

LH182 (E)

World War 1 soldiers commemorated on the Lighthorne War Memorial

by Ann Such (2014, with amendments 2018, 2025)

The Lighthorne War Memorial was dedicated by the Bishop of Coventry on 22 August 1920. The memorial takes the form of a stone cross and commemorates those who died in both World Wars.



LIGHTHORNE.

WAR MEMORIAL DEDICATION.

Sunday will long be remembered as a memorable occasion in the village of Lighthorne.

The Bishop of Coventry visited the church in the afternoon and after a service had been held, proceeded into the churchyard, where he dedicated a lofty memorial stone cross which had been erected in a conspicuous position, facing the road. The memorial, which is a handsome structure, has at its foot, the names of the men of the parish, who had fallen in the war. A large number of ex-Service men attended at the ceremony. The Bishop of Washington, U.S.A., who was also present, offered a dedicatory prayer on behalf of the American people.



This face of the memorial commemorates those who died in the war of
1939-1945
Greville Adams
Richard Lean



Face of the memorial showing the names of

Arthur Boyles
William Eden
William Garner
John Holder
Thomas Holder



Face of the war memorial showing the names of

Henry Manton
Frank Meres
William Marshall
Wilson Taylor
William Treadwell

Who were the men behind the names on the war memorial commemorated as dying in World War One?

In 2014, one hundred years after the beginning of World War One, we have undertaken an investigation of the lives of those men who died in World War One and whose names appear on Lighthorne war memorial. This research has been done entirely online, from the comfort of a Lighthorne home. Tracing the lives of these men has highlighted major national historical issues, in addition to revealing the personal tragedies of losing family members. Throughout the war the Government was constantly amending its enlistment policies as voluntary enlistment numbers dropped. Many men had no choice but to enlist. Of the ten names from World War One on the memorial, only one is buried here in Lighthorne. Some of those commemorated had close family ties to Lighthorne, others were just passing through. One name is that of a soldier who was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal in Italy but who then died in one of the hundreds of auxiliary hospitals which were set up in London to treat the wounded.

There is a story attached to every single name – with some in more detail than others. Over the next one hundred years additional information may surface, shedding more light on those war years. If anyone wishes to amend or add to anything written here, please contact the Lighthorne History Society through its website www.lighthornehistory.org.uk.

Ann Such, Lighthorne History Society
June 2014

Amended re William Garner March 2018
Amended re Wilson Taylor October 2025

Arthur Boyles

Arthur Walter Boyles 1880 – 1916

*Private 17386 11th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment killed in action
France & Flanders 16 November 1916*

Arthur was born Q1 1880 and was baptised in Lighthorne on 16 May 1880. He was the son of George Boyles (christened in Moreton Morrell on 15 August 1853) and Clara Elizabeth Boyles (born Bishops Itchington).

Arthur spent most of his life living with his parents in Lighthorne (Church Cottages 1901 census) and was still there in the 1911 census, working as a groom. Arthur married Rose Elizabeth Green in Q1 1916. In 1911 she was 20 and working as a housemaid in a very large household in Moreton Paddox. The 1901 census shows that she was originally from the civil parish of Warwick St Nicholas.

When Arthur enlisted at Leamington his place of residence was given as Heathcote Hill, south of Myton in Warwick. His name on enlistment was recorded as Byles. This may be because he was illiterate. His father was unable to sign the 1911 census and entered his mark instead.

Arthur is commemorated both on the Lighthorne War Memorial and on the Saint Nicholas Church War Memorial, Warwick, presumably due to his marriage.

William Eden

William Herbert Eden 1877 – 1917

*Private 20404 11th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment killed in action
France & Flanders 26 February 1917*

William was born Q1 1877 and was baptised at Chesterton on 4 May 1877. He was the son of William (a farm labourer) and Hannah Eden who were living in Chesterton.

In Q3 1909 William married Margaret Helen Murray and the 1911 census records them living at 8 Sydney Terrace, Lower Cape, Warwick. William was a farm labourer and his wife came from Usk, Monmouthshire. They had an 8 month old son, William.

He enlisted in Leamington and is recorded as living in Lighthorne at the time of enlistment.

The County of Warwickshire Roll of Honour (see sources) also records that 'his brother Herbert Eden also fell'. Herbert was in fact William's nephew - Herbert Wilfred Eden 21901 Private – who was the son of William's sister Florence Annie Eden. Herbert was christened on 17 July 1898 at Chesterton. He lived with William and Hannah Eden (his grandparents) and is recorded on census returns as their son. He enlisted in Coventry, joined the 10th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, was killed in action in France & Flanders on 10 April 1918, and is buried in West Flanders, Belgium.

William Garner

William Harry Parkins Garner

Lance Corporal 13555 8th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment killed in action France & Flanders 03 July 1916

The County of Warwickshire Roll of Honour states 'Age 28 in 1901. The son of George, an agricultural labourer and Ann Garner of Lighthorne. Before the war he was employed as a railway porter'.

In 2014 when research was being initially conducted, the above information led to inconclusive findings about William's life. There certainly was a William Garner who was christened on 1 September 1872 at Lighthorne, but he was not the son of George Garner who later married Ann Garner nee Walker. He was in fact the son of George's sister Hannah and in the 1911 census William was living with his uncle, being referred to as his stepson. Neither was he killed in WW1. He moved to Barry in South Wales, worked as a railway porter there and after marrying Edith Lewis in Q4 1901, he died in Q3 1910.

So in 2014 it was concluded that the family of William Garner had perhaps lost touch with him and had assumed that he had enlisted and been killed in the war, hence his inclusion on the Lighthorne War Memorial.

However in 2018 Lighthorne History Society was contacted by Lynda Reece who was conducting research into her family tree and posed the question as to whether it was a descendant of hers whose name was recorded on the War Memorial. Below is the information which she provided and Lighthorne History Society is very grateful to her for enabling us to correct our previous assumption.

Lynda Reece records that her great grandmother Emily Elizabeth Franklin of Oxford married William Parkins Garner in 1892 in Brackley. Their son, William Harry Parkins Garner, was born on 4 May 1893 with the birth recorded in Headington. Sadly his father had died of influenza on 8 April 1893, as recorded in the Buckingham Advertiser, and in 1894 Emily married Thomas Seeney. They came to live in Chesterton and then Lighthorne. In the 1901 census William is recorded as the 7 year old stepson of Thomas Seeney. It appears that later William went into service as in the 1911 census

he appears to be working as a hall boy in Bristol for William Henry Jenkins, a Railway Director. Later he enlisted.

William was killed in action in 1916. There is some correspondence in September 1916 from the administration in Birmingham which stated 'To Emily Elizabeth Seeney Effect £97'. It stated that the money was from William Harry Parkins Garner of Lighthorne. Emily also received a war gratuity in June 1919.

William is on the Battle of the Somme Roll of Honour. His name can be found at the Thiepval Memorial Part XVII index no. M.R. 21.

William's mother suffered a double loss in 1916 because her youngest daughter Amelia (Amedia inscribed on her tombstone) Leonora died aged 10 in April of that year and a large gravestone with an inscription can be found close to the path leading to Lighthorne Church (see Lighthorne History Society archive LH148(E), grave S028).

John Holder

John Robert Holder 1894 – 1917

Private 268160 2nd/7th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment recorded as enlisting at Rugby (attestation form stamped Warwick), killed in action France & Flanders 3 December 1917

John was baptised in Gaydon on 16 September 1894. His parents were Arthur, an agricultural labourer, originally from Honeybourne, Glos. and Harriett who was from Gaydon. In 1901 they were living in Hill Cottages, Lighthorne, and John, aged 7, had 5 siblings including his brother Thomas, aged 11.

In 1911 per the census on Ancestry (recorded as Halder) John was 17 and a farm labourer. He was still living with his parents in Lighthorne.

18 October 1915 saw the start of the Group Scheme (otherwise known as the Derby Scheme after Lord Derby, Director-General of Recruiting). Men aged 18 to 40 were informed that under the scheme they could continue to enlist voluntarily or attest with an obligation to come if called up later on. Men who attested under the Derby Scheme, who were accepted for service and chose to defer it, were classified as being in "Class A". The Class A men were paid a day's army pay for the day they attested; were given a grey armband with a red crown as a sign that they had so volunteered; were officially transferred into Section B Army Reserve; and were sent back to their homes and jobs until they were called up. The men who attested under the Derby Scheme were classified into married and single status and into 23 groups according to their age.

John's army service records can be found in WO363, the collection known as the Burnt Records and recorded by the War Office. The records were affected by a fire in the building where they were being stored in 1940. Only 20-30% survived the fire, but many are only fragments or have suffered damage. These records are now online at ancestry.co.uk and the information which follows is taken from them.

John attested on 27 October 1915, joining the 7th Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He gave his age as 21 years and 9 months and his trade as electrician. John was posted on 30 October 1915 but was hospitalised twice

the following year, from 2 – 10 February 1916 with tonsillitis and 22 February – 16 March with acute rheumatic fever. One fragment of a medical record suggests that he was moved to Buxton, with the comment 'Improved'. On 11 November 1916 he embarked from Southampton as part of the expeditionary force, disembarking in Rouen on 12 November 1916. On the 24 November he was posted to the 2nd/7th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

After his death his mother acted as next of kin, noting on a form dated 20 April 1918 that her husband was deceased.

John's older brother Thomas was also killed in the war, John being killed in action on 3 December 1917 and his brother two months earlier on 19 October 1917.

Thomas Holder

Thomas Holder 1890 – 1917

*Acting Bombardier 10544 47th Battery 41st Brigade Royal Field Artillery
killed in action France & Flanders 19 October 1917*

Thomas was baptised in Gaydon on 17 March 1890. He was the elder brother of John Robert Holder, who was killed in action on 3 December 1917. His parents were Arthur, an agricultural labourer, originally from Honeybourne, Glos. and Harriett who was from Gaydon. In 1901 they were living in Hill Cottages, Lighthorne.

In 1911 Thomas was living with his brother Edwin Joseph Holder and sister in law Emily Elizabeth, at 9 Leicester Road, Longford, nr. Coventry and working as a labourer.

He enlisted in Coventry and when killed in action was an acting bombardier with the Royal Field Artillery, 47th Battery, 41st Brigade. The Royal Field Artillery was the most numerous arm of the artillery, the horse-drawn RFA being responsible for the medium calibre guns and howitzers deployed close to the front line. It was organised into brigades.

The 41st Brigade was originally comprised of numbers 9, 16 and 17 Batteries RFA and the Brigade Ammunition Column. It was placed under command of the 2nd Division and went to France with it in August 1914. On 26 May 1916 47 (Howitzer) Battery joined from 44 (Howitzer) Brigade of the same division.

Thomas was awarded the 1914/15 Star. Authorised in 1918, the 1914/15 Star was awarded to personnel who saw service in France and Flanders from 23 November 1914 to 31 December 1915, and to personnel who saw service in any other operational theatre from 5 August 1914 to 31 December 1915. This indicates that he enlisted in the early years of the war. His British Army WW1 Medal Rolls Index Card 1914 -20 shows that he arrived in Egypt on Wednesday 14 July 1915. He was killed in action in Belgium.

Henry Manton

John Henry Manton 1897 – 1917

Private 2946 1st/1st Warwickshire Yeomanry, part of the Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line (incl. Yeomanry and Imperial Camel) died of wounds Egypt 28 April 1917

Henry was born at Poolfields, Compton Verney and baptised at Combrook on 17 January 1897. In 1911 he was still living at Poolfields with his parents, George Charles (born Poolfields and an estate labourer) and Elizabeth Jane (born Halford Bridge). Henry was a cowboy.

He was awarded the 1914/15 Star so he enlisted early in the war. He enlisted at Warwick and he arrived in Egypt on 15 November 1915 as per the British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914 – 1920. Here his service number is given as 2946 whereas Warwickshire Yeomanry records it as 310886. Changes in service number were sometimes recorded on military records.

His name is also included on the Australian Mounted Division, Roll of Honour, Australian and British Forces.

*John Henry **MANTON**, 1st/1st Warwickshire Yeomanry, Died of Wounds, 28 April 1917*

The Roll of Honour contains the names of all the men from Australia and Britain who are known to have served at one time with the Australian Mounted Division and gave their lives in the service of this Division, either Dying of Wounds or Killed in Action as a result of their involvement in combat.

At the time of his death, his parents were living in Post Office Lane, Lighthorne.

William Marshall

William George Marshall 1884 – 1917

*Private 19604 1st Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment killed in action
France & Flanders 3 May 1917*

William was born in Q1 1884 in Daldridge, Berkshire (part of Hungerford). As late as 1901 he was still living with his parents, Jesse and Rose Marshall, in Hungerford. He married Ellen Louisa Richardson in Q2 1906 and by 1911 they were living at the Lodge, Ettington with their 2 children, a 2 year old son and a 3 year old daughter. He was working as a gamekeeper on the estate of Lord Willoughby de Broke.

He enlisted at Kineton, joining the local Royal Warwickshire Regiment. His enlistment papers cannot be traced but assuming he attested, and based on his year of birth and the fact that he was married, he would have been placed into group 37 of the Group Scheme and mobilised on 29 May 1916. The record from the Commonwealth War Graves Registers 1914 - 1918 (online at ancestry.co.uk) records his age on death as 45, whereas he would only have been 33.

By the time of the notification of his death, his wife had returned to Hungerford (Inholmons Common, Woodland St. Mary's) possibly to be near her parents, Thomas and Martha Richardson, who in 1911 were living at Slate Cottages, New Town, Hungerford. William's parents were also nearby at Kennet Place, Chilton, Hungerford.

Frank Meres

Frank Meres 1891 – 1915

Corporal 8240 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards killed in action France & Flanders 6 February 1915

Frank was born in Q2 1891. His mother Amy Elizabeth Meres (given wrongly on the 1901 census as Ann Eliz) was born Q1 1858 in Leamington. By 1871 Amy Meres, aged 13, was living with her grandparents William and Elizabeth Shirley in Lighthorne. Ten years later in 1881 she was living aged 22 at Little Houses, Lighthorne with her sons Alfred E Meres aged 3 and Walter E Meres, born 1880 and died 1881. She was single with the head of the household being her grandmother Elizabeth Shirley aged 78.

By 1891 Amy Meres was head of the household, still single and living with her children Edmund now 13, Florence 7 and lodger John Haynes. Shortly after the census was taken Frank was born. In 1901 he was aged 9, living at Little Houses, Lighthorne with his mother, Ann (*Amy*), Daisy 5 (by 1911 she was a servant in Cambridge) and Raymond Harry (born 1899 christened 7 March 1903 and buried 10 March 1903).

By the 1911 census Frank had joined the 3rd battalion Coldstream Guards and was stationed in Whitechapel, London. These are army service numbers and corresponding enlistment/joining dates for the Coldstream Guards:

7617 joined on 13th January 1908 8251 joined on 9th January 1909

Frank's service number was 8240 so he must have joined around December 1908. By that time in his life, his oldest brother Edmund had married (1904), as had his sister Florence (1907), two of his brothers had died (Walter Ernest in 1881 and Raymond Harry in 1903) and his remaining sister Daisy had, or was about to, move away to Cambridge to work as a servant. No trace of his mother can be found after the christening and subsequent death of his youngest brother Raymond in 1903.

Frank was promoted to corporal and was awarded the 1914 Star. This was instituted in 1917 for service ashore in France and Flanders between 5 August and 22 November 1914. According to his medals card he embarked

on 12 August 1914 and the 3rd Battalion is recorded as disembarking at Le Havre on 13 August. He was killed in action on 6 February 1915.

Wilson Taylor

Wilson James Taylor 1891 – 1917

*Private 81502 207th Company Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) killed in action
France & Flanders 31 July 1917*

Wilson was born 13 November 1891 at Blockley, Glos. and christened on 31 January 1892, when his parents' abode was Spring Hill.

By 1901 he was living at Trafalgar (farm), Temple Guiting, Trafalgar, Glos. with his father James Taylor, a gamekeeper (born Chipping Campden) and his mother Eleanor (nee Beechey, born Blockley, married Q2 1887), and 5 siblings.

The 1911 census records him, aged 19, living at Keepers Lodge, Chesterton, with his parents and siblings and working as a gamekeeper, as is his father still.

Wilson's army service records can be found in WO363, the collection known as the Burnt Records and recorded by the War Office. The records were affected by a fire in the building where they were being stored in 1940. Only 20-30% survived the fire, but many are only fragments or have suffered damage. These records are now online at ancestry.co.uk and the information which follows is taken from them.

His "Short Service" Attestation Form shows that he attested in Birmingham on 26 October 1915 when he was 25 years and 356 days old and 5 foot 6 ½ inches in height. He was living at 34 Lottie Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham and included in his army records is a reference which he obtained from his employer, Cadbury Brothers Limited, prior to enlistment. Dated 26 October 1915 it states 'We understand that J.W. Taylor is endeavouring to enlist in the Army Ordnance Corps. He has worked for us for the past nine months in the capacity of a boxer in our chocolate moulding department. We have pleasure in recommending him as an efficient workman.' The officer in charge of the attestation wrongly noted his name in several places on the form as William James Taylor. He was mobilised on 4 November 1915 in Woolwich.

Wilson was successful in joining the Army Ordnance Corps and his Pay Sheet shows him being paid the 5th Rate (no amount given) as at 17 December 1915. On 11 September 1916 Wilson was transferred to the 11th Training Reserve Battalion and on 12 September 1916 he arrived at Brocton Camp, one of two large camps constructed in 1914 on Cannock Chase and by 1916 being used for training purposes. Built with the permission of and on the land of Lord Lichfield the camp had all its own amenities including a church, post office and a bakery as well as amenity huts where the troops could buy coffee and cakes, or play billiards. There was even a theatre. On 28 November 1916 Wilson was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps and sent to Clipstone Camp, near Mansfield, another training camp. Up to 30,000 soldiers could be accommodated there and training was undertaken following the digging of rifle, pistol and machine gun ranges.

Wilson embarked from Folkestone on 1 April 1917, disembarked at Boulogne the same day and joined his base at Camiers on 2 April. He joined his company on 20 June 2017 and was killed in action on 31 July 1917.

His family had been living at Chesterton Wood, Lighthorne but by 14 January 1918, presumably because of his father's employment as a gamekeeper, they had moved to Bryn Cottage, Griffiths Crossing, Carnarvon. By April 1919 they had moved again and their address was Harboro (Harborough) Hall, Blakedown, Worcs.

William Treadwell

William Joseph Treadwell 1893 - 1918

Sergeant 65281 Royal Garrison Artillery died in the UK 9 October 1918

William was born in Q4 1893 and was christened in Lighthorne on 29 October 1893. His parents William and Sarah Ann (nee Hunt) had married in Bishops Itchington on 30 July 1882. Both his father William and grandfather Joseph were carpenters living in Lighthorne. In 1911 William was aged 17 and still living in Lighthorne with his father, then aged 57, a carpenter on the Compton Verney estate and his mother, then 49, who had given birth to 13 children, all of whom were still living. He was working as a carpenter's labourer, also on the estate.

William's army service records can be found in WO363, the collection known as the Burnt Records and recorded by the War Office. The records were affected by a fire in the building where they were being stored in 1940. Only 20-30% survived the fire, but many are only fragments or have suffered damage. These records are now online at ancestry.co.uk and the information which follows is taken from them.

William attested (Short Service for the duration of the war) to join the Royal Garrison Artillery Plymouth in Birmingham on 17 January 1916. At attestation he was 22 years and 4 months old, 5 feet 8 inches tall and was living at 9 Lower Queen Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was a police constable and written on the top of the form is Warwickshire Constabulary Sutton Coldfield. The County of Warwickshire Roll of Honour 1914 – 2005 notes that he is also commemorated on the Warwickshire Constabulary Roll of Honour, Leek Wootton.

He is recorded as being part of the army reserve on 18 January 1916, was mobilised on 13 March 1916 and posted as a gunner. His attestation was certified correct at the Citadel, Plymouth on 18 March 1916. William was promoted from private to gunner on 13 March 1916 and promoted further to corporal at Woolwich on 27 March 1917. On that date he embarked from Southampton and disembarked at Havre on 28 March 1917 en route to Italy where he won his DCM.

William was promoted to sergeant with the 289th Siege Battery on 1 July 1917 and on 27 March 1918 was attached to XIV Corps Artillery School. He is recorded as a casualty in the field on 22 April but rejoined his unit on 26 April. He is included as a casualty again on 24 August and was sent to the XIV Corps Rest Camp at Sermione, rejoining his unit on 30 August. He again is shown as a casualty on 1 September, sent to the Rest Camp and rejoined his unit on 6 September. He is shown as leaving the unit on 28 September and being sent back to the UK via Havre.

William was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM), awarded to non-commissioned officers for bravery. The full citation which was published in the London Gazette of 3 September 1919 reads as follows:

65281 Sgt. W.J. Treadwell, 289th Sge. By., R.G.A. (Lightborne, nr. Warwick) (ITALY)

For gallantry and devotion to duty during the period 26th February to 14th September, 1918, during which time he has shown the most unfailing devotion to duty, and has commanded his subsection conspicuously well. He has never failed to encourage his men when under shell fire, and this was particularly noticeable on the 15th June, when on the Altipiano his battery was exposed to an intense and protracted enemy bombardment, both of gas and high explosive. His coolness and personal gallantry were such as not only to inspire his own detachment to continue their service of their gun accurately and well, but also to set an example to the entire battery.

By 1914 a policy was already in place in the UK, ear-marking public buildings for use as auxiliary hospitals in times of war. The auxiliary hospitals were attached to central military hospitals and the patients remained under military control. In August 1914 the Royal Victoria Patriotic School in Wandsworth had become the Third London General Hospital and it was to this hospital that William was admitted on 6 October 1918. From here he was moved to The Garland Home, Norfolk Street, Park Lane. This website <http://ezitis.myzen.co.uk/garlandhome.html> gives details of the house. Built in 1913-16 and sold to Mr Penryn Vaughan-Morgan, No. 4 Norfolk Street became a military hospital known as the Garland Home in 1917 with 36 beds for sick and wounded officers. The Home closed in 1919 and the street where it stands has since been renamed Dunraven Street.

A 'Morning State of Sick' form dated 10 October 1918 from the Third London General Hospital records that William died at the Garland Home at midnight on 9 October 1918 of pneumonia and syncope (a transient loss of consciousness). The form notes 'To be buried by Mother at Leamington Spa. Address: Lighthorne, nr. Warwick'. The Garland Home sent a telegram to RGA Record Office Dover, reporting the death and noting 'mother present'. Subsequently on 5 November 1918 the RGA Record Office wrote to William's mother, acknowledging the notification and describing William as dying 'whilst on leave from Italy'.

William was buried in Lighthorne churchyard alongside his father, William, who died before his son attested, on 23 September 1915 aged 62, and his mother Sarah Ann who died on 24 October 1949 aged 88. Also buried next to William are his sisters Norah Francis, who only survived him by one month, dying on 24 November 1918 aged 20, and Gladys who died on 14 April 1929 aged 43.

On 13 June 1919 the Office in charge of Records at RGA Dover sent William's mother, as next of kin, a form to complete in order that his plaque and scroll could be sent to the appropriate person. She needed to enter her own details, (and the details of her husband if he had still been alive) and list all of William's living siblings. One brother and ten sisters were duly listed. The form then had to be certified by a Minister or Magistrate. William's mother took the form to the Magistrate at the Estate Office, Kington where it was certified on 16 June, and then returned it to RGA, Dover where it was received on 18 June 1919. This is surely testimony to the responsible attitude to form filling and excellent postal service at that time.

Primary Sources

Soldiers died in the Great War 1914-19

Details of the soldiers who died in WW1 can be found in volumes of a publication 'Soldiers died in the Great War 1914-19'. These volumes were published by the War Office in 1921. Each volume (Part) relates to a different regiment. Part 1 (Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line (including Yeomanry and Imperial Camel Corps) and Part 11 (Royal Warwickshire Regiment) are in the reference section of Leamington library. The information they provide is as follows, using that relating to William Herbert Eden and taken from Part 11 as an example.

11th Battalion

Eden, William Herbert born Lighthorne, Warwicks, enlisted Leamington, Warwicks, (place of residence Lighthorne), 20404, Private, killed in action France & Flanders, 26/2/17.

Collection **WO363**, also known as the ***Burnt Records*** (WO=War Office)

This is the main collection of army service records of men who left the army between 1914 and 1921 inclusive, including those who died in service. The records were affected by a fire in the building where they were being stored in 1940: the 20-30% that survived the fire are in this collection, but many are only fragments or have suffered damage.

- These records are now online at www.ancestry.co.uk
- They are also available on microfilm at the National Archives

Collection **WO364**, also known as the ***Unburnt Records***

This collection is also often referred to (incorrectly) as the *Pension Records*. Some records or parts of records appear to have been removed from the building that burned as they were later found at the Ministry of Pensions. These records are usually a relatively small subset of what would have been the man's record. It is possible to find a record in both WO363 and WO364.

- These records are now online at www.ancestry.co.uk
- They are also available on microfilm at the National Archives

British Commonwealth War Graves Registers 1914-18 **Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

The cemetery registers generally provide details on who is buried in the cemetery and where they are buried. The memorial registers list the names of the individuals with no known grave.

Army Medal Office, WW1 Medal Index Cards

These cards were created by the Army Medal Office (AMO) of the United Kingdom in Droitwich near the close of World War I. The Medal Index Cards collection is the most complete listing of individuals who fought in the British Army in WWI, containing approximately 90% of soldiers' names. The Index Cards were created in order to keep in one place details about a soldier's medal entitlement.

These records are now online at www.ancestry.co.uk.

Many of the primary sources listed, and others, were accessed via websites.

The main websites visited were:

Ancestry.co.uk

Freebmd.org.uk

Familysearch.org.uk

Secondary Sources

The County of Warwickshire Roll of Honour 1914-2005

Vol. 1 South Warwickshire by Kenneth Fowler 2005

Available at local libraries

Information about enlistment is taken from **the website 'The Long, Long Trail'**

<http://www.1914-1918.net/recruitment.htm>.

In 1914 Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, issued a call for volunteers to increase the size of the army. The public response was rapid and at times overwhelming but soon died down to average only 100,000 men per month. Steps soon had to be taken to encourage further enlistment. It was still possible to enlist into the regular army on standard terms, usually twelve years, throughout the war. In addition to this, on Lord Kitchener's instructions in August 1914 a new form of "short service" was introduced, under which a man could serve for "three years or the duration of the war, whichever the longer".

The wartime volunteers continued to have, in theory at least, a choice over the regiment they joined. They had to meet the same physical criteria as the peace time regulars, but men who had previously served in the army would now be accepted up to the age of 45. There are many recorded instances of underage and indeed overage men being accepted into the service. It was not necessary to produce evidence of age or even of one's name in order to enlist.

But by spring 1915 the flow of volunteer recruits was dwindling. The government, torn when it came to the question of compulsory military service, tried a half-way house

scheme. The upper age limit was raised from 38 to 40 in May 1915 in an effort to keep the numbers up, but it had become clear that voluntary recruitment was not going to provide the numbers of men required. The government passed the National Registration Act on 15 July 1915 as a step towards stimulating recruitment and to discover how many men between the ages of 15 and 65 were engaged in each trade. All those in this age range who were not already in the military were obliged to register, giving details of their employment details. The results of this census became available by mid-September 1915. It showed there were almost 5 million males of military age who were not in the forces, of which 1.6m were in the "starred" (protected, high or scarce skill) jobs.

On 11 October 1915 Lord Derby was appointed Director-General of Recruiting. He brought forward a programme five days later, often called the Derby Scheme although its official title was the Group Scheme, for raising the numbers. Men aged 18 to 40 were informed that under the scheme they could continue to enlist voluntarily or attest with an obligation to come if called up later on. The War Office notified the public that voluntary enlistment would soon cease and that the last day of registration would be 15 December 1915.

Men who attested under the Derby Scheme, who were accepted for service and chose to defer it, were classified as being in "Class A". Those who agreed to immediate service were "Class B". The Class A men were paid a day's army pay for the day they attested; were given a grey armband with a red crown as a sign that they had so volunteered; were officially transferred into Section B Army Reserve; and were sent back to their homes and jobs until they were called up. The men who attested under the Derby Scheme were classified into married and single status and into 23 groups according to their age.

215,000 men enlisted while the scheme was on and another 2,185,000 attested for deferred enlistment - but 38% of single men and 54% of married men who were not in "starred" jobs had still avoided this form of recruitment. Their reticence did much to hasten a move to full conscription. Voluntary attestation reopened on 10 January 1916, while the government considered the position.

Call up under the Derby Scheme began: Groups 2 to 5 were called up in the last two weeks of January 1916, and Groups 6 to 13 in February. The last single groups other than the 18 year-olds were called up in March. This last batch was called up in parallel to the first men to be summoned under conscription under the Military Service Act. Attestation under the scheme ceased on 1 March 1916. The recruits were not necessarily posted to their local regiments and from this time on it is not wise to assume that a man would go into his local regiment. Group Scheme recruits rarely had a say in the regiment to which they were assigned.

On 6 September 1916 a start was made in posting notices announcing the formation of a new "Group B". This was to be open for voluntary attestation of those born in 1899, with the assurance that they would not be called for service until they reached 18. At the same time all men in "Group A" and those in "Class A" and who were born in 1898 were informed that they would be required to serve from the age of 18 years and 7 months

(previously 18 and 8 months). This category of man began to be mobilised from 7 October 1916.

Disappointed at the results of the Derby Scheme, the Government introduced the Military Service Act on 27 January 1916. All voluntary enlistment was stopped. All British males were now deemed to have enlisted on 2 March 1916 - that is, they were *conscripted* - if they were aged between 19 and 41 and resided in Great Britain (excluding Ireland) and were unmarried or a widower on 2 November 1915. Conscripted men were no longer given a choice of which service, regiment or unit they joined, although if a man preferred the navy it got priority to take him. This act was extended to married men, and the lower age dropped to 18, on 25 May 1916.

A system of appeals tribunals was established, to hear cases of men who believed they were disqualified on the grounds of ill-health, occupation or conscientious objection. Some trades were deemed to be vital to the war economy: they were called *starred occupations*

The Act initially failed to deliver: only 43,000 of the men called up qualified for general service in the army. Another 93,000 failed to appear when called up, filling the courts. 748,587 men claimed some form of exemption, filling the tribunals. In addition were the 1,433,827 already *starred* as being in a war occupation, or those who were ill or who had already been discharged on these grounds. The manpower of the army never caught up with its planned establishment.

From September 1916, men called up were first assigned to a unit of the *Training Reserve*. It had been found that the traditional regimental means of training was not keeping up with the flood of men coming through, and the TR was established as a means of doing so.

A further extension of the Military Service Act on 10 April 1918, followed a serious political crisis concerning the provision of manpower - which along with a large extension of the British section of the Western Front, was cited as a prime cause of the defeat of the Fifth Army in March 1918. This act reduced the maximum age of recruitment to 50 and allowed soldiers aged 18 years and 6 months to be sent overseas as long as they had had six months training.

The introduction of conscription made it very much more difficult for a recruit to falsify his age and name.

Conscription ceased on 11 November 1918 and all conscripts were discharged, if they had not already been so, on 31 March 1920.