

The Whitchurch War Dead

Currently, I am trying to compile an illustrated booklet on the men from Whitchurch who were killed in the two world wars and whose names appear on the War Memorials in St John's Church. The intention is to make this available for sale for the benefit of the village.

I was born in Whitchurch in 1950, and lived here until 1975, while my parents continued to live in the village in Oving Road until moving into Aylesbury in 1985. One of the Great War dead (Frederick Hooper) is my cousin's maternal grandfather, while one of the Second World War dead (Frederick Brown) is my mother's cousin. Ron Adams and I produced Whitchurch in Camera in 1989, while I also wrote Call to Arms: Buckinghamshire's Citizen Soldiers back in 1985. I have been on the Council of the Bucks Record Society for many years, and have been Secretary to the Trustees of the Bucks Military Museum (at the Old Gaol in Buckingham) since 1985. I am also Vice President of the Friends of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Museum.

I have managed thus far to compile material on a good many of the names on the War Memorial from the Centre for Bucks Studies, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, National Archives, the Bucks Herald and Bucks Advertiser, as well as family material. In some cases, the personal files have survived in the euphemistically named 'Burnt Collection' in the National Archives at Kew. The booklet will also include a list of all those from the village who served in the Great War, and who are included in various Rolls of Honour, currently standing at 186 names.

As is usual on war memorials, there are some anomalies, including the four men born in, or closely associated with the village, but living elsewhere and therefore not included in the list of Great War dead. One of these, William Smith, is something of a mystery, as is one man amongst those commemorated, Reginald Swift.

The full list of names is as follows:

Commemorated on the Great War Memorial in St John's Church

Henry (Harry) Adams
Fred Cheshire
Walter Dickens
Jesse Dwight
Everard Evans
George Henry Gardner
George William Grace
Herbert William Hogston
Frederick George Hooper
Lewis Kimble
William Ridgway
Reginald Swift
Frederick Tapping
Francis (Frank) William Wood
Jesse Young

Not Commemorated on the Great War Memorial in St John's Church

William Adams
Rupert John Griffin
John Henry Parrott
William Smith

Commemorated on the Second World War memorial in St John's Church

Frederick William Thomas Brown
Douglas Thomas Foulger
Oliver William Green
Clifford Charles Oliver
John Rew
Philip Clifton Wheeler

As an example of what is intended, I attach the entry for Captain George Gardner, killed at Gallipoli in August 1915.

If anyone has any family information on, or photographs of, any of those listed, I would be delighted to hear from you. I can be contacted at the School of History, Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NZ or by email on i.beckett@kent.ac.uk

Thank you for your help.

Professor Ian F W Beckett