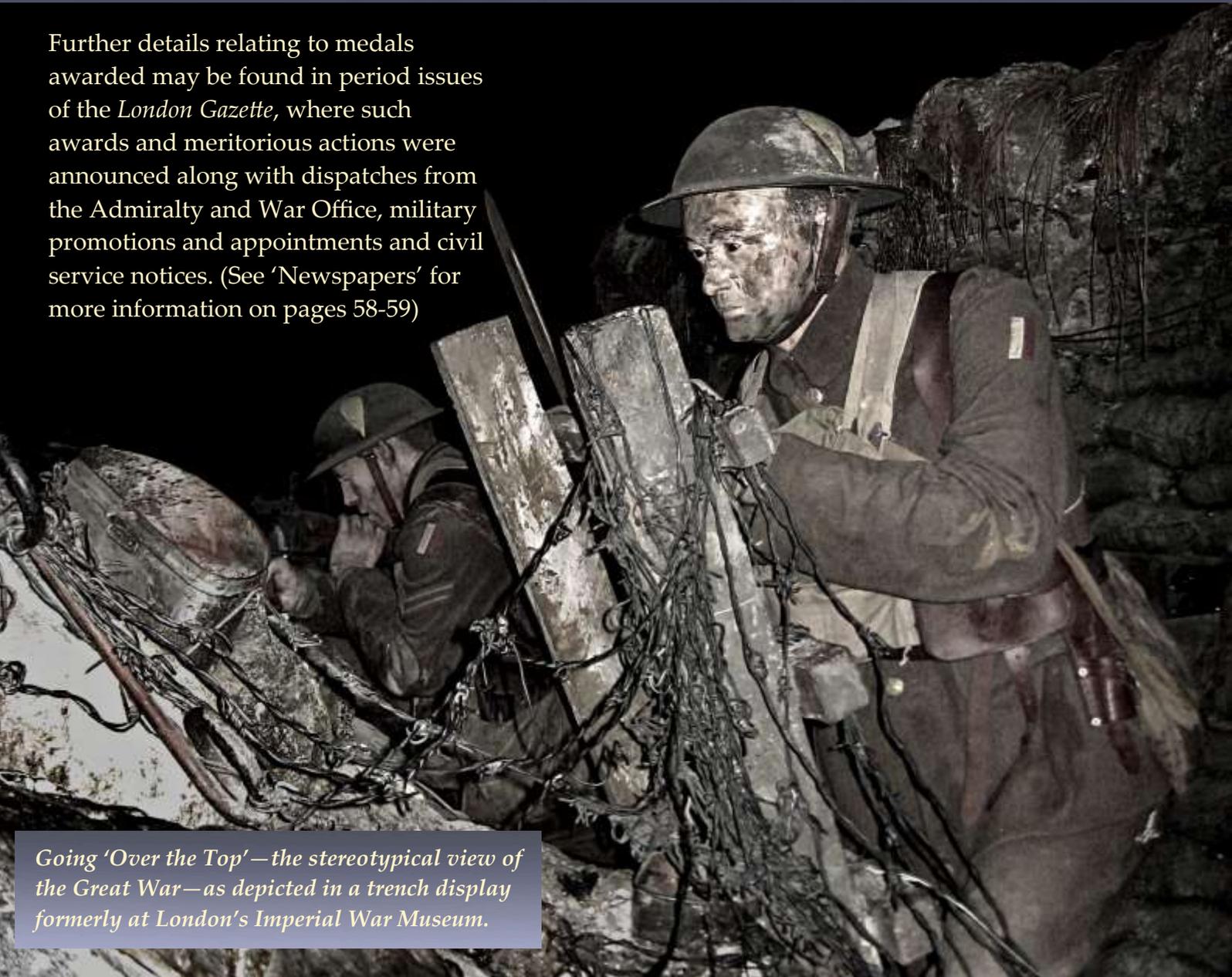
Service Records

The best source of information about a soldier's military career is often their own service record. These records have been made available through the Ancestry website, a subscription site that can be accessed free of charge through Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service and Staffordshire libraries. Unfortunately, only around 40% of Great War military service records survive as many were destroyed in bombing raids during World War 2 and a number of these have suffered significant damage through burning, water and pests (and are often referred to as the 'Burnt Records').

Where these records do survive, they can provide an excellent source of information on an individual who served. Details may include physical description, family and occupation, notes on conduct (including charges), medical records and reasons for discharge, such as being invalided out due to a wound.

In addition Medal Award index cards, the official note of medals awarded and received (and which are now held at the National Archives), may be searched online through Ancestry or the National Archives own website (www.nationarchives.gov.uk), and may provide useful information regarding rank, unit, first theatre of war in which they served and the medals to which they were entitled. Some cards also include dates of death or discharge and further remarks. It is worth noting that while it is free to search the index on the National Archives database, there is a small charge to view the cards online.

Further details relating to medals awarded may be found in period issues of the *London Gazette*, where such awards and meritorious actions were announced along with dispatches from the Admiralty and War Office, military promotions and appointments and civil service notices. (See 'Newspapers' for more information on pages 58-59)



Going 'Over the Top'—the stereotypical view of the Great War—as depicted in a trench display formerly at London's Imperial War Museum.

Other Sources

Knowing the exact battalion and regiment can be helpful when researching the activities of a soldier during the Great War. Regimental or Battalion war diaries may be found at the National Archives, some record offices (although not those of Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service) and regimental museums, whilst these locations may also house other regimental documents. Later published works on the history of a particular unit or regiment, usually researched from original documents, may also contain useful details. Several examples of such works may be found at the William Salt Library, Stafford.

In addition, there is an increasing number of websites concerned with specific aspects of military history and the Great War in particular, providing detailed information on operations and movements. Two such examples are www.greatwar.co.uk and www.ww1battlefields.co.uk.

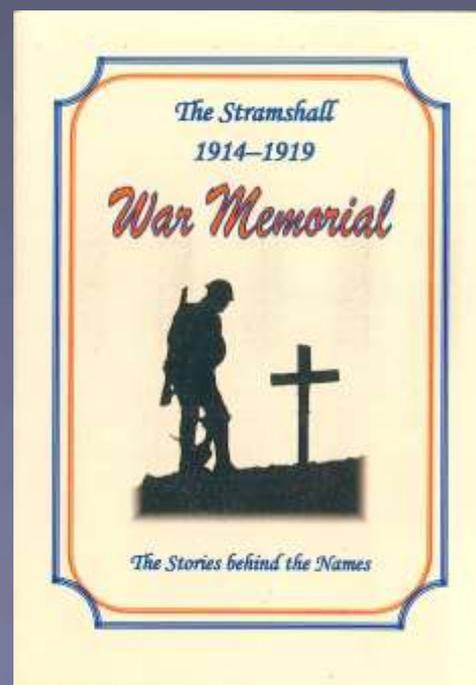
Whilst researching a fallen soldier, it can be helpful to know the date and place of death, as this may indicate involvement in a particular offensive. There is generally information available about all the large offensives of the Great War through various military or encyclopaedic websites (including those listed above) and through more traditional published histories. For example, William Trafford Newton of Tutbury is recorded as having died on 1 July 1916 at Gommecourt Wood. These two pieces of information alone suggest that he was killed on the first day of the Somme Offensive, the so-called 'Black Day of the British Army'. Further research online proves that this was indeed the case, with more information provided by family members and researchers through a number of websites.

Occasionally there is published research available for some Great war memorials, and this is likely to increase with the interest being generated by the centenary of the conflict. A recently published booklet looks at the war memorial in Stramshall, near Uttoxeter, investigating the stories of six men recorded there. These include local soldiers and also a sailor, with photographs and information about the campaigns they were involved in, where they were killed and where they are buried.

Copies of the booklet are available to consult at the William Salt Library and Staffordshire Record Office. Other information about local war memorials, including research on individuals listed on them, has been made readily available on the internet.



William Trafford Newton, killed on the infamous first day of the Battle of the Somme, is commemorated on the war memorial in the churchyard of St Mary's priory church, Tutbury.



'The Stramshall 1914-1919 War Memorial' is a good example of local research on the topic being published in booklet form.

Local Newspapers

Local newspapers can be a very useful source of information when researching servicemen with a local connection. Such information may include obituaries for individual soldiers, reports on officer promotions, awards for gallantry, reports of military weddings and stories concerning families with several members (often brothers) serving together or at the same time. There are also reports (usually heavily censored) of the activity of local regiments and certain military campaigns. It is also possible to find reports and images of thanksgiving and memorial dedication services, both during and in the aftermath of the war.

The William Salt Library holds a complete run of the *Staffordshire Advertiser* 1795-1973 (with the Great War years available on microfilm), and incomplete runs of the *Tamworth Herald*, the *Cannock Advertiser* and the *Hednesford Advertiser*. A complete run of *The Sentinel*, the north Staffordshire newspaper, can be found at Stoke on Trent City Archives, whilst copies of the *Lichfield Mercury* are available from Lichfield Library and those of the *Burton Mail* from Burton upon Trent Library. Old editions of the Wolverhampton based *Express and Star* can be found at Wolverhampton Archives and other local libraries hold various runs or individual editions of particular newspapers.

If researching a soldier who was recruited to a different regiment (i.e. out of county), it may be worth seeing whether there are surviving newspapers local to that regiment's base. The British Newspaper Library in London may also hold runs of local newspapers, with information, catalogues and online papers obtainable from their website, www.bl.uk/newspapers.

YOUNG STAFFORD SOLDIERS AT THE FRONT.

The spirit of the youth of England is well represented by the action of the young soldiers—William Marsden (left) and Lance Marsden (right)—whose photos we give below. Soon after the outbreak of war, the lads, who are cousins, tried to join the Royal Navy as boys.



WILLIAM MARSDEN. LANCE MARSDEN

But, not succeeding, they endeavoured to join the Army and were accepted for the R.F.A. at that time William was only 15, Lance having turned 16. They spent some time in Goldings and after that position was evacuated they went to Egypt. Lance belongs to Great Haywood, and he was employed by Morgan and Co., solicitors, Stafford, when he enlisted. William's home is in Hixon.

THE LATE CAPT. GUY BOSTOCK OF STAFFORD.

We give below a portrait of the late Capt. G. Edwin Bostock, 5th Royal Munster Fusiliers who was killed in action in France on Feb. 14. By inadvertence, which we regret, we published last week a portrait of Lieut. Jack Bostock, 1st North Staffordshire Regiment, as the brother of his late brother, Lieut. Geoffrey Bostock, North Staff rishire Regiment, and Lieut. J. Bostock have both been wounded at the front.



THE LATE CAPT. G. E. BOSTOCK.

the former having been awarded the Military Cross. The bereavement which Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Bostock, of Stafford, have now sustain has caused both many expressions of sympathy. Capt. Guy Bostock was only 22 years of age, a his public school attainments gave promise of a brilliant career. Mr. Bostock has received a sympathetic letter from the Officer Commanding one of the 1st Division, in which he says:—“It was with great regret that I received the news of the loss of your gallant son in the front trenches at— on the 14th of January. I have only been a short time with the Division but I had formed a high opinion of your son's worth and his noble work. It is much regretted in his regiment as throughout the division.”

TWO STAFFORDSHIRE V.C.'S.

The signal honour of two Victoria Crosses has been conferred on the 1st Battalion, Staffordshire Regiment—two to the 1st Battalion, the old 38th Foot, and the second to the 2nd Battalion, the old 8th North Staffordshire Regiment, in particular, and the company, Lichfield, in particular, will be proud of the great deeds which have been placed to their credit.

The 38th Foot, the first Staffordshire Regiment formed, was raised at Lichfield by Col. John Liddington, on Feb. 11, 1753, and the 8th Foot, Liddington's son, in the Cathedral city, on Sept. 12, 1757, by Harry W. Liddington, 1st Viscount Liddington, the famous Marquis of Anglesey, one of the heroes of the battle of Waterloo, and the city is rightly regarded as the home, and has always been the headquarters of the battalions, in the epochs of which the citizens take naturally an especial interest. For each of the battalions to have won a Victoria Cross in a war is probably unique, and Lichfield will doubtless highly appreciate the action in which the old regiment has won its highest of all honours.

The first V.C. was gained by Capt. John Francis Vallenton, of the 1st Battalion, on Nov. 7, 1914. On the morning of Nov. 8 of that year the already only-battalion was ordered



THE LATE CAPT. J. F. VALLENTON, A.C. 1st South Staffordshire Regiment.

to the aid of Ghent, where Major J. Lister Thomas was killed by a shell. It is a noble exploit, in the words of the commanding officer of the battalion, on Nov. 7, though every week all the battalions of the 1st Division need a relief company of 200 men, when the 22nd Brigade made a night march. Here it was that Capt. Vallenton the V.C. He was slightly wounded on the night of Nov. 8, and leaving

A selection of article from the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 1916. These include notification of medals awarded, obituaries, rolls of honour, articles about local soldiers and news from the local regiments at the front.

THE STAFFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR.

OFFICERS.

Dr. H. R. Spackman, Penn Fields, Wolverhampton, received a telegram on Tuesday stating that his second son, Capt. Charles Lovell Spackman, R.A.M.C., was wounded near the Tiers on Jan. 18-19. Capt. Spackman was on his way to the relief of Kut, where his brother is.

Lieut. William Herbert Lucas, 8th North Staffs., who died on Jan. 27 of wounds received in France, aged 25 years, was the second son of Mr. Herbert Noel Lucas, solicitor, and Mrs. Lucas, of The Chantry, Dronfield, near Sheffield. He was educated at Dover College, and was reading for his final examination in law when war broke out.

RANK AND FILE. POTTERIES AND DISTRICT.

THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT.

FOOTBALL AT THE FRONT.



THE WINNING TEAM IN THE GENERAL'S DIVISIONAL CUP-TIE COMPETITION. In the semi-final, the South Staffs. beat the Gordon Highlanders, 3-2, and in the final the Royal Army Medical Corps 1-0.

The London Gazette

In addition, the *London Gazette* is available to search for free online through its website www.thegazette.co.uk which also includes information from the Edinburgh and Belfast editions. Online copies of the *London Gazette* from 1825 to 1962 are also available through the Ancestry website, although there are some gaps in its run.

This publication is searchable by issue, date, page number and keyword (such as a name), and can be an excellent source for soldiers who were promoted, awarded medals or performed outstanding acts that were 'mentioned in dispatches'. Knowing which regiment a soldier served can be helpful, as there are instances where several soldiers shared the same name.

It is worth remembering that a soldier's rank may have changed permanently or temporarily (i.e. officers acting as a higher rank in the field with a particular unit, but who would not retain this rank if they moved elsewhere). Captain Robert Nevill of the South Lancashire Regiment (see page 54) is listed in the *London Gazette* as having been awarded the Military Cross in 1916 with the rank of Temporary 2nd Lieutenant.

In cases where a soldier was given an additional award, the *London Gazette* will, in addition to recording this, list the edition in which the original medal was announced (or 'Gazetted' as notices placed in this paper are known). When Reverend the Honourable Maurice Berkeley Peel (see page 30) was awarded an additional Bar for 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty', the *London Gazette* report of 17 April, 1917, also lists the edition in which his original award of the Military Cross was announced in February 1915.

Two pages from the London Gazette dated 24 August 1915, recording promotions and other announcements. This example is a chance survival amongst a collection of papers held at Staffordshire Record Office (SRO D3534/1/85)

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 24 AUGUST, 1915. 8403

The Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire Regiment).

10th Battalion—

William James George Child to be temporary Second Lieutenant. Dated 18th August, 1915.

11th Battalion—

The undermentioned to be temporary Second Lieutenants:—
Dated 16th August, 1915.

Harold Dutton,
Harold Thomas Davison.

The York and Lancaster Regiment.

11th Battalion—

William Hubert Harris Williams to be temporary Second Lieutenant. Dated 16th August, 1915.

The Durham Light Infantry.

16th Battalion—

The undermentioned to be temporary Second Lieutenants:—
Dated 16th August, 1915.

William Faid,
Miles Whichello Pattison,
Cecil Albert Shirley.

17th Battalion—

The undermentioned to be temporary Second Lieutenants:—
Dated 16th August, 1915.

Claud Leslie Brown,
Francis Henry Casson.

Temporary Second Lieutenant Raymond Taylor, from 18th (Service) Battalion (1st County), The Durham Light Infantry, is transferred to the General List. Dated 25th August, 1915.

GENE

Royal

8404

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 24 AUGUST, 1915.

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191

4th Battalion, *The Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire Regiment)*, Second Lieutenant Edward S. S. Taylor is placed on the Half-pay List on account of ill-health. Dated 25th August, 1915.

War Office,

24th August, 1915.

INFAN

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6th Battalion, *The Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own)*, The undermentioned Second Lieutenants to be Lieutenants:—
Dated 23rd July, 1915.

TERRITORIAL FORCE.

YEOMANRY.

Denbighshire (Hussars); Second Lieutenant Claude H. Lloyd-Edwards resigns his commission on account of ill-health. Dated 25th August, 1915.

Hampshire (Carabiniers); Lieutenant Herbert Godsall is seconded for duty at the London School of Musketry. Dated 17th May, 1915.

3rd County of London (*Sharpshooters*); Squadron Quartermaster-Serjeant William John Moore to be Second Lieutenant. Dated 25th August, 1915.

Staffordshire (Queen's Own Royal Regiment); Captain and Adjutant George Hutton-Riddell, M.V.O., Special Reserve, 16th (The Queen's) Lancers, to be Major (temporary). Dated 25th August, 1915.

CYCLIST COMPANIES, DIVISIONAL MOUNTED TROOPS.

SP

RESE

ROYAL

MOTOR

T

Lie

Lothrop L. de B. Smith.
Arthur J. Lush.
Horace C. Gracey.
Philip A. E. Naylor.
Robert W. H. Moline.
Frederic W. Metcalfe.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO REGULAR UNITS OR CORPS.

ROYAL FLYING CORPS.

Military Wing.

The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants (on probation):—

Dated 5th August, 1915.

Leonard Franklyn Hursthouse.
William Percy Cort.

Ernest William Barrett. Dated 7th August, 1915.

Researching Other Services

Whilst many of those who enlisted or were later conscripted served as soldiers, a number of others served in alternative branches of the armed forces, principally the Royal Navy and the Air Force (and its predecessors – see page 63). Additionally, many others served in non-combatant but equally essential roles in the Merchant Marine and the Police Force. They too are commemorated on war memorials where they fell in the course of serving during the Great War, sometimes listed amongst the soldiers, sometimes separately.

Royal Navy

As the oldest of Britain's armed forces, the Royal Navy was considered the 'senior service', and as such, it is sometimes the case that those who served at sea are listed first on a war memorial. It also reflects the perception of Britain as primarily a naval power, rather than a military one such as Germany. That said, the subduing of Germany's naval might and the forces of the Central Powers was a costly experience for the Royal Navy during the Great War, with 23,000 officers and ratings being killed or dying of wounds during naval operations at sea and in support of land campaigns.



Above: Memorial bust of John Henry Carless in Walsall, a local sailor who was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his actions during the 2nd Battle of Heligoland Bight in 1917.

Left: Article in the Staffordshire Advertiser of 27 May 1916, reporting the award of a Distinguished Service Medal to Stoker Herbert H. Purnell for 'gallant service' at Cape Helles.



Unlike the service records for the army, most individuals who served in the Royal Navy are recorded. They are divided between officers and ratings, the naval equivalent of 'other ranks' in the army. Naval service records include details such as date and place of birth (although this is not always recorded), ships served upon and dates of service, physical description and service numbers (which can, in themselves, provide interesting information, as they reflect which branch of the service an individual served in, such as stokers, stewards and sick berth staff).

These records are held today at the National Archives, Kew, which provides a series of online guides to naval sources on their website, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk. These records can be searched using the National Archives online catalogue, *Discovery*, with options for name, place or year of birth and official number. The catalogue then gives the user an option to view the complete record for a small fee.

Local newspapers – including the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, held at the William Salt Library – may also carry occasional pieces of information about those serving in the Royal Navy, including promotions, decorations for bravery and death on active service.

A sailor of the Great War clutching rope and chain, part of the war memorial for the parish of Maer. Sailors are sometimes listed separately on war memorials, and in some cases the naval casualties are listed first in recognition of the Royal Navy being Britain's oldest branch of the armed forces.

Merchant Marine

The Merchant Marine – later known as the Merchant Navy - was responsible for supplying Britain with vital imports during the Great War, and suffered heavily as a result. Over 14,000 merchant seamen were lost during the conflict, especially to German U-boats (submarines) once the declaration of ‘unrestricted warfare’ meant any vessel was considered a legitimate target.

Many of those who served in the Merchant Marine during the Great War were already working as merchant seamen, usually drawn from coastal areas, where they are most commonly commemorated on war memorials. Fewer men from inland counties such as Staffordshire were likely to have served in this capacity, but occasionally the name of a merchant seaman can be found recorded on a local memorial. Very little (if any) documentary material is held locally regarding the Merchant Marine.

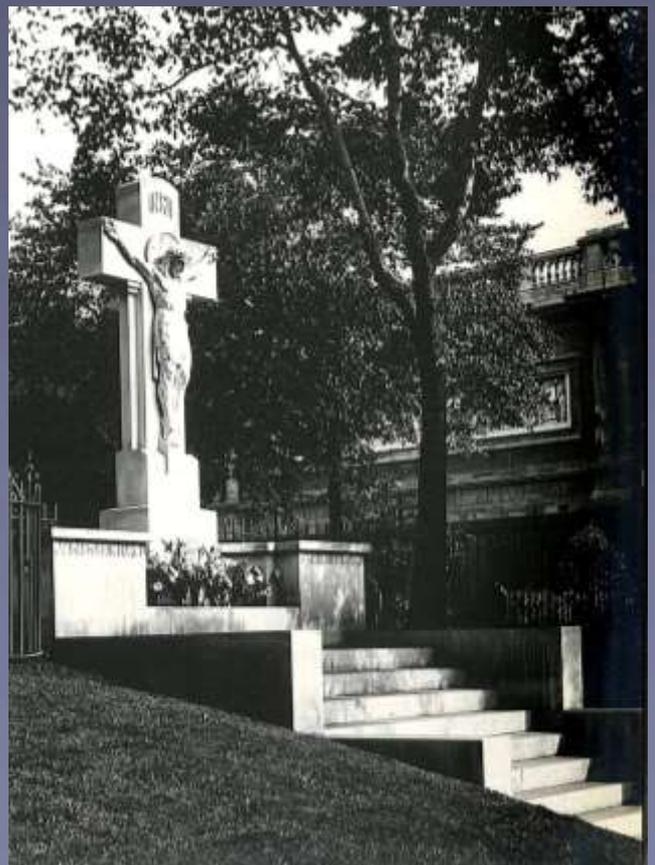
For those that did serve in the Merchant Marine, it is possible to find information through surviving records. The National Archives holds a variety of material relating to the Merchant Navy, information about which can be found in a series of online guides to sources available on the website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk. This includes an index of men awarded Mercantile Marine Medals, British War Medals and Silver War Badges. These registers include details of name, place and year of birth, medals issued and details of discharge. These records are available to search via the National online catalogue *Discovery*, and can be downloaded for a small fee. These medals are most likely to have been awarded for six months’ service at sea and work in a combat area. As a result, not all who served in the Merchant Navy are listed in these indexes.

The National Archives also holds a printed version of *British Vessels Lost at Sea 1914-1918*, which lists naval and merchant ships and their crews lost during the war. These are arranged alphabetically by name of ship and then the names of the crew (excepting the captain or skipper, who is listed first). These lists are useful but do not always record every single crew member lost.

Alternatively, most of the crew lists relating to this period can be searched online at the Maritime History Archive (Newfoundland) website, www.mun.ca, where a facility known as the ‘Crew List Index Search’ allows users to order copies of crew lists from the Archive for a standard fee.

It is possible that mercantile reservists are listed amongst the Royal Navy Reserve service records, which are also held by the National Archives. Their details can be searched for using National Archives’ online *Discovery* catalogue, with the records themselves containing details of an individual’s name and service, as well as the names of their parents. A small fee is charged to access the records online.

*The Mercantile Marine is amongst the services inscribed on the war memorial outside St Peter’s church, Wolverhampton.
(SRO D1157/1/8/17/72)*



Royal Air Force

The Royal Air Force (RAF), as a separate branch of the British armed forces, was created in April 1918. Previously, there were two separate organizations, the Royal Flying Corps (formed in 1912 and administered by the British Army) and the Royal Naval Air Service (formed in 1914, administered by the Admiralty). Records relating to the RAF and its predecessors are held today in the collections of the National Archives at Kew.

Service records for individuals are likely to contain name, rank, dates and details of service and training, as well as information on their civilian life such as date and place of birth, occupation, religious denomination and next of kin. The National Archives has a series of online guides to Air Force sources on its website, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, whilst their online catalogue, *Discovery*, allows users to search for records by forename, surname and dates of service, and it is also possible to browse the catalogue for service numbers. Where medals were awarded, these records note the issue of the *London Gazette* in which the award was announced. It is worth noting some of these records were created retrospectively and may lack some details.

Other related records held by the National Archives include officer's pension records 1916-1920, courts martial (from 1918) and rolls of honour, all of which can be searched on the *Discovery* catalogue. Local newspapers, such as the *Staffordshire Advertiser* held at the William Salt Library, Stafford, may also report on the promotion or death of RFC, RNAS and RAF servicemen who had local links.

Abbots Bromley war memorial records two men with local links who served in the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force. Thomas Unwin was a mechanic with the RFC who died in 1917 at the age of 19, whilst 2nd Lieutenant Christopher Berkeley served in the RAF, dying of wounds in 1919 at the age of 22.



Police

During the Great War, many men signed up for roles in the Second Police Reserve, a body of volunteer police constables and the forerunner of the Special Police Reserve. This reserve helped to compensate for the loss of officers who enlisted to fight, and a register of those who signed up for it in the Stoke on Trent area is held today by the Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service (SRO C/PC/14/22/5).

The register contains details such as previous service in the armed forces, address, year of birth, physical description and other notes, such as current employer and whether the men were willing to work unpaid or not. Additionally, for the autumn of 1914, the register lists employees of the Mersey, Weaver and Ship Canal Carrying Company Ltd and the Stafford Coal and Iron Company Ltd (both Fenton), Sneyd Collieries Ltd, (Burslem), and the North Staffordshire Railway Company, alongside the officers and Scouts of the Staffordshire Boy Scouts Association. Many of those who joined the Second Police Reserve later left in order to enlist in the regular armed forces.

Another useful source is the Third County Force Register, 1894-1935 (SRO C/PC/12/1/29/3), which records the progress of officers who joined the force between these dates, including a number who left to enlist during the Great War (sometimes noting units and whether they were killed in action) and those who joined after the conflict with a note of the units they belonged to during their military career. There is also a name index available for this register (SRO C/PC/12/1/29/4).

Continental Number	British Number	NAME	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	Previous Service		Year born	Height	Prepared to serve as		REMARKS
					Army	Naval			Full	Unpaid	
126		James Wilson	79, Deanside St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1891	5' 10"	✓		
127		James Cox	37, St. James St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 11"	✓		Left military
128	✓	John King	77, Deanside St. Stoke	Whitewasher	✓		1882	5' 8"	✓		
129		Thomas King	14, Deanside St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1891	5' 10"	✓		Joined Army
130		James King	117, Deanside St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1892	5' 10"	✓		Enlisted
131		James King	Windmill Inn near Stoke	General Dealer	✓	✓	1875	5' 10"	✓		
132		William King	369, High St. Stoke	Wright	✓	✓	1876	5' 10"	✓		
133		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Wright	✓	✓	1891	5' 10"	✓		Joined Army
134		John King	60, Deanside St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1888	5' 10"	✓		Enlisted
135		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		not willing
136		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		See above
137		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		do
138		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		Rejected Army
139		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		not willing
140		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		Enlisted
141		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		Enlisted
142		James King	20, High St. Stoke	Plumber	✓	✓	1882	5' 10"	✓		Enlisted



The register for the Second Police Reserve, covering the Potteries area, records various personal details of the volunteers, such as address, occupation and height. There is also an interesting 'Remarks' column, including the rejection of one man as he had 'a German alien living with him'. (SRO C/PC/14/22/5)

(SRO C/PC/1/6/13)

Researching those not listed on Memorials

War memorials are often assumed to list all - but only - those who died whilst serving their country. This is not always the case, as the inclusion of names was very much down to the committee, body or individual erecting the memorial. There are instances on both local and private war memorials where all those who served from that area, company or organization are commemorated, regardless of whether they fell in action or returned safely home. Some memorials include only those who were active combatants (i.e. involved in the fighting). In other instances, it is indeed only the fallen that are commemorated, but the list is not necessarily complete or accurate.

In some cases, names were omitted by accident or because the fate of an individual was not yet known with any certainty. Permission to include the name of a fallen soldier on a memorial was often requested from his surviving family and there may be instances where this was denied, perhaps because by including the name of a missing soldier, the family was admitting that there was little hope he would return home safely.

In other cases, names were left off a war memorial deliberately. This was usually where the conduct of a soldier had been considered shameful, whether through desertion, cowardice or criminal activity and subsequent execution, or because they had served in a non-combatant role as a conscientious objector.

In a location where only the fallen were commemorated on a war memorial, those who had served and survived (often physically or mentally scarred), and those who had contributed to the war effort on the Home Front would receive no such recognition. Certainly those who had resisted conscription in the face of considerable hostility due to personal beliefs and principles would be deemed unworthy of any commemoration at all. Increasingly the role and contribution of these 'forgotten' people of the Great War is being recognized at a national and a local level.

Where an individual is not listed on a war memorial, there may be other sources available that may explain (or at least offer a potential explanation) as to why they are not publicly recorded alongside their friends, neighbours or work colleagues.

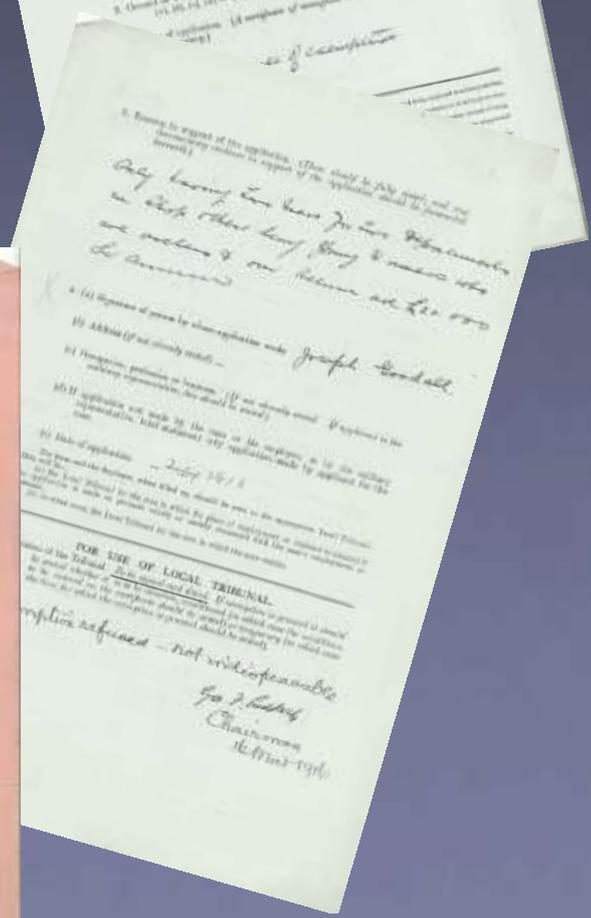
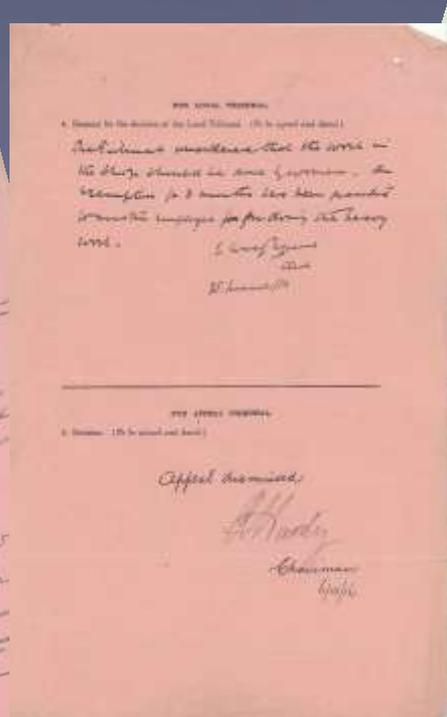
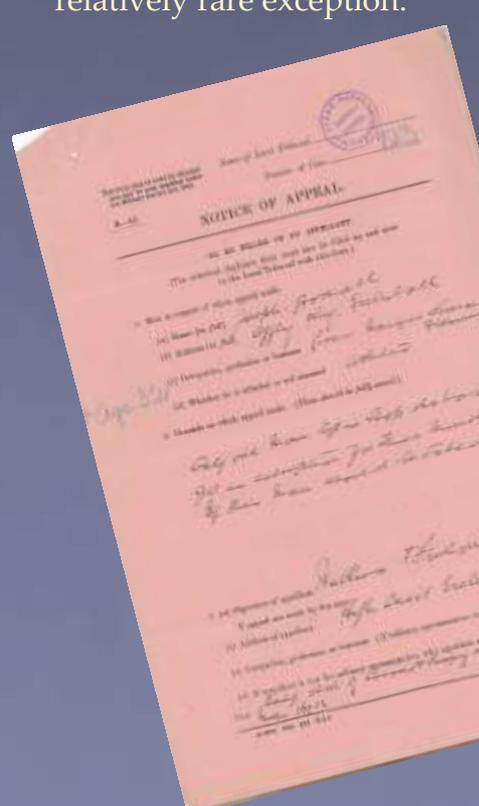
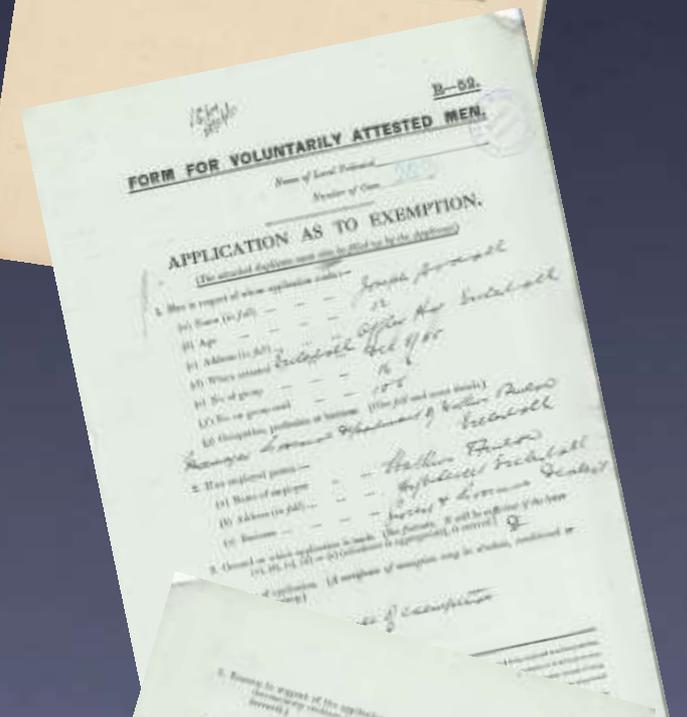
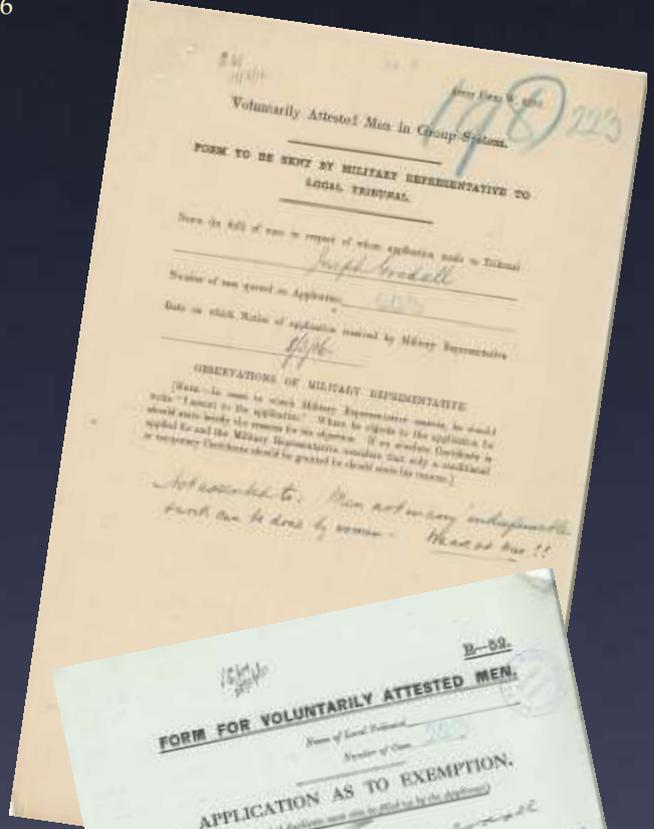
Whilst war memorials—such as this one by the main road in Kings Bromley—are useful in understanding a community's role in the Great War, they do not always present the whole picture. Some of those who served may be omitted for a number of reasons.



Tribunals

Not all men of fighting age served in the armed forces. Individuals could appeal against conscription if they were engaged in work of national importance (such as mining or farming), were unfit for service, had business or domestic hardship (including dependents with no other means of support) or for reasons of conscience. These appeals were heard at local military tribunals, formed by local borough, urban and rural district councils, with a County Appeal Tribunal formed by the County to hear cases where men were unhappy with a local decision.

A large number of men chose to appeal—by the end of June 1916, nearly 75,000 had applied to a tribunal, only some 20,000 less than had joined the armed forces. Over 2,000 tribunals were held across the country to decide on individual cases, and have since gained a reputation for their extremely harsh treatment of conscientious objectors, even though they formed little more than 2% of cases heard. Ironically, they were seen at the time as being too lenient on such men and too harsh on those claiming hardship. In the majority of cases, the papers from these tribunals were deliberately destroyed after the war due to their sensitive nature. However, Staffordshire is a relatively rare exception.

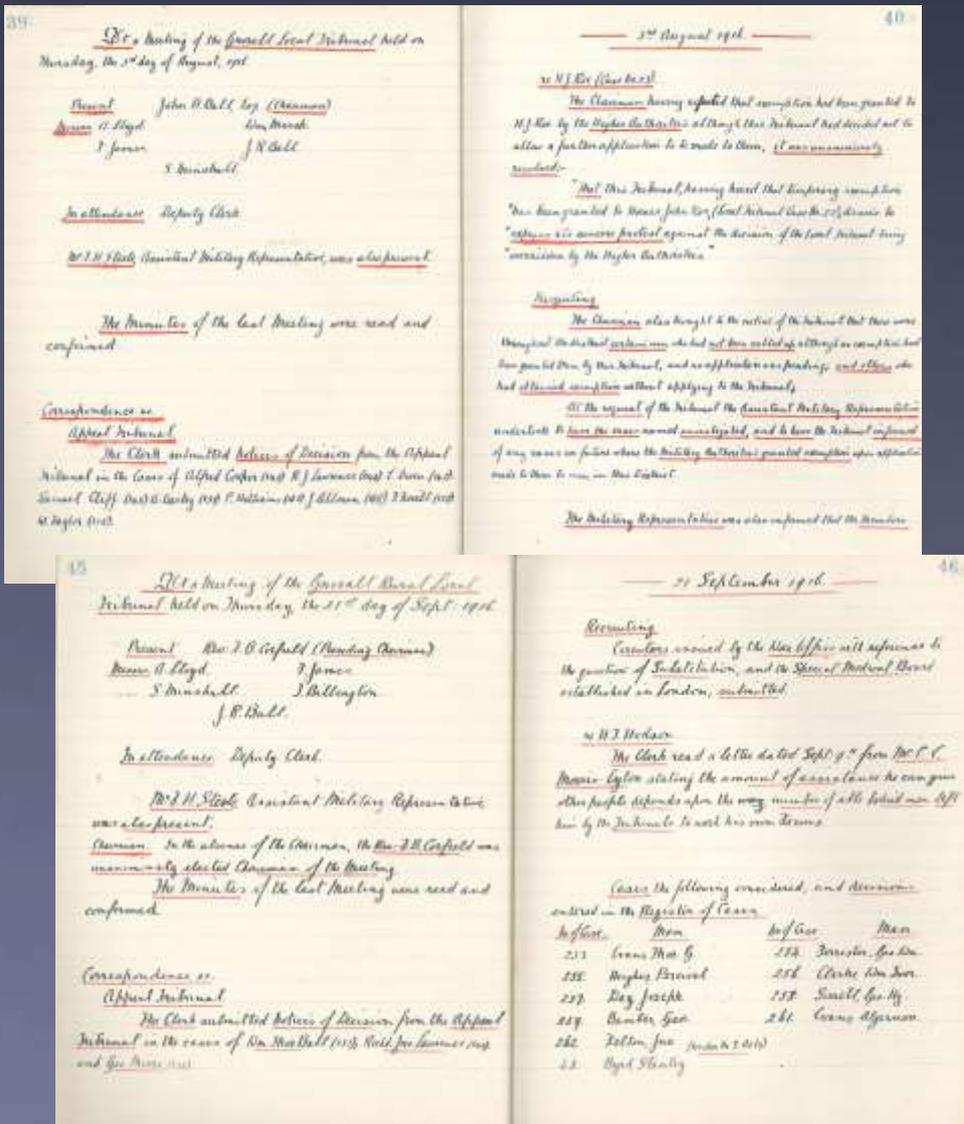


Documentation relating to the tribunal appeal of Joseph Goodall of Offleyhay, who applied for exemption in 1916 as he was needed to run a shop. He was refused exemption with the comment, 'We are at War!!' (SRO C/C/M/2/5)

Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds a collection of papers from the Mid-Staffordshire (County) Appeal Tribunal (SRO C/C/M/2/1-35), dating from 1916-1918. These include records of applications and appeals, as well as the case notes and minutes relating to these hearings. Details such as an individual's occupation and employer, home address, marital and domestic status and the reason for applying for exemption are usually contained, along with the decision of the tribunal.

Additionally, there is a surviving example of a local military tribunal minute book (1915-1918) held in the Gnosall Rural District Council collection (SRO D3040/1/4). Further information on tribunal sources from other parts of the county can be obtained from Staffordshire Record Office.

Military tribunals were also reported in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* (available to consult at the William Salt Library) which gives details of the cases being heard, but does not give the names or addresses of those involved for reasons of confidentiality.



Pages from the surviving minute book from the Gnosall Rural District Council local military tribunal, recording cases heard and other matters, including a dissatisfaction that the a man had been granted exemption upon appeal to the County Appeal Tribunal. (SRO D3040/1/4)

Extract from the *Staffordshire Advertiser* from 1916 recording cases heard by the Mid-Staffordshire Appeal Tribunal. They do not include details of name for confidentiality.

MILITARY SERVICE TRIBUNALS. MID-STAFFORDSHIRE APPEAL TRIBUNAL.

Nearly 40 appeals were heard by the Mid-Staffordshire Tribunal, sitting at Stafford yesterday (Friday).

Conscientious Objector.

A conscientious objector, who was formerly the secretary of a Liberal and Labour Club in the Cannock Chase district, asked to be placed on some work of national importance. Mr. W. H. Boot appeared as a friend in support of the application. The man was passed for non-combatant service.

Women as Bakers.

The question of the suitability of women for work in bakehouses was raised in an appeal by a young baker. His Honour Judge Ruegg suggested that female assistance could be obtained.—Applicant: It would not be any use to us.—His Honour: It is being used.—Applicant said that in large bakehouses where machinery was used the work was easy, but it was impossible for a woman to mix a sack of flour by hand or even mould.—The equivalent of two months' exemption was allowed.

An Important Point.

An Irishman of 23, a school teacher, appealed against being included in the Military Service Act on the ground that he had come to this country for the purpose of his education and that his residence here was only temporary. He said he came from a college in Ireland so as to obtain experience in an elementary school and also to take certain classes. By teaching two years in England he could obtain an English certificate.—In answer to a member of the Tribunal, he admitted that he was getting a salary for teaching at the school where he was.—The Chairman said that in order to succeed applicant had to show them that he came to England only for his own education. He appeared to have come for two purposes—for his own education and to teach others, for which he was getting a salary.—Applicant said he proposed to return to Ireland after two years.—The Tribunal dismissed the appeal, but allowed leave to appeal to the Central Tribunal, as they thought it rather an important question.

STAFFORD BOROUGH.

Business Man's Application.

At the above Tribunal on Wednesday the proprietor of a cycle business asked for leave to appeal for exemption under the Military Service Act, stating that he was not aware that an unattested married man would receive notice calling him up, or he would have appealed before March 2. It appeared the man had married since August. The Military Representative (Major Cecil Gardner) said the man was originally called for March 16, and he personally had granted him an extension until April 7. During that period he took no steps to apply for leave to appeal, and when he was called for April 7 he made a similar statement to that he made before—viz., that he had business instructions to complete. The application was refused after which Major Gardner stated that the

Shot at Dawn

One group of soldiers who were not originally commemorated on Great War memorials were those who had been executed by the British Army. These men had often been found guilty of cowardice or desertion by court martial and were executed by firing squad. Over 300 men from the British and Commonwealth armies died this way, whilst the disappointment and shame associated with the perceived failure to 'do their duty' ensured that their names were left off local memorials erected in the aftermath of the war.

In recognition of the fact that many of these men were unjustly executed (often suffering from the undiagnosed effects of shell-shock and other mental traumas induced by war), as well as providing a focus of remembrance for families who had lost relatives in this way and had no other place of commemoration, a new memorial was dedicated to their memory at the recently established National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas.



'Shot at Dawn', the memorial to soldiers executed during the Great War located at the National Memorial Arboretum, features the figure of Private Herbert Burden of the Northumberland Fusiliers who was executed by firing squad at the age of 17.



The memorial, entitled 'Shot at Dawn', features the concrete figure of a young, blindfolded soldier facing the firing squad (represented by a line of trees), surrounded by wooden posts of varying heights, each bearing a plaque with the name of an executed soldier, their rank and regiment.

Details about each of these individuals can be found on the website www.wwlcemeteries.com, which includes details of the cemetery where the soldier was buried, the charges they faced and the dates of their trial and execution. Details of the memorial itself can be found on the National Inventory of War Memorials website, www.ukniwm.org.uk.

In 2006, the British Government pardoned all soldiers executed by firing squad during the Great War (one of the last countries to do so), whilst there have been on-going campaigns by families and other groups to have their names belatedly added to local war memorials.



Some of the posts commemorating men executed by firing squad—the example in the foreground is that of Private D.J. Blakemore of the North Staffordshire Regiment, executed in 1917. Originally 306 in number, a further post was added in 2009 to commemorate Lance Corporal Jesse Short, also executed in 1917.



Asylums

During the war, and immediately after it, a large number of soldiers were admitted to psychiatric hospitals ('mental asylums' as they were known) suffering from shell-shock (neurasthenia), nervous exhaustion, hallucinations and other conditions brought on by the stress of war. Bereaved relatives might similarly suffer breakdowns or severe depressive episodes. For some of these 'hidden victims' of the war, they would spend the rest of their life in such institutions, subjected to the treatments considered appropriate at the time.

Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds patient registers for the county asylums at Stafford, Burntwood and Cheddleton, in which these admissions would have been recorded, along with case notes. However, all such records relating to wartime and post-war patients are subject to the Data Protection Act, which means access is strictly limited to immediate family. Please contact the Archive Service for further details if you think that these records are relevant to your research, but bear in mind that you will need to seek appropriate written permission to access any patient material.



Servicemen suffering from long-term psychological trauma would have been admitted to county asylums, such as St George's Hospital in Stafford, depicted here after its partial closure. (SRO C/P/65/6/1/69/22)

Medical Records & Hospitals

Wounded or sick service personnel from Staffordshire did not necessarily received treatment within the county, and this can make medical records difficult to locate, as can the fact that many records do not survive or may be restricted due to the Data Protection Act.

If service or pension records for an individual serviceman exist, they may note the place where they were wounded or fell ill and the name or location of military hospitals to which they were admitted. If the service record was amongst the 60% of Great War service records destroyed during the bombing of the War Office in World War 2, the task can become considerably harder.

Although more paperwork would have been generated during a service person's time in hospital, most medical or hospital records were destroyed after the war, with a small sample selection being retained by the National Archives. These include admission and discharge registers from a sample of general and stationary hospitals, casualty clearing stations, field ambulances, ambulance trains, hospital ships and other medical establishments in Britain, as well as a sample of individual medical records of officers and men from 5 selected units. It is worth bearing in mind that this sample is just 2% of the records originally created. The National Archives also holds some war diaries from overseas medical units, although there is usually little mention of individual cases.



A group of nurses and recovering servicemen in their 'hospital blues' uniform from a photograph in Major Edward Blizzard's scrapbook, a note in which identifies the central nurse as 'Sister Hawkins'. Records of such men may be difficult to find. SRO D797/2/2)

Where it is possible to find mention of a particular hospital in service records, it may be possible to search for any surviving records using the Hospital Records Database on the National Archives website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) which is run in conjunction with the Wellcome Trust and can be searched by hospital or town. The database links to the Access to Archives catalogue on the same site (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a), but it is also worth checking this catalogue directly for any records held by local record offices or hospital archives. There is potentially more surviving documentation (such as admission and discharge registers) for larger civilian hospitals that continued to operate after the war than there is for specialist military hospitals which lasted only for the duration. Even here, it is possible that the hospital changed its name more than once, so some background research into the history of the establishment may be necessary.

Likewise, a similar search of Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent's online catalogue *Gateway to the Past* (www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk) will highlight any potential material, although the service holds relatively little in connection with Great War hospital use.

Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds a few items connected an individual's experience with medical services of the Great War. The image on the right shows a ward in a field hospital in Northern France and relates to Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland's time as a volunteer nurse on the Western Front.

(SRO D6578/15/1/89/8)



The tag and medical card (below) are those of Corporal J.H. Green, who was shipped back to Britain severely wounded in 1915. The tag would have been attached to Corporal Green, and gives details of wound, regiment, field hospital (Wimereux) and the ship taking him home.

ARMY FORM W 3083.

No. 7 General Hospital at Wimereux
Stationary

Regtl. No. 1374 Date 8/9/15

Name Green J.H.

Regt. or Corps. 1/2 South Midland R.E.

Name of Ship Anglia

Doct

ARMY FORM W. 3118.
FIELD MEDICAL CARD.
(M.C.—USE LEAD PENCIL)

NUMBER 1374 RANK Cpl

NAME Green J.H. UNIT R.E.

Wound or Disease Wounded by shrapnel

Condition (if any) requiring special attention Wound

Medical Unit from which transferred 1011

Date 27-8-15

This reverse is to be used for notes on special cases (disease, operations, special treatment, or other necessary instructions) in cases requiring or requiring special treatment during evacuation.

This red and white envelope will be used for cases diagnosed or severely wounded and who require immediate attention.

If a more detailed history is necessary, a Medical Certificate (A.R. 113) or Medical Case Sheet (A.F. 1-1337) or other statements of men may accompany.

(SRO D3632/3/20a&b)

Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC)

Women were not permitted to serve in frontline combat roles in the Great War, but there were several 'auxiliary' services to which they belonged, providing vital support in a variety of roles behind the lines. Where material survives relating to the service of these women, it is generally held centrally by the National Archives.

The Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) was formed in 1917 and renamed Queen Mary's Auxiliary Army Corps (QMAAC) in 1918, being disbanded in 1921. Designed to free up fit men for frontline service in the trenches, the roles assigned to the women of the Auxiliary Army Corps included cooks, waitresses, clerks, telephone operators, mechanics and a number of other supporting roles. Women were paid less than their male counterparts and, because of the traditions of the British Army, no woman could become an officer. However, those who did rise through the ranks were given titles such as 'administrator' or 'controller'.

Approximately 57,000 women joined the WAAC, but only a fraction of their service records survive as the majority were destroyed when the War Office was bombed in World War 2. The records that do survive are held at the National Archives and can be searched through the online catalogue, *Discovery*, on its website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) The records – where they survive – provide domestic details such as address, marital status and parents' nationality, as well as various details of service, such as rank (known as grade), location and promotions, as well as miscellaneous information, such as employer references and clothing history relating to the uniform issued). A standard fee is charged to download the records.

A group of WAACs in their familiar brown uniforms stationed at Rugeley training camp on Cannock Chase during the Great War. (Staffordshire Museums Service)



A group of WAACs with an army officer at Brocton Camp, also on Cannock Chase. The photograph has been signed by Gladys Harvey, who worked in the camp canteen. She can be seen in the back row stood on the left. (Staffordshire Museums Service)

The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS)

The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS, popularly known as the 'Wrens') was formed in 1917 as the women's branch of the Royal Navy. Women were recruited to serve in shore-based duties, freeing up sailors to serve at sea. The Admiralty envisaged recruiting around 3,000 women to undertake duties such as cooking, serving meals and cleaning but by the time the service was disbanded in October 1919, over double that number of women had joined and were undertaking a far wider range of duties, including some based overseas. During this period, the WRNS lost 23 women serving.

The National Archives today holds the service records of some 5,000 women of the WRNS. These can be searched by name or official number through the online *Discovery* catalogue on the National Archives website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

Information in the records themselves includes name, age, date of enrolment, character, whether willing to work away from home, period of service and where an individual served. Officers' details can additionally include information such as marital status, religion and physical description. Records can be downloaded from the National Archives website for a standard fee. Additionally, the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth (www.royalnavalmuseum.org) holds the official archives of the WRNS, including official and unofficial documents such as personal manuscripts and photographs.

The Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF)

The Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) was founded in April 1918 alongside the Royal Air Force. Many of those who joined the WRAF had worked for the WAAC or the WRNS previously, as the air force had been run as wings of the British Army and the Admiralty. Women of the WRAF worked as mechanics, drivers, cooks, clerks and a variety of other support roles (including photography and pigeon keeping) to free up men for active service. Of the 32,000 women who served in the WRAF, some 500 were dispatched to bases in France and Germany in the aftermath of the war, with the rest serving in Britain.

The WRAF was disbanded in April 1920, but their records survive and those of women who served between 1918 and 1920 (some 30,000) are held today at the National Archives. Unlike the records of the WAAC, these documents have survived largely intact, although no officers' records are known to exist. The records can be searched using the National Archives' *Discovery* online catalogue, with options for name and service number. Details that can be found in the records themselves include age, address, marital status, next of kin and dependents, promotions, transfers, physical description and discharge details. Again, a standard fee is charged to download the records.



Agnes Porter, assistant medical inspector for the Staffordshire Education Committee, volunteered to work for the Red Cross and was captured by Austrian Forces in 1916, as reported by the Staffordshire Advertiser in February of that year.

Women's Land Army

The Women's Land Army (WLA) was formed in January 1917 by the Board of Agriculture, recruiting women to work on the land and to help maintain vital food production, and by 1918, there were over 20,000 members. The WLA was disbanded in 1919, but the original service records have not survived.

Likewise, there are very few local holdings in Staffordshire, although Staffordshire Museums do hold a couple of photographs of a Land Army parade through Stafford in 1919. These images (below) can be viewed on the *Staffordshire Past Track* website, www.staffspastrack.org.uk. There is additionally mention of the Women's Land Army in the Stone Urban District Council in-letter book for 1918-1919 held by Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service (SRO S1526/1/37).



Two images of a Women's Land Army parade through Stafford town centre, showing the members wearing the distinctive uniform and holding banners reading 'The Nation's Food' and 'God Save the King'. (Staffordshire Museums Service)



Queen Alexandra's Imperial Nursing Service (QAIMNS) & Reserve Territorial Force Nursing Service (RTFNS)

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service was founded by Royal Warrant in 1902, providing nurses for British Army hospitals. The Reserve Territorial Force Nursing Service was founded in 1909 as a sister service, supplementing the regular services in emergencies. Its members were all trained civilian nurses. Both organizations served throughout the Great War in every campaign of the British Army. QAIMNS continues to exist today (now known as Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps) as the nursing branch of the British Army, whilst the RTFNS became its Territorial branch in 1949.

The records for both organizations are held today by the National Archives and can be searched using the online catalogue *Discovery* (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) by name. Records for around 15,000 women who served in QAIMNS and the RTFNS survive, and include details about training, references, hospitals or mobile units they served in and the date they left the service. The records can be downloaded for a standard fee.



Two photographs showing QAIMNS nurses (with shoulder capes) and Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADS) with recuperating soldiers at an unidentified field hospital during the Great War. Note some of the men wear the 'hospital blues' (recuperating) uniform, whilst others wear their service uniform – including a Highlander in his kilt.

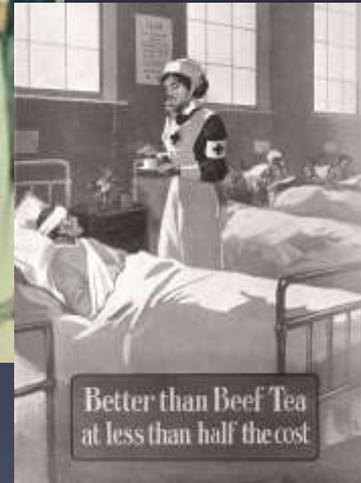
(SRO D6696 pt)



First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY)

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry was created in 1907 as a first aid-providing link between the frontline and field hospitals. Originally mounted on horseback (hence the title 'Yeomanry'), the FANYs did not see their role as that of nurses but rather rescuing wounded men from the front and administering first aid. Members were trained in signalling and cavalry drill. During the Great War, its members continued in this vein by driving motorized ambulances, running field hospitals, setting up troop canteens and even a mobile bathroom. FANYs worked with the Belgian, French and British armies, although they were not officially part of any of them.

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (Princess Royal Volunteer Corps) still exists, and maintains its own independent archive. The organization can be contacted via their website (www.fany.org.uk), where an archivist can undertake research for a small fee. Additionally, the FANYs Great War photographic archive can be viewed for free online (www.fanyarchive.org.uk), where it can be searched by subject and name.



Popular images of nurses, as they appeared in 'The Sphere' magazine of December 1914—the coloured image in a painting of those fighting for the British Empire, the hospital scene as an advert for 'Oxo'.
(SRO D952/5/2/213)



A large wooden hut serves as a ward in this photograph of a military field hospital with QAIMNS nurses and recovering patients. Note the central stoves and the patterned bedcovers.
(SRO D6696 pt)

Article in the Longton St Mary's 'Ecclesia' parish magazine from 1915 looking at wartime military convalescent hospitals in London and how a range of activities is helping to rehabilitate the patients. Such hospitals were found across the country, including Staffordshire.
(SRO D4160/6/17)



Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD)

The Voluntary Aid Detachment, founded in 1909 by the Red Cross, was a voluntary organization that provided nurses for field hospitals during the Great War. Each individual volunteer was referred to as a 'detachment'. Many VADs were from the middle and upper classes of society (one famous example being Staffordshire-born writer Vera Brittain) and had not previously experienced hardship, combat situations or hospital discipline – consequently the British Army refused to let them serve on the frontline. VADs provided support to the regular nursing staff in the field hospitals, although there was initially some tension between the professional nurses and the enthusiastic but 'amateur' VADs. In total, some 38,000 VADs served in field hospitals, as ambulance drivers and as cooks during the war.

Incomplete records for VADs are held in the archives of the Red Cross, information on which can be found on its website, www.redcross.org.uk. The records are not yet searchable online, but a request for details can be made in writing (British Red Cross Museum & Archives, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL). Information in the personal records includes details of medals awarded, dates of service, duties performed, places and institutions in which they served, other honours received and possible details of training. It is helpful to have as many details of an individual who served as a VAD as possible in order to accurately identify them within the records. The Red Cross does not make a formal charge for their research service, but do request a donation to cover costs.

Right: Page from the 'Army Orders' printed booklet of 1916 listing some of the Voluntary Aid Detachments at a national level, with the organizing bodies also given.
(SRO D5493/9)

27
Army Orders—May, 1916.

APPENDIX TO ARMY ORDER 161.
VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENTS.
Countries, &c., are arranged in alphabetical order.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

No.	Detachment.	Classification.	By which organized.
180	Cheshire	Women's	British Red Cross Society.
181	"	"	"
182	"	"	"
183	"	"	"
184	"	"	"
185	"	"	"
186	"	"	"
187	"	"	"
188	"	"	"
189	"	"	"
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* In place of detachments resigned.

SCOTLAND.

11	Edinb...	Women's	British Red Cross Society, Scottish Branch.
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Great War period photograph of a VAD in her official uniform
(SRO D6696 pt)

Below: Excerpt from the Berkswich-with-Walton Roll of Honour, listing Marjorie Gibson, VAD, who died whilst on service in 1916. She is also commemorated on the local Weeping Cross war memorial.
(SRO D3361/1/8/12)

1916.

KIDWELL, OSMUND
SMALLWOOD, GEORGE
SITWELL, JACINTH WILMOT
FARNSWORTH, ERNEST
COATES, ROBERT
YEWBERRY, HARRY
HARVIE, EDWARD
SALT, WALTER PETIT
TILSTON, LEONARD

Gibson, Marjorie V.A.D. nurse

1917.

Researching a Service Person's Family

In instances where details of a service person's family have been recorded – as next of kin in a service record, or as the donors of a private memorial plaque, for example – it is possible to trace information about that family through a range of standard sources that may already be familiar to researchers who have studied Family History.

The census of 1911 – available through the Ancestry website (www.ancestry.co.uk) at Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service and Staffordshire libraries – can provide information about those who would go on to serve and their families, giving details such as occupation, age and relationship to the head of the household.

Parish registers record details of baptisms, church marriages and burials and are a familiar and major resource for Family Historians. Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service holds collections of Anglican and Nonconformist registers, with additional microfilm copies of some Roman Catholic registers. Civil certificates recording births, marriages and deaths are indexed online (www.ancestry.co.uk and www.freebmd.org.uk are two examples) and certificates can be ordered from the local Registration Service or from the General Register Office (www.gro.gov.uk).

In-depth description of these and other sources relating to Family History is beyond the scope of this work, but more information can be found in the Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service publications *Family History for Beginners* and *The Advanced Guide to Family History*, both of which can be purchased through the website, www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives.

A selection of military weddings, as reported in the Staffordshire Advertiser in February and May, 1916.

The Register of Cases (1916) from the Cheadle branch of the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association, an organization set up to provide assistance for former servicemen and their dependents – in this instance, a soldier's disabled mother.

(SRO D5493/2)

49		Case No. 257	Remarks.	50															
Particulars of Case, (Date of Registry)																			
Name of Family <i>Keen and Keen</i>																			
Address: <i>7 Holly Street, Blythe Bridge</i>																			
Husband's Rank and Name: <i>Arthur Keen</i>																			
Regiment or Coy: <i>Cheshire Regt</i>																			
If ever married, Where?																			
If discharged, date and character stated on case?																			
If dead, date of death?																			
Duration of Service, Match, etc.																			
Date of Marriage, place, and by whom solemnized (State any conditions stated by case.)																			
If "over" or "out on" the strength?																			
If in receipt of Husband's pay or Allowance, How much?																			
If from work or employment, How much?																			
If from any other Fund or source, of which stated, How much?																			
Children's Names and Dates of Birth:																			
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date.</th> <th>How disposed of, etc.</th> <th>Amount.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>1916</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Sept 15</i></td> <td><i>2/3 a week - Mother a cripple, daughter at Staffport 12 months 1/2 a week - 5/- depending on...</i></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><i>all 2-28/1916</i></td> <td><i>1 8 0</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Sept 16</i></td> <td><i>- Same 5/2/1916</i></td> <td><i>16 3</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Date.	How disposed of, etc.	Amount.	<i>1916</i>			<i>Sept 15</i>	<i>2/3 a week - Mother a cripple, daughter at Staffport 12 months 1/2 a week - 5/- depending on...</i>			<i>all 2-28/1916</i>	<i>1 8 0</i>	<i>Sept 16</i>	<i>- Same 5/2/1916</i>	<i>16 3</i>
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HAUGHTON D.G.M. MARRIED AT STAFFORD.



MILITARY WEDDING AT BLYTHE BRIDGE.



SADLER-CORP. AND MRS. COX.

...to be seen in uniform. Sadler-Cox has spent ten years in the Army, six of them in the front line. He was drafted to France with his own troops soon after war broke out, and has been in many engagements, but has no special honors.

The ceremony was witnessed by a large number of people. The bride made a pretty figure in a dress of white tulle and lace. The groom wore a military uniform, and the bride's dress was in the latest style. The bride's hair was styled in a bun, and she wore a large veil. The groom's uniform was in full dress, and he wore a sash. The ceremony was held at the home of the bride's mother, and was a very private affair.



THE BRIDE AND GROOM.

...and a very pretty one. She was attended by the Misses Howard and Misses ... who were dressed in white. The ceremony was held at the home of the bride's mother, and was a very private affair.

Other Locations for Research

Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service provides a variety of material to help the researcher get started when investigating a local war memorial, but it may be necessary to consult records held by other organizations to obtain a more complete picture or to answer questions thrown up by initial lines of research.

The National Archives

The National Archives, the official repository of British governmental papers based at Kew, holds a large proportion of the surviving records relating to the Great War. These include service records (see page 56) and British Army Unit War Diaries, which document the movements of each unit during the conflict. There are also collections of papers from the War Office, Admiralty and Air Force, as well as the personal papers of a number of commanding officers. Publicity, correspondence and a host of other related records generated or amassed during the course of the war by the British government are held at the National Archives, whose online catalogue can be accessed via their website, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk.



Men recorded on war memorials such as this one at Hednesford may also be recorded in documents held at the National Archives.

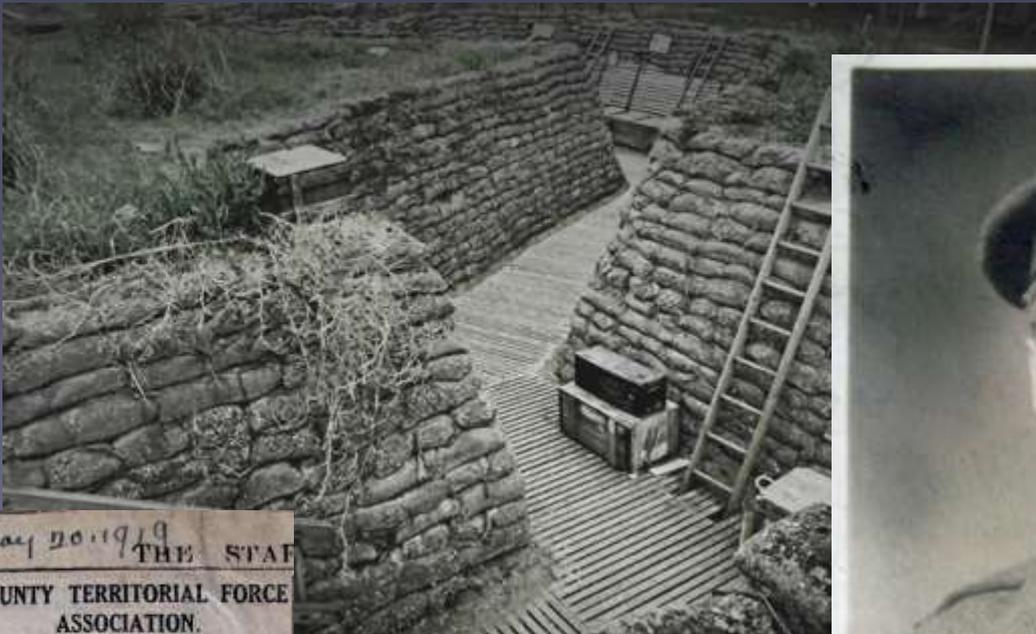


The Staffordshire Regiment Museum

The Staffordshire Regiment Museum, located at Whittington Barracks near Lichfield, holds the Regimental journals, battalion war diaries and other documentation relating to the North & South Staffordshire Regiments. A standard fee is charged for personal or remote research, and further details can be found on the museum's website, www.staffordshireregimentmuseum.com.

The Staffordshire Regiment Museum also has a series of themed displays, including an exterior full-scale Great War trench replica which is regularly used for re-enactment events. This trench has been dedicated as a memorial to the soldiers of Staffordshire, especially Lance-Corporal William Coltman VC, a non-combatant stretcher bearer in the North Staffordshire Regiment, who became the most highly decorated NCO of the Great War due to his tireless efforts to rescue wounded men under fire.

Newspaper cuttings relating to Lance-Corporal Coltman's inspiring story can be found in Major Edward Blizzard's scrapbook, a contemporary document created by a North Staffordshire recruiting officer and now held at Staffordshire Record Office (SRO D797/2/2).



THE BURTON OBSERVER, SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1920.

A PICTURE FOR POSTERITY.



View of Lance-Corporal Coltman, who being awarded to perpetuate the sacred loss of Burton's V.C. One is to be seen in the picture and another in the front hall at Burton, headquarters of the North Staffordshire Regiment. The Hon. A. S. Park, C.B., C.M.G.



(SRO D797/2/2)

The 'Coltman Trench' at the Staffordshire Regiment Museum (top left) is named in memory of Lance Corporal William Harold Coltman, the highest decorated Non-Commissioned Officer of the Great War. Information about Lance Corporal Coltman, who came from Burton, can be found in Major Edward Blizzard's wartime scrapbook.

The Imperial War Museum

The Imperial War Museum maintains the National Register of War Memorials, which is searchable online. Additional information concerning the names listed on a memorial, research files and memorial-related photographs are also available. The Museum's sizeable archive contains collections of personal papers from those on active service and civilians, along with contemporary films, photographs and later sound recordings of personal experiences. More information can be found on the website www.iwm.org.uk.

Other Archives

Other county archives, history centres and record offices may hold additional information about individuals listed on a war memorial, particularly if they lived or were born outside of the county or served with a regiment not associated with Staffordshire. It is worth bearing in mind that some war memorials list those with links to the town or parish (sometimes through relatives), and may not necessarily have spent any considerable time locally. In this case, it will be helpful to locate which county or city they are most closely linked with, and then seeing what local archives cover the area.

County archive records can be searched using the National Archives *Access to Archives* search facility (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a) by visiting individual websites and using their own online catalogue (where they exist).

In some cases, there are local museums or history societies that have a small archive which may be of use, and an internet search may help to bring such organizations to light.

Information pertaining to those listed on local war memorials such as this example (with soldier holding rifle reversed in mourning) at Biddulph may sometimes be found in other county archives and repositories.



Conclusion

Investigating Great War memorials can be a rewarding project, revealing social and military history at a national, local and individual level. Memorials can tell us how local communities and individuals reacted to the war, how they coped with loss and how they went about commemorating those who served and fell. The documentation generated in the creation of a war memorial can tell us about the focus, ideas and concerns of those responsible for erecting them, whilst the memorials themselves can demonstrate the rich tradition of monumental sculpture that the artists and architects who created them drew upon.

Researching the stories behind the men and women recorded on local war memorials—and those who were not— can bring a ‘human element’ to names inscribed in stone or bronze, and serves to remind us that each name listed amongst the fallen would have left behind grieving relatives and friends. These names may reveal heroic actions and awards for gallantry, or they may reveal those who did their duty without special recognition.

By combining these lines of research, it helps us to understand how valuable and unique an historical resource war memorials are, and to appreciate the role they play in telling the story of Staffordshire’s Great War—of those who served, those who fell and those who were left behind.

Albert Toft’s bronze soldier forms the focal point of Stone’s Great War memorial.



Useful Websites

This is a selection of websites that contain information useful in researching a local war memorial and those commemorated on it. Information is correct at time of writing, but it is worth noting that websites are subject to frequent change, relocation or even closure. Material relating to the Great War is currently being made available online on a regular basis and will continue to be so over the next few years, so it is worth revisiting these websites periodically for new information.

www.staffspasttrack.org.uk Staffordshire Past Track website, run by Staffordshire Archives and Heritage, contains a large number of images from across Staffordshire including war memorials, soldiers and civilians of the Great War period.

www.wolverhamptonwarmemorials.org.uk This is a very complete index of war memorials around Wolverhampton, some of which no longer survive or are not accessible to the public. This includes transcriptions of the names and information provided about the soldiers and covers memorials from both World Wars.

www.bfhg.org.uk The website of the Burntwood Family History Group includes a webpage on local war memorials. This offers a good collection of photographs and transcriptions of memorials from the Anglo-Zulu War to World War 2.

www.nicholsonmemorial.org.uk This website is devoted to the Nicholson Memorial in Leek. Here, the Nicholson Memorial is chronicled, including restoration work, images and diary entries of soldiers listed, along with guides to other sources concerning the memorial.

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looking-for-subject/firstworldwar This is the guide and links to researching Great War records held by the National Archives. From here it is possible to search medal indexes and order copies of records.

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a The Access to Archives website, run by the National Archives, offers a search facility which can find results from record offices and some specialist archives from across England and Wales. This can be particularly useful when searching for business collections which may be held by several different organizations.

www.cwgc.org The Commonwealth War Graves Commission maintains and records war graves of British and commonwealth soldiers in Britain and across the world for both World Wars. This database lists not only where soldiers are buried or, if there is no known grave, commemorated, but also includes service number and may include additional information where this is available.

www.volksbund.de/graebersuche The German War Graves Commission records and maintains German war graves across the world. Databases here are searchable by name and regiment, but not location. Please note that this website is in German and does not translate through a browser, however sections of text may be highlighted and translated through an online translation website.

www.ukniwm.org.uk This is the website for the National Register of War Memorials and lists large and small memorials dating between the 10th Century and the present day. This site is particularly helpful when searching for business memorials and memorials which have been moved or lost.

www.ancestry.co.uk This is an extremely useful website which may be accessed for free through Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service and Staffordshire libraries. Here it is possible to search through a wide variety of databases, including census and medal awards.

Further Reading

A number of books have been written on the subject of war memorials, both in general and specifically for the Great War. The following is a list of publications consulted in the compilation of this work. Additionally, information can increasingly be found on a variety of websites created by individuals, groups and organizations at both local and national level.

A Century of Remembrance: One Hundred Outstanding British War Memorials

Derek Boorman, Leo Cooper Ltd, 2005

At the Going Down of the Sun: British First World War Memorials

Derek Boorman, 1988

For Your Tomorrow: British Second World War Memorials

Derek Boorman, 1995

War Memorials

Alan Borg, Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 1991

War Memorials in Britain

Jim Corke, Shire Publications Ltd, 2005

Monuments of War: How to Read a War Memorial

Colin McIntyre, Robert Hale Ltd, 1990

*Public Sculpture of Staffordshire
and the Black Country*

George Noszlopy and Fiona Waterhouse,
Liverpool University Press, 2005

The Windows of St Editha's

Stan T. Parry , St Editha's (Tamworth), undated

Remembrance and Community:

War Memorials and Local History

Kate Tiller, British Association of Local History, 2013

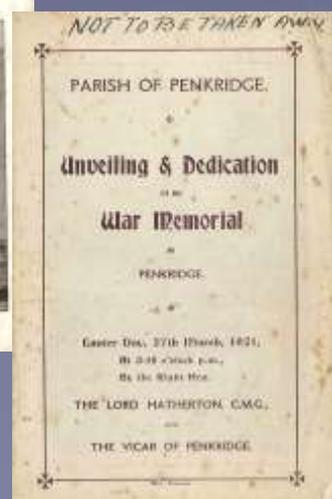
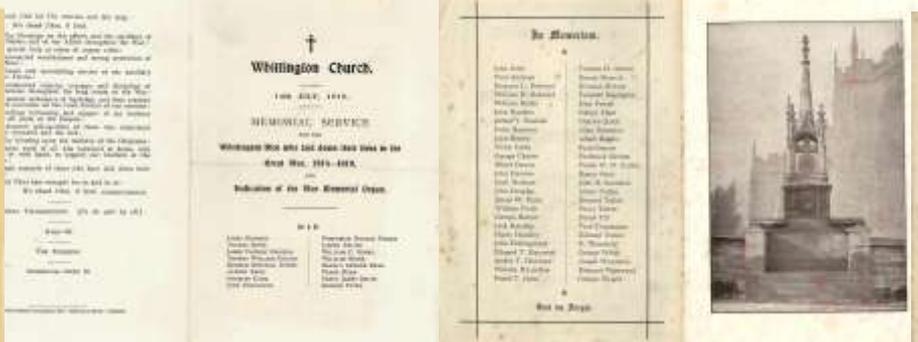
The war memorial for the village of Standon can be found in the churchyard of All Saints, the parish church. The memorial takes the form of a tall cross with the names of the fallen inscribed on the base.



Index

- Abbots Bromley 63
 Alleyne's Grammar school memorial (Uttoxeter) 34
 Alrewas 20
 Alrewas Arboretum (see *National Memorial Arboretum*)
 Anglo-Zulu War memorial (Lichfield) 7
 Anglo-Boer War memorials 8, 45
 Arden, Humphrey Warwick, memorial 24
 Armitage 9
 Asylums 71
 Ball Haye Green 53
 Barlaston 45
 Barton-under-Needwood 45
 Baswich / Berkswich 48, 80
 Bench (memorial type) 13
 Biddulph 41, 84
 Bilston 21
 Blurton 91
 Blythe Bridge (see *Forsbrook*)
 Boer War (see *Anglo-Boer War*)
 Brewood 45
 Bridgeman, Robert & Sons (sculptors) 41
 Broadhurst Green (CWGC cemetery) 10, 46-47, 49, 51
 Burslem 52
 Burton-upon-Trent 11, 37, 40, 41
 Business memorials 31-33
 Butler, W., & Co memorial (Wolverhampton) 33
 Calvary (war memorial type) 9, 15, 19, 20, 24, 42, 62
 Cannock 11, 12
 Cannock Chase 43, 46-51, 54
 Carless, John Henry VC, memorial 60
 Cenotaph (memorial type) 12
 Cheadle 13, 81
 Cheslyn Hay 23
 Church memorials 15-20
 Civic memorials 22-29
 Clock tower (memorial type) 14
 Codsall 25
 Coltman, Lance Corporal W.H, VC, 83
 Column (memorial type) 13
 Commonwealth War Graves 46-49, 53
 County War Memorial (Stafford) 3, 22
 Cross (war memorial type) 9, 10, 13, 43, 45, 63, 85, 91
 Cross of Sacrifice 10, 46, 47
 Databases (research) 53
 Dorman, W.H., business memorial (Stafford) 33
 Eccleshall 74
 Elmore Green School memorial (Bloxwich) 34
 Endon 38-39
 Faculty records 15, 17, 39
 Fazeley 14
 Fehr, H.C. (sculptor) 11, 41
 Fenton Town Hall memorial 44
 First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) 79
 Forsbrook / Blythe Bridge memorial 10, 20, 41
 Fulford 15
 Garden (memorial type) 14
 Gates (memorial type) 13, 53
 German military cemetery (Cannock Chase) 50-51
 Gnosall military tribunal 67
 Great Wyrley 25, 26
 Goodall, Joseph, military tribunal 66
 Greenstreet, Reverend W.G., grandsons' memorial 19
 Halmer End 91
 Hanbury 1, 85
 Hanley 10, 11, 41, 45
 Heath Hayes 13
 Hednesford 82
 Hoar Cross 13, 16, 26
 Hopwas 9
 Hospitals 72-73
 Hot Lane memorial (Burslem/Cobridge) 36
 Hulme, T.E. memorial 38-39
 Ipstones 13
 Jenkinson, Captain John, memorial 17
 Johnson, Rifleman Arthur, (NZRB) grave 49
 Johnson, Private H., memorial (Tamworth) 8
 Keele 43
 Kidsgrove 19
 Kings Bromley 65
 Knutton 10
 Lamp (memorial type) 14
 Leek 4, 14
 Lichfield 14, 32, 41, 85
 Lichfield Cathedral 7, 8
 Lichgate (memorial type) 14
 London Gazette (newspaper) 56, 59
 Longton 7, 12
 Lord Audley's Cross (Blore Heath) 6
 Lord Brooke's plaque (Lichfield) 6
 Lotus Ltd memorial (Stafford) 33
 Madeley Heath 10, 41
 Maer 10, 61
 Marchington 13, 41
 Marchington Woodlands 14
 Medical records 72-73
 Memorial windows 8, 12, 30, 39-39
 Merchant Marine 62
 Messines Model (Cannock Chase) 43
 Military Tribunals 66-67
 Mossfield Colliery disaster memorial 7
 National Memorial Arboretum (Alrewas) 6, 31, 32, 44, 68-69, 85

- National Register of War Memorials 40
 Newcastle-under-Lyme 43, 45
 Newspapers 58-59
 Newton, William Trafford, named on memorial 57
 New Zealand soldiers 43, 47, 49
 Nicholson War Memorial (Leek) 4,14
 Nevill, Captain Robert, memorial 17, 54, 59
 Nonconformist memorials 20
 North Road memorial (Burslem) 36
 Norton in the Moors 17
 Nurses 78
 Obelisk (war memorial type) 10, 23, 24, 38, 43, 82, 91
 Ogle Hay 19
 Parochial church Council memorials 27
 Pattingham 19, 70
 Peel, Rev. Hon. Maurice Berkeley, memorial 30, 59
 Penkridge 12, 90
 Pensioned survivors 70
 Plaque (memorial type) 11, 16, 17, 25, 31, 33, 36, 37, 43, 44, 85
 Police 64
 Porter, Agnes (PoW) 76
 Purnell, Stoker H.H. 60
 Recreation ground (memorial type) 13, 53
 Roll of Honour 20, 21, 25, 26, 35, 40, 55, 58, 70, 80
 Roman memorials 6
 Roman Catholic church memorials 19
 Royal Air Force 63
 Royal Navy 60-61
 Rugeley 23
 Rushall 42
 St Michael's Chapel (Lichfield) 7, 8
 Sandon Estate memorial 5, 4, 41, 45
 Saxon Cross 6, 9
 School memorials 34-35
 Sellars, Private F.E., grave (Baswich) 48
 Service records (military) 56
 Sharp Bros & Knight memorial (Burton) 33, 40
 Shot at Dawn memorial (Alrewas) 68-69
 Shrine (memorial type) 12, 40, 90
 Smith, Captain E.J., memorial (Lichfield) 8
 Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association 81
 Stafford 8, 22, 28-29, 31, 33, 37, 40, 41, 54, 70
 Staffordshire Advertiser (n'paper) 29, 58, 60, 67, 76, 81
 Staffordshire Regiment (North) 83
 Staffordshire Regiment (South) 7, 8
 Staffordshire Regiment Museum 83
 Standon 88
 Statue (war memorial type) 10, 11, 20, 28-29, 33, 41, 45, 52, 60, 61, 84, 85, 86
 Stone 41, 45, 52, 86
 Stowe-by-Chartley 43
 Stramshall 57
 Stretton 21
 Tablet (memorial type) 12, 24, 32, 34, 36, 37
 Tamworth 8, 12, 17, 30, 54
 Tean, Upper 11
 Tennis tournament (fundraising) 37
 Tixall 18
 Toft, Albert (sculptor) 41, 45
 Trentham 9
 Tutbury 17, 57
 Uttoxeter 14, 85
 Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) 80
 Wall (memorial type) 12
 War Memorials Trust 44
 Weeping Cross 27
 Weston School memorial 35
 Whitehead, J, & Sons (sculptors) 28, 41
 Whittington 48, 83, 90
 Wigginton 85
 William Salt Library 22, 55, 57, 58, 61, 67
 Wolverhampton 62
 Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) 75
 Women's Land Army (WLA) 77
 Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) 76
 Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) 76
 Yoxall 21, 24
 Zeppelin raids 37, 47, 51
 Zulu War (see *Anglo-Zulu War*)



Left: Elevation and Order of Service for the dedication of the war memorial organ at Whittington St Giles. (SRO D4834/5/11/1)
Right: Order of Service from the unveiling and dedication of the Penkridge war memorial in March 1921. (SRO D5419/17)

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Photography—**Ben Cunliffe & Hannah Dale**

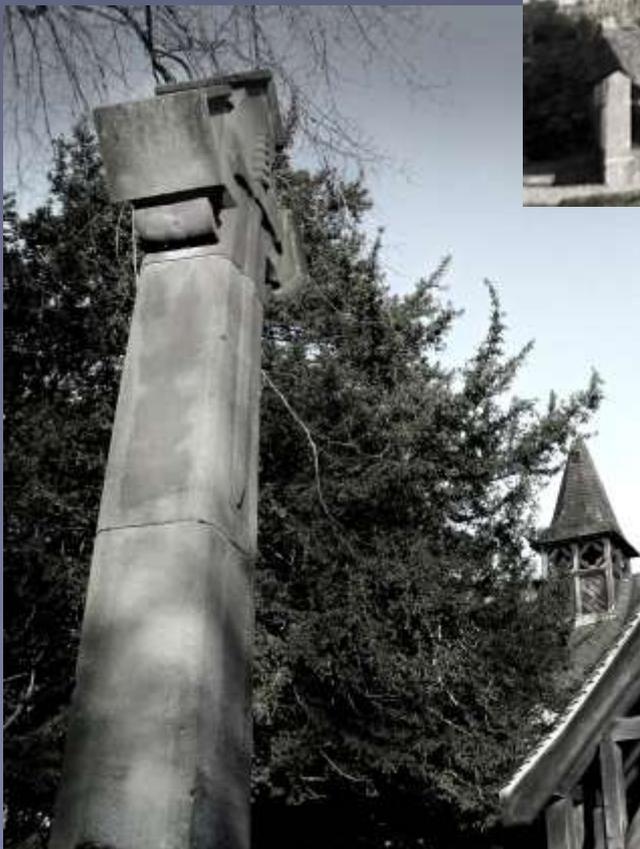
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The war memorial at Halmer End, North Staffordshire, sits on the main road through the village. Behind, the church of St John contains a memorial listing the civilian casualties of the Minnie Pit colliery disaster in 1918.



Elements from Blomfield's 'Cross of Sacrifice' are combined with a Saxon-style design in the war memorial at Blurton, standing outside the parish church.

