

THATCHAM
THE GREAT WAR
1914-1918



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Introduction

One hundred years on from armistice and the names of the soldiers that gave their lives remains fresh. Whilst the names remain fresh, with many being on the War Memorial or the Roll of Honour in St. Mary's Church, the individuals behind those names are often forgotten. An attempt has been made to identify each name on the memorial and Church Roll. That is, where possible the military details of each soldier have been identified and their civilian details.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify every soldier. However, research will continue and details for the soldiers will be revised.

Links to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), Imperial War Museum (IWM) and West Berkshire War Memorials are given should you wish to find out more information on an individual.

Other researchers have been undertaking similar tasks and special thanks must be made to Phil Wood who has produced the website, West Berkshire War Memorials, and has kindly allowed reproduction of many of the materials used within this document.

Memorials

There is a War Memorial and a Roll of Honour in St Mary's Church, both unveiled shortly after the end of the war. Initially both had 103 names on, however they were not necessarily the same names, some have been altered, some added, and some removed. At the start of the 100 year anniversary there were 108 names on the War Memorial, there are now 117.



The War Memorial is presently situated on the West side of Thatcham along the A4. However, it has not always been there. In 1918 an application was made to the War Office for a captured gun. This was approved in 1919 along with the design for the memorial. The memorial was erected, at the top of the Broadway, in 1919 but not officially unveiled until Armistice Day in 1920.

A write up from the 18th November 1920 Newbury Weekly News describes the unveiling ceremony:

Thatcham's Tribute Memorial Cross in The Broadway

Thatcham honoured the memory of its gallant dead by assembling in large numbers at three o'clock on Thursday afternoon to witness the unveiling and dedication of the Memorial Cross erected in the Broadway to commemorate the names of those from the village



who fell in the Great War. It was a simple but impressive ceremony, lasting about half-an-hour, after which the people made a close inspection of the memorial, laying many beautiful wreaths and bunches of flowers at its base.

The Memorial Cross

The memorial is in the form of a Wayside Cross, made of Douling stone, seventeen feet in height, with a hexagonal base of three platforms, the designer being Sir Charles Nicholson of London. Upon the front slab of the cross appears the following:-

"To the glorious memory of the Men of Thatcham, who, serving in the Royal Navy and in the Army, gave their lives for their country in the Great War, 1914-1918."

On the remaining five slabs are inscribed the names of the men who fell as follows:-

Royal Navy

Chaplain -	AB -
Rev H A W Back	S H Southey

Army

Second Lieutenants -	G Hawkins
A B Turner, VC	B A Headlong
H Glastonbury	F H Headlong
Sergeants -	W Headlong
A Amor	M Holloway
P H Rutter	W J Howells
Corporals -	A Howse
F Marchant	F J Hunt
G Rutter	L J Hunt

Lance-Corporals -	V J Hutchins
F J Prouting	H V Jenkins
C Rutter	J Jenkins
Privates -	F J Jenkins
F Allen	G Jenkins
H B Allwood	F Lawrence
A Bew	G Lawrence
F Bosley	W Long
H Bosley	H Mace
H Bradbury	J Mace
T G Breach	A Millsom
A Browning	H Nailor
W C Butler	H G Nailor
A Capon	J Nightingale
A E Chandler	T J Nightingale
A Cook	J Pearce
T Cook	W Pearce
W Cook	W J Pike
T W Couzens	A Pinnock
W E Couzens	E Pope
F Denness	C Powell
H Deness	J Preston
R Diggins	W Preston
A Dodd	F Quelch
J Durbridge	J Quelch
D Dyer	C Radbourne
E Eldred	G Rogers
H Farley	F Rolfe
A G Fisher	J Rolfe
E Franklin	F Rose
F Franklin	H Rosier
H French	W Savager
A Fry	Gnr S M Simpson

E Fry	E J Stephens
F Fyfield	W H Stephens
A Gale	W Street
C Gibbs	J Thorne
W Gibbs	D Tidbury
C Goodchild	G Tull
J Green	C Wallington
L Green	F Westall
G Haines	A Wheeler
J Haines	H Wigmore
Gnr E Hall	H Witts

The German Gun

A newly painted German howitzer captured by the First Battalion of the County Regiment had been placed behind the cross on the morning of the day for its unveiling. A tablet on the ground between the cross and the gun read:-

"German howitzer captured by 1st Battalion Royal Berks Regiment, presented to the village of Thatcham as a tribute to the memory of 2nd Lieut A B Turner, of Thatcham House, who was awarded the VC for his gallantry at Fosse, near Vermelles, on 28th September, and died of wounds received there on 1st October, 1915."

Church Service and Procession

Before the unveiling ceremony took place, a service was held at the Parish Church, where prayers were offered by the curate, Rev A S Hazel; John S Arkwright's "The supreme sacrifice" was sung; and a short address was given by the Vicar, The Rev W S

Grindle (Vicar of Cold Ash) was also present. Mr G J Fyfield, ARCO, was at the organ. With the verger at its head, a procession then wended its way from the church to the Broadway, where a large rectangle was formed. Behind the memorials stood the clergy and the united choirs of all denominations, also several of the gentry and villagers. Immediately facing the front of the cross in two ranks were ex-service men, who formed a guard of honour. In a prominent position in the foreground were two uniformed buglers of the Berkshire Regiment, Spencer and Durbridge. On the east and west sides were lined up children of the Council School, National School and Crookham School, under the supervision of masters and teachers; Girl Guides and Brownies, commanded by Miss Turner and Miss Pear MBE, and Boy Scouts with Patrol Leaders Fairchild and Turner in charge. Many relatives of the fallen and hundreds of villagers stood in reverent silence to watch the ceremony. The memorial cross was draped with two huge Union Jacks.

The Unveiling and Dedication

The first hymn to be sung was "O God our help in ages past," which was followed by passages of Scripture, Heb xi, 32-40; xii, 1-2; and Rev viii, 13-17; read by the Congregational Church pastor, the Rev John Stay. Then Major Charles Turner, JP, stepped forward and asked Major-General E T Dickson, of the Royal Berks Regiment, to unveil the memorial. General Dickson, who was wearing a black armband on his left arm, and stood with cap in hand, said he had just travelled from London, where the King and people had been engaged in paying a last tribute of respect to the memory of an Unknown Warrior. He was about to unveil a memorial to warriors who were well known to

them. He would not say more, but would like to recite the words of a beautiful anthem:-

"Father, we bring our dead to Thee.
And Thou wilt fold them closely on Thy breast,
And for a little season they shall be At Rest
Loved ones, they bore our honour well,
In storm-swept rampart and on dreadful deep,
'Till this new Glory touched them and they fell
Asleep.
A little sleep before the dawn,
A veil of shadow over weary eyes,
And then shall come a trumpet call at morn,
Arise!"

General Dickson then pulled the cord, and the flags enveloping the cross fell to the ground. Major Turner removed the flag covering the plate in front of the gun. The General Salute was sounded by the buglers. Prayers were read by the Vicar (Rev E Chamberlain). who then dedicated the cross, "*To the honour and glory of God, and in memory of those whose lives had been given in the service of their King and Country.*" Other prayers followed, and the hymn, "For all the saints," was feelingly sung. The Blessing, the Last Post sounded by buglers, and the National Anthem brought the ceremony to a close. Half-muffled peals were rung on the bells before and after the service.

Amongst those present were Major and Mrs C Turner, Miss Tull, Mr A S B Tull, Mrs Branwell Davis, Mr and Mrs A Brown, Mr and Mrs T H Brown, Mr J M Henry, Miss A L Henry, Mr W Draper, Mrs Wyatt, Mr and Mrs Skillman, Mrs Martin, Mr and Mrs Sheppard, Mr Harman, Mr J Lane, etc. A letter of apology for absence was received from Admiral Sir Arthur Fanshaw. The

floral tokens placed on the memorial immediately after its unveiling on Thursday were from Thatcham House, Mrs Glastonbury, from School Teachers and Children of Church of England School, Organist and Choir, Clergy and others; from all at Coombe Lodge; Mr and Miss Tull and Mrs P Bramwell Davis, Miss Henry, Dr and Mrs T Martin, Bell-ringers, to F G Breach, Charles Powell, Cyril Rutter, Martin (from home), Arthur G Fisher, from wife; Mother, Sister and Emily. A Gibbs, Harold Rosier, Sig H Farley, F Marchant, Arthur Pinnock, to Jim; and others. Many other flowers have since been added.

Soldiers

Within this section are details for every soldier that appears on the War Memorial and Church Roll. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure details are correct, there may exist some errors. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify every soldier on the memorials.

For each soldier an attempt has been made to identify their military details and their family details. In particular, where possible, their connection to Thatcham and any memorials other than those in Thatcham are identified.

Details of each soldier have been split into civilian and military. Details of their family are included where known and a summary of their military service is given. Links to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (**CWGC**), Imperial War Museum (**IWM**) and West Berkshire War Memorials are given should you wish to find out more information on an individual.

Please note where “**Unknown**” is placed for a sibling it means there is a sibling their but their name is not known.

Private Frederick Allen

Frederick was born, about 1882, in Ecchinswell to George and Emma. By 1901 he had enlisted and was stationed in Reading. After his service and no later than 1911 he had moved to Thatcham, lodging with the Bye family in Northfield Road.

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1882, Ecchinswell, Hampshire
 - **Death:** 26th June 1916, France
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1911 he was living, lodging, in Northfield Road, Thatcham.
 - **Father:** George Allen
 - **Mother:** Emma
 - **Siblings:** Eliza, George, Emma, Fanny and Mark
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 6071
 - **Memorial:** Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/584730/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/23685
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Allen
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Allen
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Allen

Stoker 1st Class James Henry Allen

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1897, Silverton, Devon
 - **Death:** 6th December 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** By the time of his death the family were living in London Road, Thatcham. James was a stableman at this time and presumably working in Midgham and not Thatcham as his name is on the Midgham War Memorial.
 - **Father:** Richard Allen
 - **Mother:** Ada Allen (née Castle)
 - **Siblings:** Arthur, Ada, William, Frederick, Annie and Albert
- Military
 - **Service:** Royal Navy
 - **Ship:** H.M.S Kildorrey
 - **Rank:** Stoker 1st Class
 - **Service number:** K/29689
 - **Memorial:** CWGC Headstone at Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648817/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6405796
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** [westberkshirerwarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00261 S.php](http://westberkshirerwarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00261S.php)
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J H Allen
 - **War Memorial (2018 panel):** J H Allen
- Additional details:
 - He is shown as 'James H Allen' on the Midgham War Memorial.
 - J H Allen was one of nine soldiers added to the Thatcham war memorial in November 2018.

Stoker Allen by West Berkshire War Memorials

James Henry Allen was born, according to his service record, at Wooburn Green, Bucks on 21 February 1897, the son of Richard Allen and his wife Ada née Castle. However, it seems that James was a little confused about his birth. His parents were from Wooburn Green and had married there in 1889, but they had moved to Silverton in Devon shortly before James arrived - in 1898 according to his birth registration. His father was an engine fitter and seems to have moved around the country following his trade. By 1911 the family had reached Berkshire, living at 81 Belmont Road, Reading. By the time of their son's death they had moved again, to 'Oakdene', 33 London Road, Thatcham. James was employed as a stableman, very possibly in Midgham, for his name is on Midgham's war memorial, not Thatcham's.

On 24 November 1915 he joined the Royal Navy at Chatham for 12 years (according to his version of his birth he was 18). His record shows that he was 5 feet 8 inches tall had a chest size of 37 inches, brown hair, grey eyes and a fresh complexion - and a scar on his right ankle.

His initial training took place at HMS Pembroke, the shore establishment at the Royal Naval Barracks, Chatham. Following his basic training James was posted, on 28 March 1916, to HMS Wallington, another shore establishment on the Humber, but his time was not all spent on shore. Wallington was an Auxiliary Patrol Base out which a number of small vessels carried out patrols at sea, James became part of the crew of an aging small river class destroyer, HMS Ouse. HMS Ouse was taken out of service in early 1917 and James went back on to the books of HMS Pembroke. On 10 October 1917 he was posted to HMS Hecla, a depot ship that acted as the base for the 2nd Destroyer Flotilla, including HMS Mosquito on which James served.



HMS Kildangan, sister ship of HMS Kildorrey in 'dazzle' camouflage (designed to break up the outline of the ship as seen through a submarine's periscope). IWM via Wikipedia

His next posting (8 April 1918) to HMS Idaho (a shore station at Milford Haven) saw him serving on a smaller ship, the Kildorrey, a Kil class gunboat. From Milford Haven the Kildorrey was moved to a Liverpool shore station (HMS Eaglet). On 1 November 1918 James left the Kildorrey and moved ashore. This may have been due to illness, certainly he was admitted to Hemmingford Street Military Hospital, Liverpool, where he died of pneumonia (probably a victim of the influenza epidemic) on 6 December 1918.

His body was returned to Thatcham where he was buried in the town cemetery in plot 881.

James Allen's grave in Thatcham Cemetery.

Newbury Weekly News, 19 December 1918

The Funeral took place on Thursday at the cemetery, of James Henry, fourth son of Mr and Mrs Allen, of Oakdene, London-road. "Jim," as, perhaps, he was best known, was with Mr David Collings, in the boat repairing, for some 12 months. He joined the Navy about three years ago, where he still was when he contracted influenza, seven weeks ago. He had seen service, principally on the



"Ouse," the "Mosquito," and lastly the Kildorry." The coffin was inscribed: "James Henry Allen, died Dec 6th 1918, aged 21 years," and was borne from his home draped with the Union Jack, and covered with floral tokens. The first part of the service was held in the Parish Church, the Rev H Pickels officiating. The mourners were: Mr and Mrs Allen (father and mother), Ada, Fred, Annie, Bertie (brothers and sisters), Willie and Nellie, Arthur and Leila, Mrs Collings and Mrs Frances, etc. The flowers included, an anchor from father, mother, brothers and sisters, uncle and aunt, Mr and Mrs J M Henry, Mrs Collongs and Mr Fred Brooks, Mrs E and Mrs F Williams. Another brother is serving in the Army and one in the Navy. The funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr H D Mayers.

James Allen is commemorated on the Midgham war memorial and on the roll of honour in St Mary's church, Thatcham.

Thanks to Carol and Valerie Pike for their contribution to this story.

Private Harry Baker Allwood

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1895, Crookham
 - **Death:** 28th October 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harry was born and lived within the parish boundaries.
 - **Father:** Henry William Baker
 - **Mother:** Sarah Ann Allwood (née Goodchild)
 - **Additional:** Sarah married Charles Allwood in 1883 and after his death married Henry Baker. Shortly before the second marriage her son Harry was born.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 20082
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/773404/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/36618
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** [westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00653 S.php](http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00653_S.php)
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H B Allwood
 - **War Memorial (original):** H B Allwood
 - **War Memorial (current):** H B Allwood

Private Allwood by West Berkshire War Memorials

Harry was born in 1895, the son of Sarah Ann Allwood, a widow from Crookham. His middle name, Baker, was a pointer to his father, Henry William Baker. Although Harry was born illegitimate his parents married soon after his birth. His father (also known as Harry) was a game keeper, as was his father. At the time of the 1901 census he gave

his occupation as 'living on own means', suggesting that he had retired – at the age of 39. This seems unlikely, but it may be an indication that Henry's health was failing. He died on 24 May 1903 aged only 42. For Sarah Ann this was her second experience of widowhood, her first husband, Charles Allwood had also died young. Sarah herself did not live to an old age, she passed away on 21 December 1908, aged 49.

Eleven year old Harry was left an orphan and was taken in by Sarah's parents, Charles and Emma Goodchild who lived in Brimpton. Following his schooling he was employed as an under gardener at a local house before moving on to adult employment as a carter. This was the occupation he gave when he attested for military service on 9 December 1915, aged 20 years 10 months. At this date attestation was taken under the 'Derby scheme', named after Lord Derby, Director General of Recruiting. This scheme encouraged men aged between 18 and 40 to register for service at an unspecified later date. The younger and fitter you were, the faster your services were likely to be required. Harry did not have to wait long, on 8 February 1916 he was called up into the 3rd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment. The 3rd Battalion, was a training/depot Battalion, that operated as resource for the fighting battalions, sending men out as required to keep the active units operational.

Following a period of training (usually around 3 or 4 months) Harry was posted to the 2nd Battalion, a regular Battalion, that had been brought back from India when war broke out and had been fighting ever since. It is not known whether Harry had joined the Battalion, by 1 July, if he did he would have been with the Battalion, during their darkest hour. On the first day of the Battle of the Somme the 2nd Berks lost over half of their men and almost all their officers as part of the first wave over the top at Ovillers La Boisselle. However, it is more likely that Harry went out to France as one of the many replacements sent out to re-establish the shattered Battalion, as a fighting unit.

By October the Battalion, was evidently considered ready to take part in another offensive, the final one of the Battle of the Somme, also known as the Battle of Le Transloy. The offensive started on 1 October 1916 and was an attempt to break through new German lines along a ridge of land south of Bapaume, just a few miles east of Ovillers La Boisselle. The offensive started well but got bogged down in the mud as the autumn rain turned the terrain into a quagmire. On the afternoon of the 23 October the Battalion, was in support of battalions of the Rifle Brigade and the Lincolnshire Regiment in an attack on the German positions known as Zenith Trench. All three battalions suffered heavy casualties.

Major Hanbury-Sparrow of the 2nd Royal Berks gives his recollections:

The shattered remains of Zenith and Eclipse trenches guarded Le Transloy. The day was foggy and the attack on these two trenches was, in consequence, postponed till 3 p.m. Punctually to the minute fell the most fearful barrage you had ever heard. The Guards' artillery was backing us. They were firing a barrage such as their infantry found adequate. There could be no excuse for failure. The noise was so unbroken as to produce the effect of a grand silence through which came the rapid fire of the eighteen-pounder quick-firers like the rat-tat-tat of a giant machine-gun. The battalion, and with it the company you commanded, was in support, jammed in a communication trench. Cascades of earth rose silent in the din and fog. The air quivered and pulsed, making you feel as you had at Bois Grenier, one with the battlefield.

No, you weren't afraid as long as the sound was unbroken. Let there be the least gap in the wall of sound and you'd have flowed to it, only to have got caught and jarred by the next

explosion. But this unbroken continuity is your saving. You get out of the trench and run up and down alongside, seeing to things in the company, so that your sergeant-major implores you to come in.

The attack has started. You send an officer forward to report how it is progressing, for you can see nothing in the fog. He never comes back, for he is killed. Poor boy, it was his first battle!

Then comes the news. The attack has failed. Poor old Division.

In the early hours of the following day (when they were reinforced by men from the Royal Irish Rifles and the Durham Light Infantry) they tried once more to capture Zenith Trench, and failed again.

The Commonwealth War Graves commission shows a number (over thirty) men from the 2nd Berks as dying on 28 October, the day following the battalion's withdrawal to a reserve position. The Battalion war diary for the day reads: The Battalion, proceeded to "F" Camp, and remained in camp that night. It seems likely that these men, Harry Allwood among them, died in action on 23/24 October and that their passing was recorded during this day of rest as the Battalion, HQ staff sorted out the inevitable paperwork, perhaps mistakenly putting the current date rather than the date of the action on the casualty reports.

Harry's body was never identified among the fallen, he may still lie where he fell or in one of the thousands of graves of unidentified soldiers in the nearby war cemeteries. His name is commemorated on the vast memorial at Thiepval on pier 11 and face D. He is also remembered on his parent's gravestone in the churchyard of St

Peter's, Brimpton, on the Thatcham War Memorial and on the roll of honour in St Mary's Church, Thatcham.

Harry Baker - inscription masked by lichen on his parent's gravestone at Brimpton

The gravestone (right) has led to some confusion as it only shows his forenames, Harry Baker, on a stone for his parents, Henry and Sarah Baker.



Obviously the omission of his surname may have avoided some family embarrassment for his elderly grandparents, who must have arranged for his name to be added to their daughter's stone. However, it has led some (including me) to a fruitless search for a deceased soldier with the surname Baker.

Thanks to Doris Butler for the information about the Brimpton gravestone, to John Chapman for Major Hanbury-Sparrow's words and to the members of the Great War Forum who attempted to track down Pte Harry Baker.

Sergeant Albert Sidney Amor

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1890, Hungerford
 - **Death:** 25th May 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:**
Albert was living with his brother, George, and his family in Northfield Road. He was recorded as a paper maker, presumably working at Colthrop Paper Mill.
 - **Father:** Henry Amor
 - **Mother:** Mary Amor (née North)
 - **Siblings:** Sarah, Edith, John, George, Florence
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Sergeant
 - **Service number:** 2399
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/773474/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/43181
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:**
<http://westberkshirwarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00651S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Amor
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Amor
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Amor



Sergeant Amor by West Berkshire War Memorials

Albert was born in Hungerford in 1890, the son of farm worker, Henry Amor, and his wife Mary, née North.

His name is the cause of some confusion, as he is found in various records with differing second names - Sidney or Thomas. However, the records of the Royal Berkshire Regiment tie the two together as both Albert Sidney and Albert Thomas are recorded in the 1st/4th Battalion, with the service number 2399.

His birth is registered in the Oct-Dec quarter of 1890 as Albert Thomas and it is Albert T who appears with his parents and many siblings in the 1891 census, aged 7 months.

Albert came to Thatcham to work as a paper maker, probably at the Colthrop Mill. He lodged with his brother George (also a paper maker) and his family in Northfield Road.

He also signed up for some part-time soldiering as a member of the Territorial Battalion, of the Royal Berkshire Regiment (the 4th Battalion). On the day after war was declared the Battalion, arrived at their annual camp outside Marlow after a two mile march in the rain. The camp was cancelled and the men were woken at 2.30am and put on a train back to Reading arriving at 6.30am. Normally they would have been sent home after the camp, but not on this occasion; they hung around the Brock Barracks in Reading waiting for news. The following day (4 August 1914) at 7.20pm the news they had been expecting arrived - the Battalion, was to mobilise. They were ordered to join the South Midland Division currently forming at Swindon.

Territorials signed up to serve in the UK, at this early stage of the war, before they could be sent to France or any other overseas theatre of war, they had to agree to a change in the conditions of their service.

Some 70% of the Battalion, volunteered to fight, the remainder, and some deemed unfit for active service, becoming part of a newly formed 2nd/4th Battalion. They were soon back up to full strength as, at this time, around 50 more men were arriving each day. The Battalion, was sent to Chelmsford for training, arriving on 29 August. They remained there until late March 1915 when they entrained for Southampton and crossed to Boulogne.

The local paper reported the news:

Newbury Weekly News, 1 April 1915

The now presumed departure of the Berks Service Battalion, of Territorial's now known as the 1st/4th Royal Berks for the actual field of war involves four of our local roll. Namely Sgt P H Rutter, Lance Corporals H Pearson, Alfred Wallington and A Amor. The three former were turners at J Brown and Sons and the other day the employees sent a telegram to their erstwhile shop mates wishing them success safety and an early return. This wish will be endorsed by the wide public in the village. It is stated that they crossed to France on Tuesday night.

For the following year Albert and the Battalion, lived life on the front, periods manning trenches separated by much longer periods of relative inactivity - though the men would always be kept busy training or at some task or another. Losses were incurred through sniping and shelling or to men sent into no-man's land on patrol but they were not involved in any major actions. During this period Albert was promoted to Sergeant - a very responsible position, demonstrating the respect he must have generated in both the men he commanded and the officers who commanded him.

On 16 May 1915 their most serious action to date took place when the Germans attacked their trenches in force following an artillery barrage. The Battalion suffered heavily losing 98 men (18 killed, 29 missing), B Company being reduced to half its strength. Most of the missing later turned up as prisoners of war (PoWs).

Records show that Albert was killed in action on 25 May 1916 and that his body was not identified - his name being recorded on the Thiepval Memorial (Pier 11 & Face D).



Albert's name on the Thiepval Memorial

This date is odd, on that day the Battalion, war diary records that they were billeted at Beauval, well

behind the front, and the most they had to face was a thunderstorm that delayed a route march (something to keep the men fit and occupied) from the morning to the afternoon.

It seems more likely that Albert died during the action in the early hours of 16 May or from wounds received that night.

He is remembered on the Thatcham Town War Memorial and on the roll of honour in St Mary's Church, Thatcham.

Thanks to Carol & Valerie Pike for their contribution to this story

Acting Chaplain Hatfield Arthur William Back

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1891, Worstead Vicarage, Norwich
 - **Death:** 9th July 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Hatfield was Curate at St Mary's Church from 1914 to 1916.
 - **Father:** Arthur James Back
 - **Mother:** Ellen Harriet Back
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Margaret, Hilda
- Military
 - **Service:** Royal Navy
 - **Ship:** H.M.S Vanguard
 - **Rank:** Acting Chaplain
 - **Memorial:** Chatham Naval Memorial
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/3052073/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/7663127
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H A W Back
 - **War Memorial (original):** H A W Back
 - **War Memorial (current):** H A W Back



Hatfield undertook his degree at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge in 1912 and then went on to Leeds Clerical School. He was ordained deacon in 1914. He came to Thatcham to serve his first curacy, living over Green's shop in the High Street. He was then ordained priest in 1915. He left in Left 1916/7 to serve as a naval chaplain. The Vangaurd was at Scapa Flow on 9 July 1917. During the day the crew had been conducting exercises including abandoning ship. She anchored towards the north of Scapa Flow around 6.30pm. All was fine until about 11.30pm when an explosion occurred. It is believed that the explosion was triggered when a magazine caught fire causing other items to ignite. The resulting explosion killed 804 people.

Private Arthur James Bew

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1888, Greenham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 8th February 1915, Hampshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Arthur was in 1911 living with his family at Oak Cottage in Greenham and was working as a Gardener.
 - **Father:** Edward Bew
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Bew
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Ernest, Edith, Laura, Elsie, Frances, Private Frederick Bew, Herbert, Private Leonard Bew.
 - **Spouse:** Ada Bew (who later remarried a Mr Wheeler and moved to Dinton, Wiltshire).
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 9th Battalion, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 17567
 - **Memorial:** CWGC Headstone in St Mary's, Greenham
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/2001984/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Bew
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Bew
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Bew
- Additional details:
 - Also appears on the Church Roll at Greenham appearing as 'Arthur Bew' and in Newbury Baptist Church appearing as 'Arthur J Bew'.

Private Frederick Bew

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1898, Greenham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 13th April 1918, France and Flanders
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick was in 1911 living with his family at Oak Cottage in Greenham and was working as a general labourer.
 - **Father:** Edward Bew
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Bew
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Ernest, Edith, Laura, Elsie, Private Arthur James Bew, Frances, Herbert, Private Leonard Bew
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 17625
 - **Memorial:** Rocquigny-Equancourt Road British Cemetery, MananCourt
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/243320/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/329404
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Bew
- Additional details:
 - Also appears on the Church Roll at Greenham appearing as 'Frederick Bew' and in Newbury Baptist Church appearing as 'Frederick Bew'.

Private Leonard Bew

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Greenham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 13th March 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Leonard was in 1911 living with his family at Oak Cottage in Greenham and was attending a school.
 - **Father:** Edward Bew
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Bew
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Ernest, Edith, Laura, Elsie, Private Arthur James Bew, Frances, Private Frederick Bew, Herbert
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 20480
 - **Memorial:** Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/874545/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/329437
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** L Bew
- Additional details:
 - Reported missing 12 April 1918 where local newspaper shows him as Corporal. Also appears on the Church Roll at Greenham appearing as 'Leonard Bew' and in Newbury Baptist Church appearing as 'Leonard Bew'.



Private Frederick Bosley

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1895, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 21st March 1918, France and Flanders
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick, or Freddie as he was recorded as, was living at 1 Northfield Road in 1911 along with the rest of his family. He was listed as a labourer at the paper mill, presumably Colthrop.
 - **Father:** William Bosley
 - **Mother:** Georgina Ann Bosley (née Haines)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, James, Sarah, David, Private Herbert John Bosley, Florence, Eliza, Henry, Amelia, George, Ada, Walter
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 18239
 - **Memorial:** Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/874756/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/421426
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Bosley
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Bosley
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Bosley

Private Herbert John Bosley

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1890, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 3rd April 1918, France and Flanders
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Herbert was living at 1 Northfield Road in 1911 along with the rest of his family. He was listed as a labourer at the paper mill, presumably Colthrop.
 - **Father:** William Bosley
 - **Mother:** Georgina Ann Bosley (née Haines)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, James, Sarah, David, Florence, Private Frederick Bosley, Eliza, Henry, Amelia, George, Ada, Walter
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 201861
 - **Memorial:** Vadencourt British Cemetery, Maissemy, Aisne, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/2939262/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/421458
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H J Bosley
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Bosley
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Bosley

Private Henry Bradbury

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1890, St Mary Bourne, Hampshire
 - **Death:** 10th September 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1911 he is living with his parents in Broad Street (The Broadway). He is recorded as working as a mop stick maker presumably at one of the local turnery works.
 - **Father:** Henry John Bradbury
 - **Mother:** Mary Ann Bradbury (née Holmes)
 - **Siblings:** Harriett, Dora, Henry, Tom, Charlie, Kate
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 18813
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/767233/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/455778
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Bradbury
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Bradbury
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Bradbury

Private Henry Edwin Breach

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1892, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 5th March 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Henry was born in Thatcham and lived in 1901 at Newtown, Thatcham. They later relocated to Brimpton.
 - **Father:** Henry Edwin Breach
 - **Mother:** Ada Caroline Breach (née Denness)
 - **Siblings:** Mary, Private Frederick George Breach, Florence, Winifred, Ellen, Reuben, Daisy, Mabel, Elsie, Ethel, Alice, Rose
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 8910
 - **Memorial:** Lillers Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/2947335/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/480063
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** [westberkshiriewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP01099 S.php](http://westberkshiriewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP01099_S.php)
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Breach
- Additional details:
 - Henry enlisted on 11 June 1908, aged just 16. In 1911 he is shown as being at Dover Castle. Where he gives his age as 21 when he was actually a few years younger.
 - Henry is also listed on the Newbury Town War Memorial as 'H E Breach' and on the roll of honour in St Nicolas Church, Newbury where he is listed as 'H E Breach'.

Private Breach by West Berkshire War Memorials

Henry was born in Thatcham in early 1892, the eldest son and second child of Henry Edwin Breach and his wife, Ada Caroline (née Denness). He was baptised on 6 March 1892 at St Mary's church, Thatcham. At the baptism his father gave his occupation as 'engineer', quite what this entailed is not clear although he does qualify it in the 1891 census to 'Engineer Beaterman at Paper mills'. Presumably he was looking after machinery at the mills, which would most likely have been those at Colthrop to the east of Thatcham.

During the early years of their marriage Henry Edwin senior and Ada lived in Thatcham Newtown (to the west of central Thatcham) but moved to West End, Brimpton ca 1904. Theirs was a productive marriage, they had at least 12 children – mainly girls: Mary Ann (1890), Florence Amy (1895), Winifred Ada (1897), Ellen Matilda (1899), Daisy Blanch (1901), Mabel (1903), Elsie May (1906), Ethel Elizabeth (1907), Alice (1910) and Rose (1910), but there were two sons, Henry Edwin (1892) and Frederick George (1893).

Henry decided early in life to experience the military life; he enlisted with the local regiment, the Royal Berkshires, on 11 June 1908, aged only 16. At that age he would not have been sent into a combat area, however, he may well have lied about his age - in his entry in the 1911 census, when he was serving with the 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment at Dover Castle, his age is shown as 21 – when he was, in fact, two years younger.

He would have been discharged to the Reserve before war broke out in 1914 (a typical enlistment was for 12 years, five with the colours and seven in the Reserve). As the Reserve was immediately mobilised when war was declared he would, in any case have been in uniform within days. This can be seen to be the case for he was with the 1st Battalion,

when it crossed to France on 13 August 1914, only nine days after the declaration of war.



The regimetal badge of the Berkshire Regiment, as used on CWGC headstones.

With the 1st Battalion, he would have taken part in a number of actions, from the initial encounter with the Germans at Mons, through the retreat to the Marne and the subsequent advance and establishment of the trench lines that typify the Great War on the Western Front. In 1915 Henry took part in the battles at La Bassée and Neuve Chappelle and was wounded on 22 December 1915 when the Battalion, took over a series of trenches at Cambrin, a French village between Neuve Chappelle and Loos. His wound earned him a trip home and he was able to visit his family for the last time on 9 February 1916.

Henry returned to his unit a few days later and was wounded again on 1 March 1916 while the Battalion, was in trenches near Souchez. This time there was to be no trip home; he died of his wounds four days later on 5 March 1916. He died at a Casualty Clearing Station (a forward hospital) at Lillers about 22 miles north-east of Souchez. At that time both the 6th and 58th Casualty Clearing Stations were at Lillers; it is not known which was treating Henry.

He was buried in grave IV.E.31 in the Lillers Communal Cemetery (the local town graveyard).

The news of his death soon reached Newbury:

Newbury Weekly News, 16 Mar 1916 – Local War Notes

The ill-fated news has been received by Mr and Mrs Breach, of 13, Victoria-Street, Victoria Park, Newbury, of the death of their son, Pte H Breach, of the 1st Royal Berks Regiment, and the age of 23. The deceased enrolled on the announcement of hostilities in August, 1914, and left in the following month with the British Expeditionary Force for France, going through the battles of Mons, La Bassé, Neuve Chapelle and others. He returned home for a seven days leave on August 10th, 1915. Having been slightly wounded on the 22nd December, he was allowed another opportunity of visiting his home on the 9th February. The rest proved beneficial and he returned to the firing line, but was wounded on the 1st of March, and died on the 5th, being buried in the churchyard at Lillers. The death of their much-loved son causes a cloud of sadness to rest upon the parents and other members of the family, but they have the satisfaction of knowing no one could be a braver soldier and more loyal an Englishman.



Henry's name on Newbury War Memorial - immediately above that of his brother Henry.

Locally Henry is remembered on the Newbury Town War

Memorial, the memorial board and roll of honour in St Nicolas Church, Newbury, and the Thatcham War Memorial.

His younger brother, Frederick served in the same Battalion, and died a few months later during the Battle of the Somme. Frederick is remembered on the same memorials as his brother and also the memorial board in St Mary's Church, Thatcham. It is not clear why

Henry was omitted from this memorial, though it appears that his connection with Thatcham was less than that of Frederick, who went back to live and work in their childhood parish.

Their mother Ada must have been shattered by the loss of both of her sons but more bad news was to follow; her cousin Harry Denness (son of her uncle, Edmund) died in December 1917, also serving with the 1st Battalion, Royal Berks; and her nephew Godfrey Denness (son of her brother Thomas) died in August 1917 while serving with the 15th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. Both are remembered on the same Thatcham memorials as Frederick Breach.

Private Frederick George Breach

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1893, Thatcham
 - **Death:** 27th July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick was born in Thatcham and lived in 1901 at Newtown, Thatcham. His family moved to Brimpton but Frederick moved back where he stayed with his aunt and uncle in Newtown, Thatcham. He worked as a labourer at the paper mill, presumably this was Colthrop Mill.
 - **Father:** Henry Edwin Breach
 - **Mother:** Ada Caroline Breach (née Denness)
 - **Siblings:** Mary, Private Frederick George Breach, Florence, Winifred, Ellen, Reuben, Daisy, Mabel, Elsie, Ethel, Alice, Rose
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 9573
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/767603/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/480042
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** westberkshirerwarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP01100S.php
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** T G Breach
 - **War Memorial (original):** T G Breach
 - **War Memorial (current):** T G Breach

Private Breach by West Berkshire War Memorials

Frederick was born in Thatcham in 1893, the second son and third child of Henry Edwin Breach and his wife, Ada Caroline (née Denness). He was baptised on 1 October 1893 at St Mary's Church, Thatcham. At

the baptism his father gave his occupation as ‘engineer’, quite what this entailed is not clear although he does qualify it in the 1891 census to ‘Engineer Beaterman at Paper mills’. Presumably he was looking after machinery at the mills, which would most likely have been those at Colthrop to the east of Thatcham.

During the early years of their marriage Henry Edwin senior and Ada lived in Thatcham Newtown (to the west of central Thatcham) but moved to West End, Brimpton ca 1904. Theirs was a productive marriage, they had at least 12 children – mainly girls: Mary Ann (1890), Florence Amy (1895), Winifred Ada (1897), Ellen Matilda (1899), Daisy Blanch (1901), Mabel (1903), Elsie May (1906), Ethel Elizabeth (1907) and twins, Alice and Rose (1910), but there were two sons, Henry Edwin (1892) and Frederick George (1893).

In 1911 his family moved from Brimpton and into Newbury, where they lived for a while at 13 Jack Street before moving on to 52 St George’s Avenue (a post-war development of ‘homes fit for heroes’).

Frederick followed his father to work in the paper mills, moving out of the crowded family home to lodge with his mother’s sister Amy Hazell and her family in Thatcham Newtown. However, in 1911, he followed his brother Henry’s example and enlisted with the Royal Berkshire Regiment on 8 August. The following year, having completed his basic training, Frederick was posted to the 2nd Battalion, of the Royal Berks, which was stationed in India.



The regimental badge of the Berkshire Regiment, as used on CWGC headstones.

When war was declared in August 1914 the 2nd Battalion, was immediately recalled to

England, landing at Liverpool on 3 October. The Battalion, joined the newly formed 25th Brigade in the 8th Division, which was made up of units recalled from all corners of the Empire. A month later the Division crossed to France, Frederick landed on 6 November. A week later, on 14 November the Division took over a section of trenches at Fauquissart, their first experience of the front line.

Although there was no great offensive underway there were casualties, including Frederick, who was wounded on 22 December. The battalion's war diary entry for that date is short: In billets at Levantie. 5 men to hospital. Although the men were in billets (relatively safe quarters behind the lines) there were plenty of opportunities for casualties. Working parties would often be sent forward to work in the support trenches, well within range of German artillery. Even training could be very hazardous – especially bomb (grenade) training.

After a few months in hospital and convalescence he returned to France, this time to the 1st Battalion, Royal Berks rather than the 2nd. It is not known exactly when he returned to action, but it is possible that he was sent as a draft of reinforcements following the 1st Battalion's heavy losses during the Battle of Loos – which would explain his change of battalion.

On 1 July 1916 the Allies launched the first of a series of offensives known to history as the Battle of the Somme. Frederick's old Battalion, went over the top on the first day and suffered horrendous casualties, but the 1st Battalion, was not called into action until 27 July when they were sent in to recapture a section of Delville Wood that had been fought over since 15 July. The Battalion, achieved its objective but took heavy losses – 8 officers and 256 other ranks killed, wounded or missing. Frederick was one of the 37 other ranks listed as missing. His

body was found a couple of months later near a support trench – which might, of course, have been the front line on 27 July.

His family received the news that he had been found in a convoluted way – the Chaplain responsible for his burial, not knowing Frederick's next-of-kin details, wrote to the Congregational Minister in Newbury with the news to be passed on to the family:

Newbury Weekly News, 14 September 1916 – Local War Notes

Mr and Mrs H Breach of 13, Victoria-Street, Victoria Park have received the sad news of the loss of their second son, Pte Fred Breach, of the Royal Berks Regiment, who was killed on July 27th, 1916. The information was contained in a letter dated September 1st, sent by the Rev W Telfer, Church of England Chaplain, by the Rev JW Harford, Congregational Minister, in which the writer says:- "I write to you to tell you of the burial of 9573 Pte F Breach, 1st Royal Berks Regt, whom I gathered to be a member of your congregation. I found his body lying in the vicinity of our support trench. Owing to exposure to the weather it was impossible to recover any of his personal effects, but there were four testaments and portions in his tunic pocket, one containing the Diocesan Form signed, and another was the one given to him by the church." The Chaplain concluded his letter with a request to the Rev Harford to hand out the information, as he could find no address. Pte Breach was in India when the war broke out, and was sent to the Front, being wounded on December 22nd of that year. After several months in hospital, he rejoined his regiment, and had been on leave, returning on June 9th last. This is the second bereavement sustained by Mr and Mrs Breach, their eldest son, Pte H Breach, of the 1st Royal Berks, having been killed in action on March 1st, 1916.

Frederick's Thatcham connection was not forgotten:

Newbury Weekly News, 28 September 1916 – Echoes from Thatcham

Pte F Breach, son of Mr and Mrs Breach, of Newbury, whose death in action was recorded in this paper the other week, was better known in this village than at Newbury. He was a Thatcham lad, and made this his home. It is his local friends who greatly mourn his death. He spent a lengthy time here recuperating from his former wounds. We will remember his cheerfulness and joviality. He brimmed over with gay spirits and humour.

As can be seen from the newspapers Frederick was buried in 1916, but he has no known burial place. Presumably his burial plot was destroyed in subsequent fighting and bombardment. He is now remembered on Pier 11 and Face D of the massive Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme.



Frederick's name on Newbury War Memorial - immediately below that of his brother Henry.

Locally Frederick is remembered on tablet 10 of the Newbury Town War Memorial, the memorial board and roll of honour in St Nicolas Church, Newbury, the Thatcham War Memorial and the memorial board in St Mary's Church, Thatcham. For some unknown reason he is recorded on the Thatcham memorials as T G Breach. Perhaps he was known by a nickname of Tom or some such, but it could easily be that a handwritten F was mistaken for a T.

His elder brother, Henry also served in the 1st Battalion, Royal Berks and died a few months earlier. For some reason Henry's name was omitted from the memorial board in Thatcham church, but appears on all the other memorials commemorating Frederick.

Their mother Ada must have been shattered by the loss of both of her sons but more bad news was to follow; her cousin Harry Denness (son of her uncle, Edmund Denness) died in December 1917, also serving with the 1st Battalion, Royal Berks; and her nephew Godfrey Denness (son of her brother Thomas) died in August 1917 while serving with the 15th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. Both are remembered on the same Thatcham memorials as Frederick.

Private Albert Anthony Browning

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1889, Blashford, Hampshire
 - **Death:** 28th October 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1911 Albert was living in The Broadway with David Collings. David owned a boot repair business where Albert worked. His photograph in the newspapers though record him as living at Hollington Place.
 - **Father:** Henry Browning
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Browning (née Long)
 - **Siblings:** Edith, Beatrice, Florence, Henry.
 - **Spouse:** Florence Browning (née Durrant), remarried a Mr Haines after Albert died.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 21934
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/765917/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/565272
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Browning
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Browning
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Browning



Private William Quelch Butler

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1882, Heads Hill, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 23rd August 1917, France and Flanders
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** William was born in Crookham.
 - **Father:** Eli Butler
 - **Mother:** Mary Ann Butler
 - **Siblings:** Edward, Ethel, Nelly, Robert
 - **Spouse:** Jane Butler (née Arnold)
 - **Additional:** William was born in Crookham. In 1910 he married Jane Arnold and by 1911 the couple had settled in Romsey.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 6th Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 42260
 - **Memorial:** Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calis, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/499633/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/685300
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W Q Butler
 - **War Memorial (original):** W C Butler
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Q Butler
- Additional details:
 - Originally shown as 'W C Butler' on the war memorial which has presumably been corrected to 'W Q Butler'.

Private A Capon

- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Capon
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Capon
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Campon

Private Albert Edward Chandler

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1897, Kilburn, London
 - **Death:** 3rd December 1917
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 7th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 28024
 - **Memorial:** Rocquigny-Equancourt Road British Cemetery, Manancourt
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/243481/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/769121
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A E Chandler
 - **War Memorial (original):** A E Chandler
 - **War Memorial (current):** A E Chandler

Private 1st Class Alfred Francis Cook

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1893, Lower Upham, Wiltshire
 - **Death:** 20th July 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Alfred was recorded in 1911 as living in Chapel Street and working as a Farm Labourer.
 - **Father:** Joseph Cook
 - **Mother:** Sarah Ann Cook (née Talbot)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Joseph, Private Thomas Cook, Private William Arthur Cook, Albert, John, Alice, Charles
- Military
 - **Service:** Royal Air Force
 - **Rank:** Private 1st Class
 - **Service number:** 135913
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648818/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/928806 or livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6654358
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A F Cook
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Cook
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Cook



E Cook

- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** E Cook

Private Thomas Cook

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1878, Ramsbury, Wiltshire
 - **Death:** 20th February 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Thomas moved to Thatcham with his family sometime between 1893 and 1901. He married Hannah and together lived in Thatcham Newtown.
 - **Father:** Joseph Cook
 - **Mother:** Sarah Ann Cook (née Talbot)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Joseph, Private William Arthur Cook, Albert, John, Alice, Charles, Private 1st Class Alfred Francis Cook
 - **Spouse:** Hannah Cook
 - **Children:** Bessie Cook
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 10315
 - **Memorial:** Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cuinchy
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/194606/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/935370
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H T Cook
 - **War Memorial (original):** T Cook
 - **War Memorial (current):** T Cook



Private William Arthur Cook

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1881, Ramsbury, Wiltshire
 - **Death:** 14th February 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** William moved from Wiltshire with his family between 1893 and 1901. He married Mary in 1903 at Thatcham Church and in 1911 William and his family were living in the High Street.
 - **Father:** Joseph Cook
 - **Mother:** Sarah Ann Cook (née Talbot)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Joseph, Private Thomas Cook, Albert, John, Alice, Charles, Private 1st Class Alfred Francis Cook
 - **Spouse:** Mary Jane Cook (née Ford)
 - **Children:** William, George
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 33421
 - **Memorial:** Niederzwehren Cemetery, Kassel
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/903149/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/936180
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W A Cook
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Cook
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Cook
- Additional details:
 - Was recorded in the Reading Mercury, 3rd November 1917, as a PoW in German Hands.

Private Thomas William Couzens

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1886, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 14th December 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Thomas was living in the High Street with his parents in 1901 working at a local Saw Mill. He married Florence in 1908 but appears to have moved to Gillingham, Kent, sometime before the marriage. Together they had two children, one died in infancy.
 - **Father:** Henry Couzens
 - **Mother:** Jane Couzens
 - **Siblings:** Henry, Thomas; half-siblings: Frank Hearn, Emily Hearn, Kate Hearn
 - **Spouse:** Florence Couzens
 - **Children:** Unknown, Thomas
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 738th Mechanical Transport Company, Royal Army Service Corps
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** T4/199543
 - **Memorial:** Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/340660/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** T W Couzens
 - **War Memorial (original):** T W Couzens
 - **War Memorial (current):** T W Couzens
- Additional details:
 - In 1903 and 1908 there are records connecting Thomas with the Royal Navy.

Private William Edward Couzens

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1897, Reading, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 19th July 1916, France and Flanders
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** By 1911 the family was living in Chapel Street, Thatcham and William is listed as an Office Boy.
 - **Father:** Unknown
 - **Mother:** Jane Couzens
 - **Siblings:** Frederic, Ellen, Dorothy
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 3398
 - **Memorial:** Laventie Military Cemetery, La Gorgue
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/327913/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/979985
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W E Couzens
 - **War Memorial:** W E Couzens
 - **War Memorial (original):** W E Couzens
 - **War Memorial (current):** W E Couzens



Private Godfrey Denness

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1898, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 5th August 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Godfrey is recorded as being born in the High Street but in 1901 and 1911 the family are living at Colthrop.
 - **Father:** Thomas Denness
 - **Mother:** Miriam Denness
 - **Siblings:** John, Thomas, Gertrude, Frederick, William
 - **Additional:** There appears to be some confusion over the order of the names, some records show Godfrey Ernest Denness others Ernest Godfrey Denness.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 15th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 201399
 - **Memorial:** Ypress (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1609820/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2378661
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G E Denness
 - **War Memorial:** G Denness
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Denness
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Denness
- Additional details:
 - Was originally on the memorial as F Denness and shown on the CWGC as Denniss. Presumably the change on the War Memorial is a correction.

Private Harry Denness

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1884, Thatcham, Berkshire.
 - **Death:** 2nd December 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harry was born in Thatcham, living in Chapel Street in 1891 and Newtown in 1901. He married Ada in 1909 and by 1911 they were living as a family with their son in Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Edmund Denness
 - **Mother:** Sarah Ann Denness (née Hyde)
 - **Siblings:** Blanche, Charles
 - **Spouse:** Ada Denness
 - **Children:** Charles
 - **Additional:** Cousin of Private Godfrey Denness.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 30126
 - **Memorial:** Grevillers British Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/289935/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2375871
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Denness
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Denness
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Denness

Private Richard Diggins

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1891
 - **Death:** 7th September 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:**
Richard was born in Broad Street (The Broadway), Thatcham in 1891 moving by 1901 to Church Row (Church Gate). In 1911 Richard was a Wood Turner living at Camberley, Surrey.
 - **Father:** Thomas Diggins
 - **Mother:** Alexandria Diggins.
 - **Siblings:** Charles, Edward, William, Robert, Florence, Evelyn, Samuel
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 11th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 12149
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/754000/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1636250
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** R Diggins
 - **War Memorial (original):** R Diggins
 - **War Memorial (current):** R Diggins
- Additional details:
 - CWGC notes 'Diggins' but IWM has 'Diggins'.



A July edition of the Newbury Weekly News from 1918 writes:

“Six sons of Mr T Diggins (Sexton) and Mrs Diggins, have served in the Army during the war. One (Dick) made the

supreme sacrifice nearly two years ago, and the other five are still serving. It is a remarkable record, and the parents and sons deserve congratulation upon the fact. Six sons in the Army we believe establishes the highest number from one family from this parish. It has other unique features; they have all been bell-ringers, and they have all been butchers - a combination of B's. They were cradled in the atmosphere of the Parish Church and the belfry, thus bell-ringing came to them as second nature. But that each in turn should take a hand at butchering, appears even more remarkable. Also, each worked for the late Mr J Warren, formerly butcher in the village. The sons and Regiments are: - Corporal Ted Diggins, ASC; Pte. Charlie Diggins, Wilts, who has recently been wounded, but is making fair progress now; Sergt. Will Diggins, Hants, who has seen length and strenuous service in France; Pte Dick Diggins, Hants, who, as mentioned above, has been killed in action; Pte. Bob Diggins ASC, and Pte Sam Diggins, Hants."

Private Anthony George Dodd

Anthony was the youngest person to die, identified so far. Anthony was born in 1898 in Thatcham. He had a rough start to life with his mother, Margaret, passing away in 1900. The 1901 census have Anthony and his sister, Martha, living with George and Mary Cook in Northfield Road where they are described as “Nurse Children”. Essentially another family fostered them. Their father worked at a local mill and lived close by. Anthony was in the 35th Battalion, Training Reserve, his service number being TR/8/10086. He died 10th May 1917.

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Thatcham, Berkshire.
 - **Death:** 10th May 1917, Wilton, Wiltshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Anthony was born in Thatcham. In 1911 he was living with the Cook family in Northfield Road.
 - **Father:** Frederick Dodd
 - **Mother:** Margaret Dodd
 - **Siblings:** Martha
 - **Additional:** Margaret died in 1900 and by 1901 Anthony and his sister were described as “Nurse Children” living with George and Mary Cook in Northfield Road.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 35th Battalion, Training Reserve
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** TR/8/10086
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648819/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Dodd
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Dodd
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Dodd

Private J Durbridge

- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Durbridge
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Durbridge
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Durbridge

Private Daniel Dyer

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1884
 - **Death:** 14th October 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Daniel was born in Kingsclere in c.1884. He married in 1909 at Kingsclere and then moved to The Malthouse at the east end of Crookham. He was working as a gardener.
 - **Father:** Frank Dyer
 - **Mother:** Martha Dyer
 - **Siblings:** Rose, Walter, Samuel, Ada, Kate
 - **Spouse:** Alice Dyer
 - **Children:** Walter
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 8th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15597
 - **Memorial:** Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/54046/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** D Dyer
 - **War Memorial (original):** D Dyer
 - **War Memorial (current):** D Dyer
- Additional details:
 - Daniel presumably was working in Brimpton as he seems to also appear on their war memorial.

Lance Corporal Edward Henry Eldred

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1876 Weedon, Northamptonshire
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1906 Edward married Maud Annie Denness. Maud was the daughter of Solomon and Alice Denness who lived at Woodside Cottage in Crookham. Military records in 1902 and 1914 give his details, living in Crookham in the latter.
 - **Father:** William Eldred
 - **Mother:** Sarah Eldred (née Izzard)
 - **Siblings:** Philip
 - **Spouse:** Maud Eldred (née Denness)
 - **Children:** Philip, Lucy
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Lance Corporal
 - **Service number:** 10525
 - **Memorial:** White City Cemetery, Bois-Grenier, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/292445/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2436592
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:**
<http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00678S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** E Eldred
 - **War Memorial (original):** E Eldred
 - **War Memorial (current):** E Eldred

Lance Corporal Eldred by West Berkshire War Memorials

Edward was born in Weedon, Northamptonshire, the son of William Eldred and his wife Sarah, née Izzard.

After leaving school Edward went to work on the railways as a porter. However, he had changed job to follow his father's trade as a painter by the time he was 18. A few months later, on 13 November 1902, he enlisted at Northampton joining the Royal Garrison Artillery. On 8 January 1903 he was posted to the 2nd Company, RGA.

His career in the artillery was very short: he was transferred into the Northamptonshire Regiment on 20 February 1903 and found himself in South Africa on 9 June serving with their 2nd Battalion. After a year in South Africa he returned to England and Borden Camp near Alton in Hampshire.

Edward had signed up for 12 years service, but only three years were to be served with the colours, the remaining nine would be served in the Reserve. In reality he was transferred to the Reserve a few months early on 18 April 1905. He then returned to civilian life.

On 12 March 1906 he married Maud Annie Denness, the daughter of local photographer Solomon Denness and his wife Alice, who lived at Woodside Cottage, Crookham. The couple moved to Weedon and then on to Marlow in Buckinghamshire. They had two children, Philip Edward on 16 June 1909 and Lucy Isabel on 19 December 1911.

When war broke out in August 1914 Edward was only a few months away from the end of his service in the Reserve. This made no difference to the Army and Edward received his mobilisation orders along with the rest of the Reserve. On reporting to his unit he soon found himself in Sydney Hall Hospital, Weymouth. It is not clear what his health problem was, but it was sufficient for him to be discharged as medically unfit for service on 16 September 1914. Correspondence relating to a claim for unpaid allowances shows that, during his convalescence Edward and his family stayed with his in-laws at Crookham.

However, he was not to be denied his chance to serve, the local paper takes up the story:

Newbury Weekly News, 21 January 1915

Lance Corporal E. H. Eldred of Crookham now attached to the 3rd Royal Berks was at the commencement of the war a reservist of the Northants Regiment. After 6 weeks with the Colours he was considered medically unfit and discharged, But Eldred was persevering and after some weeks of recuperating and treatment and having gained in weight and strength he again offered his services. He was accepted, attached to the 3rd Berks and given the rank of Lance Corporal.

Edward joined the 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment in a draft of 30 men on 22 February a few days after landing in France.

The 2nd Battalion, were engaged in the normal day to day activities of life on the front line; short periods of discomfort manning a section of the line intersperses with much longer periods of training and fatigues. However, a major Allied offensive was being planned. The 2nd Berks were tasked with carrying out a diversionary attack to the north of the main targets, near the village of Bois Grenier, on 25 September 1915. This action formed part of the Battle of Loos.

The Battalion's losses were very heavy, almost 200 killed, wounded or missing. It was over a month before word reached Maud Eldred of her of husband's death:

Newbury Weekly News, 4 November 1915

The Crookham part of our Parish has indeed been rather badly hit by the war recently, news has been received that we think

unofficially L/Cpl. E.H. Eldred 2nd Berks has been KIA. Eldred married a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. Denness of Crookham at the outbreak of war they were staying at Crookham, as he was a reservist of the N/Hants Regiment (with which he was engaged in the South African war). He returned to his unit unfortunately he soon became unwell and was eventually invalided out. Later he became better in health and with successful persistence re-enlisted in the 3rd R/Berks being a fully trained man he was soon sent with a draft to reinforce the 2nd Batt. It is now believed that he has fallen and friends will sympathize with his wife and two children and with his Crookham connections.



Edward Eldred's grave in the White City Cemetery.

It seems that the official notification may have arrived soon after:

Newbury Weekly News, 15 November 1915, p8

Among the wounded we may mention two other well known Crookhamites William Durbridge and Harry Greenough for whom we fervently wish a recovery. Last but not least much sympathy is felt for Mrs. S. Denness of Woodside for the loss of her son in law E. H. Eldred who first enlisted in a Northampton Regiment and after being invalided home for some time eventually joined the Royal Berks. He too was killed in action on September the 25th in the great drive when the Allies were on the offensive. He leaves a widow and two children to mourn the loss of the breadwinner. We hope the spirit of patriotism will sustain them in their sorrow and grief.

Edward was buried in the White City Cemetery half a mile south of the village of Bois Grenier, in plot B.3.

Edward Eldred is commemorated on the Thatcham war memorial and on the roll of honour in St Mary's church, Thatcham.

Thanks to Carol & Valerie Pike for their contribution to this story.

Private Harry Farley

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1898, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 27th April 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harry was born in Thatcham. In 1901 he was living at Thatcham Newtown. By 1911 the family had moved to Bath Road, Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Harry Farley
 - **Mother:** Ellen Farley
 - **Siblings:** Florence, Winifred, Ellen, Mary, Frederick, Maggie, Thirza and Joe
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 31324
 - **Memorial:** Adaelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/25838/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1194285
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Farley
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Farley
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Farley

Private Arthur George Fisher

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1894
 - **Death:** 7th September 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1911 Thomas and Louisa were landlords of the White Hart in the High Street, Thatcham. His siblings appear on the census for that year but Arthur does not. By 1915 Thomas was no longer landlord of the pub, presumably this is when he moved to Church Gate. It is assumed that Arthur would have lived with his parents at one or both locations.
 - **Father:** Thomas Fisher
 - **Mother:** Louisa Fisher
 - **Siblings:** Henry, Thomas
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st/14th Battalion, London Regiment (London Scottish)
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 5229
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/751963/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1242137
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A G Fisher
 - **War Memorial (original):** A G Fisher
 - **War Memorial (current):** A G Fisher

Driver Ernest Edward Preston Franklin

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1891, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 14th March 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Ernest was born in Thatcham living in 1901 at Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** James Franklin
 - **Mother:** Mary Franklin
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Joseph, Kate, Harry, Francis, Private Forrester Franklin, Beatrice, Laura, Frank, Mary, Rupert, Elvyne and Elizabeth Hale (half-sister)
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 45th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery
 - **Rank:** Driver
 - **Service number:** 511098
 - **Memorial:** Pont-du-hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/596854/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** E Franklin
 - **War Memorial (original):** E Franklin
 - **War Memorial (current):** E Franklin
- Additional details:
 - By 1911 he had enlisted with the 135th Battery Royal Field Artillery.



Private Forrester Franklin

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1886, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 14th November 1919
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Ernest was born in Thatcham living in 1901 at Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** James Franklin
 - **Mother:** Mary Franklin
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Joseph, Kate, Harry, Francis, Beatrice, Laura, Driver Ernest Edward Preston Franklin, Frank, Mary, Rupert, Elvyne, Elizabeth Hale (step-sister)
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 4th Royal Berks Territorials / Grenadier Guards ?
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 25780
 - **IWM:** [livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1245352](https://www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1245352)
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Franklin
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Franklin
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Franklin
- Additional details:
 - Buried in Thatcham Cemetery but there is no CWGC headstone.

Private Henry French

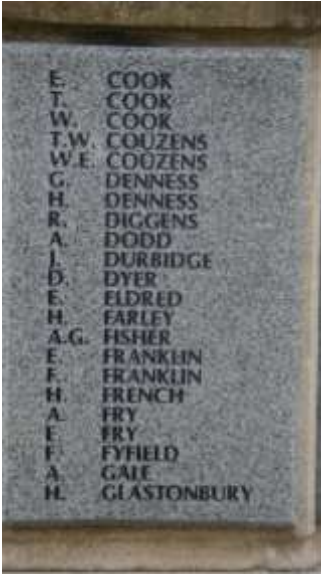
- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1888, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 4th February 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Henry and most of his family were born in Thatcham. They lived in Broad Street (The Broadway) in 1891 but had moved to Chapel Street by 1901. Henry married Mary Ann Peters and moved to Whitchurch, Hampshire.
 - **Father:** Henry French
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth French (née Don)
 - **Siblings:** Alice, Lilly, Elizabeth, Alfred, William, Albert, Mabel, Herbert, Gwendoline, Stanley
 - **Spouse:** Mary French (née Peters)
 - **Children:** Albert, William
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** "A" Company, Army Service Corps
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** S4/043961
 - **Memorial:** Aldershot Military Cemetery, Hampshire
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/359314/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H French
 - **War Memorial (original):** H French
 - **War Memorial (current):** H French

Private Alfred Arthur Fry

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 9th April 1892, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 22nd November 1916, War Hospital, Bradford, Yorkshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Alfred was born in Crookham and lived there with the family. By 1911 he had moved to Headley working for Henry Pearce as a Baker. By 1916 he had joined in with his father in their baking business.
 - **Father:** James Fry
 - **Mother:** Ellen Fry (née Dowling)
 - **Siblings:** Private Ernest James Fry, Albert, Jesse
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1/7th Reserve Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 5141
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648820/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1268187
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** <http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00684S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A A Fry
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Fry
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Fry
- Additional details:
 - Alfred also is on the Newbury War Memorial and the roll of honour in St Nicholas Church.



Private Fry by West Berkshire War Memorials



Alfred's name on Thatcham War Memorial - above his brother Ernest.

Alfred was born in Crookham, Berkshire on 9 April 1892 the son of James Charles Fry and his wife Ellen Rose née Dowling. James was a baker serving the scattered community to the south of Crookham and Greenham Commons. Crookham is a hamlet of the much larger village of Thatcham (now a town of 30,000+ inhabitants), but the Fry's lived in Head's Hill, an area far from the main settlement and some distance from the cluster of housing normally thought of

as Crookham. In reality he probably got as much trade from the villages of Newtown and Headley; close by but over the border in Hampshire.

Alfred was the youngest of four children, all brothers; the others were Ernest James (born 1885), Albert John (1886), and Jesse Charles (1889).

The bakery evidently did a decent trade because both Ernest and Albert joined their father in the business rather than seek employment elsewhere. By 1911 Arthur had left home to work, as a baker, for Henry Pearce in Headley – where he was probably serving an apprenticeship as he too had joined the family business by 1916. The remaining brother, Jesse, was the only one to rebel against embroilment in the family trade; he became a 'cycle agent', which covers a wide range of activities, but Jesse was more the local cycle repair man than the business entrepreneur selling a wide range of the latest bicycles.

After war was declared in August 1914 many young men eagerly volunteered, but not Alfred. By this time his father was 64 and the three brothers, Ernest, Albert and Arthur, were heavily involved in the running of the family business; each had a lot more to lose than an employee would. However, the Government introduced conscription in January 1916 and Alfred was duly called up for service.

Ernest, John and Alfred were all called up – and foolishly ignored their papers, believing they were automatically exempt because they were working in a reserved occupation. When a second set of papers arrived they should have realised things were not that simple – but they ignored them again. The next call was from the police, who came to arrest them for not appearing to be attested (the first step in enlistment – form signing and a medical).

They appeared before a magistrate in Newbury, who adjourned the case so they could appeal against their conscription at the local Tribunal. The brothers' case appeared before the Newbury Rural Tribunal on 2 May 1916:

Reading Mercury, 6 May 1916 – Newbury Rural Tribunal

Chief interest in the proceedings centred around the appeal sent in on behalf of three brother bakers – Ernest James Fry (31), Albert James [sic] Fry (28), and Alfred Arthur Fry (23) – the sons of Mr J C Fry, baker, of Crookham, near Newbury. It will be remembered that the three men were recently arrested by the police for failing to report themselves to the military authorities pursuant to two notices which were sent them, and which they admitted receiving. When before the court, Mr Lucas, solicitor, appeared on their behalf, and state that being under the impression they were engaged in a certified occupation as bakers, they had not attested or made any appeal. On his

application the matter was adjourned for a fortnight to enable an appeal to be made to the Tribunal, so that the cases might be heard on their merits. This course was assented to by the magistrate who heard the case, a belated protest by Lieutenant Bidmead, who represented the military on that occasion, not being entertained. Mr Lucas appeared before the Tribunal on Tuesday in support of the appeal, which was made by the father. Mr Lucas stated that Mr Fry did a baking business of twelve sacks per week, and there was no other baker within 3½ miles. The sons' time was entirely given up to baking and the delivery for which two horses and carts and a bicycle were daily employed.

Major Bertram, for the military, here intimated that he objected to the appeals being heard at all on the grounds of time.

Mr Lucas having read the portion of the Military Service Act bearing on the point, while agreeing that an appeal should have been made, urged that the impression held by Mr Fry that baking was a reserved employment was sufficient reason for asking that the appeals should now be heard on their merits.

Mr Fry was called and said he had four sons, one of whom was in the Army. In reference to the other three, he was under the impression that he need not appeal, and therefore had not done so.

Examined by Major Bartram, he said he had always thought this, but could not say why, when he did make the appeal he did not do so on these grounds, but on others. He knew his sons had received papers calling them to the Colours, but neither he nor they had taken any steps to find out if these notices were in order, because, being bakers, they did not think it necessary. He read the newspapers when he had time, and noticed the reports of Tribunals.

Major Bertram applied that the cases should not be heard on their merits. If these men had taken the trouble to consult the authorities such proceedings might not have been taken. But they had ignored both the first and second notice sent them to join the Colours. One would have thought they would have done something to find out about the matter, instead of which they let it all slide, and left it until they were arrested by the police.

Mr Lucas, replying, said it was not likely that Mr Fry would read the proceedings of Tribunals or that his sons would learn the intricacies of these matters. He contended that a reasonable ground had been established for allowing the appeals to be heard on their merits, and reminded the Tribunal that there was a need for bread for women and children as well as of men for the Army.

In reply to the chairman, Mr Fry said he was informed by a magistrate that baking was a certified occupation.

The clerk pointed out that in neither of the appeals was this specific ground taken, to which Mr Lucas replied that it was set out fully in the applications.

The Tribunal deliberated in private, and on their return the chairman said they had carefully considered the matter and declined to hear the appeals.

Mr Lucas: To-morrow there will be a considerable district without bread.

There is no reason to believe that all three would have been granted exemption had they appealed at the appropriate time – it is hard to believe that a tribunal would consider that a small rural bakery had genuine need for three bakers. Perhaps one, probably Ernest as the

eldest, would have been reprieved. Certainly the desperate state of the bakery business seems to have been exaggerated; their father was still running it a decade later.



The regimental badge of the Worcestershire Regiment, on a recently cut CWGC headstone.

The day after the Tribunal Alfred found himself in Reading where he was given a medical, passed fit for general service and appointed to the 3/7th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment.

The 3/7th was a training battalion, where Alfred would be given the basic training needed to turn a civilian into a soldier. Once they reached a certain level of competence trainees were posted to one of the regiment's battalions in the field. In Alfred's case this was the 1/7th (Territorial) Battalion; he landed in France on 14 August 1916 (after a remarkably short period of training) en route to the Battalion, which he joined on 16 September. Most of the intervening month was probably spent at an Infantry Base Depot, where he would have received more training.

Two months later, on 15 November, Alfred was wounded with what is given in his paperwork as GSW (shrap) – gunshot wound (shrapnel). Shrapnel shells contained numerous 'bullets' – balls of lead or steel – that were sprayed around when the shell burst. So, although not strictly a gunshot wound the damage caused was very similar to that of a bullet fired from a rifle. Alfred received wounds to his right arm and right leg. He was treated at 45 CCS (casualty clearing station) and 3 Stat H (stationary hospital – in Rouen) and then, on 22 November, evacuated to England on the SS Aberdonian. The wound to his leg (thigh) proved to be fatal, it became infected and Alfred died in Bradford War Hospital of septicaemia on 27 November 1916.

Information about his funeral was printed in the war news column:

Newbury Weekly News, 7 December 1916 – Local War Notes

The late Pte Alfred Fry, the youngest son of Mr and Mrs Fry, of Crookham, who died of wounds at War Hospital, Bradford, Yorkshire, was buried at Thatcham Cemetery with military honours. The mourners were father, mother, and brother, Miss Newman, Mrs Simpson, Miss Heal, Miss Head, Miss Gostling. Wreaths were sent by Father, Mother and Brothers, in ever loving memory; Dorothy; Fanny and Bill; Anna Alice and Mary; Mr and Mrs Gostling and Nellie; Mr and Mrs Hazel and family; Mr and Mrs Bew and family; Miss Clarke; Mr J Brown and Miss Collins, of Headley; Friends of Headley; Friends of Bishops Green; Mr and Mrs Miller. Flowers: Mrs Leng, Mrs Parkyns.

And a month after his death a notice appeared in the Family Announcements column:

Newbury Weekly News, 28 December 1916 – Died of Wounds

In loving memory of Pte A Fry, No 5141, A Company, Worcestershire Regt, who died of wounds November 27th, 1916, aged 23 years.

*The call was short, the shock severe,
To part with one we loved so dear;
Our hope's in Heaven that we may meet,
And then our joy will be complete.*

Alfred was buried on 1 December 1916 in grave 1002 at Thatcham Cemetery. He is remembered on the Thatcham War Memorial and on the memorial board in St Mary's Church, Thatcham.

The anniversary of his death was publically remembered by his family:

Newbury Weekly News, 6 December 1917 – In Memoriam

*In ever loving memory of Pte Alfred Fry, late of the 1/7th
Worcestershire Regt, who died of wounds received in action at
Delville Wood, France.*

It is just twelve months ago

That he was called above;

From one that he has always loved,

In future we shall meet above.

From his loving Father, Mother and Brothers

Family

Please see Ernest James Fry for his story and information on the remaining brothers, Jesse and Albert.

Locally William is remembered on tablet 12 of the Newbury Town War Memorial, the memorial board and roll of honour in St Nicolas' Church, Newbury.

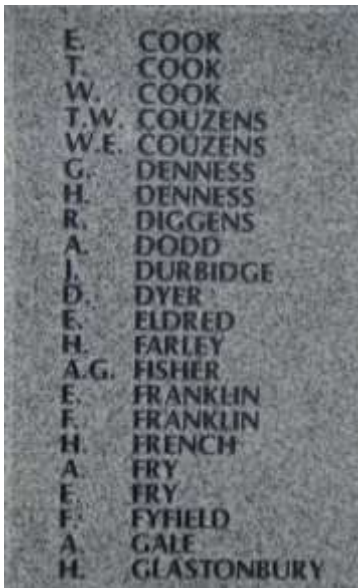
Private Ernest James Fry

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1885, Crookham
 - **Death:** 1st February 1919
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Ernest was born in Crookham and lived there with the family eventually working with his father as a baker at their bakery.
 - **Father:** James Fry
 - **Mother:** Ellen Fry (née Dowling)
 - **Siblings:** Albert, Jesse, Private Alfred Arthur Fry
 - **Spouse:** Ellen Fry
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 159th Company, Labour Corps
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 94964
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/75452838/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1268513
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:**
<http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00685S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** E J Fry
 - **War Memorial (original):** E Fry
 - **War Memorial (current):** E Fry
- Additional details:
 - Ernest also is on the roll of honour in St Nicholas Church, Newbury.

Private Fry by West Berkshire War Memorials

Ernest was born in Crookham, Berkshire in 1885 the son of James Charles Fry and his wife Ellen Rose née Dowling. James was a baker

serving the scattered community to the south of Crookham and Greenham Commons. Crookham is a hamlet of the much larger village of Thatcham (now a town of 30,000+ inhabitants), but the Fry's lived in an area far from the main settlement and some distance from the cluster of housing normally thought of as Crookham. In reality he probably got more trade from the village of Newtown close by but over the border in Hampshire.



Ernest's name on Thatcham War Memorial - below his brother Alfred.

Ernest was one of only four children, a relatively small family by the standards of the time. His siblings, all brothers, were Albert John (born 1886), Jesse Charles (1889), and Alfred Arthur (1892).

The bakery evidently did a decent trade because both Ernest and Albert joined their father in the business rather than seek employment elsewhere. By 1911 Arthur had left home to work, as a baker, for Henry Pearce in Headley – where he may well have been serving an

apprenticeship as he too had joined the family business by 1916. The remaining brother, Jesse, was the only one to rebel against embroilment in the family trade; he became a 'cycle agent', which covers a wide range of activities, but Jesse was perhaps more likely to be the local cycle repair man than a business entrepreneur selling a wide range of the latest bicycles.

After war was declared in August 1914 many young men eagerly volunteered, but not Ernest. By this time his father was 64 and, as the eldest son, Ernest would have taken on much of the running of the

family business; he had a lot more to lose than an employee would. However, the Government introduced conscription in January 1916 and Ernest was duly called up for service.

Ernest, John and Alfred were all called up – and foolishly ignored their papers, believing they were automatically exempt because they were working in a reserved occupation. When a second set of papers arrived they should have realised things were not that simple – but they ignored them again. The next call was from the police, who came to arrest them for not appearing to be enlisted.

They appeared before a magistrate in Newbury:

**Reading Mercury, 22 April 1916 – County Police Court
Wednesday, April 19th – Before R Beynon Esq.**

Three Baker Brothers and Military Service

Arthur Alfred Fry, John Albert Fry, and Ernest James Fry, brothers, single men, living at Crookham, and engaged with their father in a baking business, were charged with failing to appear at the time and place required on the 10th and 11th April.

P S Gallop, stationed at Thatcham, stated that he asked the men the reason they had not attended. Arthur Fry replied, "Because I had other work to do"; John Albert said, "Conscientious objection through pressure of business"; and Ernest answered, "Conscientious objection through business."

In reply to Mr Lucas, who appeared for the brothers witness said that they told him they were bakers, and although they did not say this was a reserved occupation he understood that this was what they meant.

Mr Lucas applied for an adjournment for a fortnight. These men were engaged with their father (who was quite unable to do anything himself) in a bakery business at Crookham, doing twelve sacks per week, and serving a wide area, and no one else was working in the business, which would have to go if they were taken away. The reason for asking for an adjournment was that their cases might come before the tribunal in the usual way. If the tribunal decided that they must go they must submit, but it might be possible in the interval for the father to make some arrangement for carrying on the business.

The Magistrate: The case is adjourned for a fortnight.

Lieutenant Bidmead (from the Newbury Recruiting Office): Am I too late to object to this on behalf of the military authorities?

The Magistrate: The decision has been given.

On the application of Mr Lucas the men were admitted to bail in their own recognizance of £5 each.

The brothers' case appeared before the Newbury Rural Tribunal on 2 May 1916. Their father applied for their exemption from conscription on the grounds that they were working in a reserved occupation. However, the military authorities objected on the grounds that they were too late to appeal. As they had each received two separate notices of their call up and simply ignored them (until the police came to arrest them for non-appearance) one can see the military's point.

Sadly for the Frys the tribunal ruled in favour of the military objection – they had failed to appeal within the time allotted and hence the appeal would not be heard. So, despite the possibility of there being

grounds for their exemption from service they would have to go into the army. The following day all three became soldiers.

As their council said on hearing the tribunal's ruling "Tomorrow there will be a considerable district without bread". For a newspaper report of the Tribunal hearing see [here](#).

There is no reason to believe that all three would have been granted exemption had they appealed at the appropriate time – it is hard to believe that a tribunal would consider that a small rural bakery had genuine need for three bakers. Perhaps one, probably Ernest as the eldest, would have been reprieved. Certainly the desperate state of the bakery business seems to have been exaggerated; their father was still running it a decade later.



The regimental badge of the Berkshire Regiment, as used on CWGC headstones.

Ernest's fitness was assessed as 'B1' - fit for Labour service, not for combat duty. He was mobilised as 22814 in the Royal Berks and then posted to the 11th Works Company which was attached to the 3rd

Hants at Fort Comer as part of the defence of Portsmouth (section III). On the 9th May 1916 the 10th (Labour) Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment was formed from various works units of the Berks and Wilts. Ernest was posted to the new Battalion, on 20 May, almost certainly along with the rest of his Company.

On the 14th June section III of the Portsmouth Defences was ordered to France along with the rest of the 10th Battalion. They left Portsmouth on 17th June for Southampton and half embarked on the Transport ship Astralind on the 18th with the rest on the Caesarea on

the 19th. On arrival at Le Havre they went to Sauvie camp and on the 20th entrained for Rouen to be based at 3 Labour Camp at Quevilly. Here they worked at the Docks and Ordnance depot.

The Labour Corps was formed December 1916 and absorbed the 10th Battalion, which was formally transferred to the Labour Corps 9th May 1917 as 158 and 159 Labour Companies. Ernest joined 159 Company with the service number 94964.

He was home for Christmas 1917, on leave or through sickness, and took the opportunity to marry his sweetheart, Ellen Gostling, on Christmas Day.



The regimental badge of the Labour Corps. (wikipedia)

In March 1918, back in France, he had a bout of dysentery that required medical attention. Subsequently he suffered two further bouts of diarrhoea eventually being invalided home and admitted for treatment at Newcastle under Lyme War Hospital, Staffordshire on 19 December 1918.

He was discharged from hospital on 13 January, fit for duty but no longer required by the Army. He was, therefore, recommended for 'transfer to Class Z'. This was the normal form of discharge for a fit soldier – he would remain a member of the reserve in case the peace process failed and hostilities resumed. Meanwhile Ernest was able to go home and resume his civilian life while the discharge paperwork was processed through the system.

However, all was not well, Ernest died at home on 1 February 1919, three weeks after his discharge from hospital.

Newbury Weekly News, 13 February 1919 – Deaths

FRY – February 1st, at Crookham, Pte E Fry, Labour Corps, dearly beloved husband of Ellen Fry, Crookham, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J C Fry.

*Oh, how much we miss thee, loved one,
No tongue on earth can tell.
But God thought best to take him home,
With Him in Heaven to dwell.*

His military record includes a form covering any possible award from any disability caused by his service. Owing to inherent delays in the paperwork (the Army was processing hundreds of thousands of discharges as fast as it could cope with them) this form was finally completed on 13 February and clearly notes that there would be no award since Ernest had no disability – obviously the authorities were still wholly unaware that he had died 12 days earlier.

Ernest was buried on 6 February 1919 in grave VI.799 at Thatcham Cemetery. His death certificate gives the cause of death as an epileptic convulsion and asphyxia. This does not appear to be linked to dysentery or diarrhoea, nevertheless he was still a serving soldier (just) and his name joined his brother Alfred's on Thatcham's war memorials. He is remembered on the Thatcham War Memorial and on the memorial board in St Mary's Church, Thatcham.

His name is also among those on the memorial in Newbury Baptist Church, which records the deaths of Baptists from the wider religious community served by the Newbury church and its satellite chapels. As his brother Alfred's name is not on this memorial it seems that the Frys were not a Baptist family; it was probably Ernest's wife, Ellen, who was the Baptist, though Ernest may well have chosen this path of worship himself.

Ernest's death while still a serving soldier means that he should be remembered on the national Debt of Honour Roll maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which should also be monitoring and caring for his grave. However, his was one of many cases that slipped through the net. An application will be made to the Commission to rectify this and to add his name to the honour roll and his grave to those under the Commission's care.

Family

Ernest's mother also died in 1919, but his father continued to run the Crookham Bakery until his death in 1930.

All four Fry brothers served during the war – following his abrupt conscription Alfred served with the 1/7th (Territorial) Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. He was wounded in November 1917 and died later that month.

Albert was the third brother conscripted, but no record of his service has been found. This is not unusual, the majority of service records were destroyed in a fire during WW2. The alternative sources of information tend to require more information in order to work out which Albert John Fry they might apply to.

Numerous Albert J Frys were awarded medals (the most complete record source for WW1 army service), but the records do not contain any useful identification information (such as date of birth, next of kin, address). So John's service remains a mystery – he could even have failed the medical on attestation and returned to the bakery within a few days of the Tribunal in May 1916. He certainly did return at some point - he died in Crookham in 1942.

The fourth brother, Jesse, served voluntarily, enlisting on 15 November 1915 into the King's Royal Rifle Corps (R16693). After training he was posted to the regiment's 12th Battalion, in Belgium.

Newbury Weekly News, 3 August 1916 – Local War Notes

Private Jesse Fry, third son of Mr and Mrs Fry, of Crookham, has been seriously wounded during the great advance in France by shrapnel. He is being treated in hospital at Woolwich, and by the latest report is progressing favourably. Two other brothers, Ernest and Alfred, are also seeing service in France.

It should be noted that this news item is not entirely correct – Jesse's Battalion, was in the Ypres area a good distance away from the 'great advance' on the Somme and Alfred was still training in the UK at this time. It is impossible to be sure when or where Jesse received his wounds, newspaper reports such as this were usually printed weeks after the event, sometimes months. The most likely occasions were in early June, when the Battalion, was very active in the Battle of Mount Sorrel (a German attack on Canadian-held positions east of Ypres) and in early July when the Battalion, suffered a number of casualties from enemy shelling while manning the line at Potijze.

Further reports followed:

Newbury Weekly News, 3 August 1916 – Local War Notes

Rifleman Jesse Fry, of Crookham, writes to say that he is in Brook Hospital, Woolwich, satisfactorily recovering from his wound.

Newbury Weekly News, 3 August 1916 – Local War Notes

Rifleman J Fry, of Crookham Common, who was badly wounded in June of last year, is still in hospital in Croydon. He has been in four different hospitals since September, but is progressing fairly well.

While Jesse recovered he was no longer fit for army service and was discharged on 4 September 1917. He returned home and picked up his old life, returning to his role as the local cycle mechanic. In 1918 he married Hilda Parker and the couple settled at Head's Hill, where Jesse died on 7 January 1943.

Private Albert Felix Gregory Fyfield

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1890, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 16th August 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Albert was born in Thatcham and lived with his parents in Broad Street (The Broadway). By 1911 they were living at Marsh House in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Fyfield
 - **Mother:** Emma Fyfield
 - **Siblings:** George, Lilly, Catherine
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 37223
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/839438/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1279488
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F A G Fyfield
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Fyfield
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Fyfield

Private Arthur Gale

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1889, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 3rd July 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Born in 1889, possibly in Pound Lane. In 1911 he was living in Heath Lane, Cold Ash and working on a local farm.
 - **Father:** John Gale
 - **Mother:** Christina Gale
 - **Siblings:** George, John, Jane, Sarah, Allan
 - **Spouse:** Ada Gale
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 16373
 - **Memorial:** Belgian Battery Corner Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/92787/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1284055
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Gale
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Gale
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Gale

Private C Gibbs

- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C Gibbs
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Gibbs
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Gibbs
- Additional details:
 - Was listed as 'C Gibbs' on the original War Memorial. Has since been altered to 'G Gibbs'.

Gunner W C Gibbs

- Civilian
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Gibbs was living at Northfield Road.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W Gibbs
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Gibbs
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Gibbs



Second Lieutenant Harold Mynett Glastonbury

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1889, Somerset
 - **Death:** 1st July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harold was appointed head of St Mary's School in August 1913. A year later he enlisted and his wife took over as head where she remained until 1925 when she remarried.
 - **Father:** Albert Glastonbury
 - **Mother:** Lucy Glastonbury (née Mynett)
 - **Siblings:** George, Gilbert
 - **Spouse:** Irene Glastonbury (née Jennings)
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, attd. 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles
 - **Rank:** Second Lieutenant
 - **Service number:** unknown
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/748662/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1359243
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H M Glastonbury
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Glastonbury
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Glastonbury

Private C Goodchild

- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C Goodchild
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Goodchild
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Goodchild
- Additional details:
 - The war memorial originally had 'C Goodchild' and was at some time changed to 'G Goodchild'.

Private James Green

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1877, Bucklebury, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 24th July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** James was born and lived in Bucklebury. The CWGC record notes “Husband of Emily Matilda Green, of 47, Station Rd., Thatcham, Berks.” The 1911 census shows James along with wife and children as living in Bucklebury so presumably either they moved prior to 1916 or the wife moved after his death.
 - **Father:** Isaac Green
 - **Mother:** Charlotte Green
 - **Siblings:** Frederick, Philip, Walter, Charlotte, Agnes, Ernest, Kate
 - **Spouse:** Emily Green (née Radbourn)
 - **Children:** Gladys, Philip
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15718
 - **Memorial:** Bethune Town Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/63047/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1444784
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Green
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Green
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Green



Private L Green

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** L Green
 - **War Memorial (original):** L Green
 - **War Memorial (current):** L Green

Private Albert James Haines

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1895, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 29th October 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Albert was born and lived in Crookham, mostly at Avenell's Cottages.
 - **Father:** Thomas Haines
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Haines
 - **Siblings:** Thomas, Sarah, Emily, Kate, Arthur, Herbert
 - **Additional:** Albert also appears on some records simply as James.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 3rd/5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment transferred to (454910) 617th Agricultural Company, Labour Corps
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 22330
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648821/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1516930
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A J Haines
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Haines
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Haines



The last person from Thatcham to die before the armistice was Private Albert James Haines of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, service number 22330. He died 29th October 1918. His parents, who lived at Avenell's

Cottages, were Thomas and Elizabeth who had at least six other children including Thomas, Sarah, Emily, Kate, Arthur and Herbert.

Albert was placed in the Royal Berkshire Regiment and made the rank of Lance Corporal. However he was wounded and then transferred to the Labour Corp., his new service number being 454910, where he appears as a Private. He was killed and subsequently buried on 6th November 1918.

Private George Haines

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 2nd June 1891, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 9th May 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** George was born in Crookham and living at Avenells Cottages in 1891. By 1901 he was living with his uncle, James Haines, in Kingsclere. He was at Folly Farm in Headley in 1911.
 - **Father:** George Haines
 - **Mother:** Annie Haines (née Gittings), remarried Mr French.
 - **Siblings:** Annie, Alice, Nellie, Elsie, Edith; half-siblings: William French, Clara French, Percy French; Frederick French (step brother)
 - **Additional:** The CWGC record his mother as being at Newtown, Thatcham at the time of his death.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 19th Battalion, Canadian Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 766206
 - **Memorial:** Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/1568759/haines,-george/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/5915840
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G Haines
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Haines
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Haines

Gunner Edwin Hall

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1895, Bradfield, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 25th February 1917, Mesopotamia
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Edwin was born and lived at Bradfield. In 1911 he was living in Newbury working as a Butcher's assistant.
 - **Father:** Alfred Hall
 - **Mother:** Amy Hall
 - **Siblings:** Flora, Dorcas, Emily
 - **Additional:** Son of Alfred and Amy Hall, of Alviston Cottage, Bucklebury Common, Reading.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery
 - **Rank:** Gunner
 - **Service number:** 18552
 - **Memorial:** Basra Memorial, Iraq
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/865637/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/5345686
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** E Hall
 - **War Memorial (original):** E Hall
 - **War Memorial (current):** E Hall

Private George Hawkins

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1884, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 6th June 1915, Berkshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1891 the family were living in Chapel Street. The 1901 census shows him at Thatcham Newtown with his aunt and uncle. In 1911 he was still living with his uncle, his aunt having since died. George was listed as a wood turner. The CWGC record shows his wife as living at Newtown, Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Richard Hawkins
 - **Mother:** Ellen Hawkins
 - **Spouse:** Emily Hawkins
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 4288
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648822/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G Hawkins
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Hawkins
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Hawkins

Private Benjamin Albert Headlong

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c. 1886, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 29th March 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Benjamin was born in Thatcham and the family goes back several generations within the village.
 - **Father:** Benjamin Headlong
 - **Mother:** Mary Headlong
 - **Spouse:** Alice Headlong
 - **Children:** Kathleen
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** In 1911 he was recorded as being in the 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment but was later recorded in the 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 7553
 - **Memorial:** Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/786003/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1808542
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** B A Headlong
 - **War Memorial (original):** B A Headlong
 - **War Memorial (current):** B A Headlong

Private Frank Harry Headlong

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1888, Thatcham, Berkshire (pos. Broad Street)
 - **Death:** 29th October 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frank was born and lived in Thatcham. In 1891 the family were living in Broad Street (The Broadway)
 - **Father:** Benjamin Headlong
 - **Mother:** Emma Headlong
 - **Siblings:** John, Ellen, Thomas, Edward, Benjamin
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records his father living at 6 Durlly Cottages, King's Road, Newbury.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 8368
 - **Memorial:** Oxford (Botley) Cemetery, Oxfordshire
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/393033/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1808545 or livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1808544
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F H Headlong.
 - **War Memorial (original):** F H Headlong.
 - **War Memorial (current):** F H Headlong.
- Additional details:
 - Frank had signed up for service at the age of 18 in 1906. He was placed with the Royal Berkshire Regiment, service number 8368.

Private George William Headlong

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Thatcham, Berkshire (pos. Turnfields)
 - **Death:** 1st December 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family were living at Turnfields in 1901 but had moved to Station Road by 1911.
 - **Father:** William E Headlong
 - **Mother:** Mary Headlong (née Wheeler)
 - **Siblings:** Ethel, Frederick. There is also an Albert E Wheeler listed, presumably a step-brother.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** G/22575
 - **Memorial:** Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1753678/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1808547
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G W Headlong.
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Headlong
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Headlong

Private Martin Lloyd Harris Holloway

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1898, Sagebury, Worcestershire
 - **Death:** 24th May 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** His father moved to Thatcham in 1911 where he became a bailiff at Crookham House. Presumably Martin moved there with them.
 - **Father:** Roger Holloway
 - **Mother:** Catherine Holloway
 - **Siblings:** Philip, Dorothy, George, Norah, Stephen
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records his parents at Waterside Farm, Thatcham.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 10th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 39825
 - **Memorial:** Klein-Vierstraat British Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/455518/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1938284
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** M L H Holloway
 - **War Memorial (original):** M Holloway
 - **War Memorial (current):** M Holloway

Private Albert House

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1883, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 26 April 1917, Salonika
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1901 the family were living in Northfield Road, Albert was described as a sawyer.
 - **Father:** George House
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth House
 - **Siblings:** Henry, George, Frederick, Walter, Ernest, Frank, Maurice, Emily
 - **Spouse:** Martha House
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists Martha Ann House as living at Railway Terrace, Ferryside, Carmarthenshire.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 7th Battalion, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 17938
 - **Memorial:** Sarigol Military Cemetery, Kriston, Greece
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/331880/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1974817
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Howse
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Howse
 - **War Memorial (current):** A House
- Additional details:
 - Was originally on the war memorial as 'A Howse' but has been redone at some point to 'A House'.

Private William John Howells

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1887, West Ilsley, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 30th November 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family moved to Thatcham between 1901 and 1911. In 1911 they were living on the Bath Road where William was working as a bricklayer.
 - **Father:** Thomas Howells
 - **Mother:** Mary Howells
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, Mary, George, Ann, Thomas, Esther
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists his parents living at the High Street, Thatcham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 22430
 - **Memorial:** Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1754078/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1990192
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W J Howells
 - **War Memorial (original):** W J Howells
 - **War Memorial (current):** W J Howells

Private Frederick John Hunt

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1899, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 11th September 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick was a slaughter man working for Robert Wyatt. In 1911 the family were living at Marsh Terrace in Chapel Street. In July 1917 Robert applied for exemption for Frederick. In the 5th November 1918 Newspaper: Weekly Casualty List (War Office & Air Ministry) he is simply listed as J Hunt.
 - **Father:** Charles Hunt.
 - **Mother:** Ellen Hunt.
 - **Siblings:** Florence, Edith, Charles.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 34701
 - **Memorial:** Vis-en-artois Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1744028/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2566897
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F J Hunt
 - **War Memorial (original):** F J Hunt
 - **War Memorial (current):** F J Hunt

Private Leslie James Hunt

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 12th October 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Leslie was born in Thatcham and in 1911 living with his family in Broad Street (The Broadway).
 - **Father:** Richard Hunt
 - **Mother:** Sarah Hunt
 - **Siblings:** Walter, William, Elizabeth, Thomas, Clara, Richard, Herbert, Leonard.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Mr. R. Hunt, of Broad St., Thatcham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 10th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 49182
 - **Memorial:** Montay-neuvilly Road Cemetery, Montay, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/528841/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** L J Hunt
 - **War Memorial (original):** L J Hunt
 - **War Memorial (current):** L J Hunt

Private James Victor Hutchins

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1899, Headley, Hampshire
 - **Death:** 11th August 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Born in Headley by 1901 the family had moved to Thornford in Crookham.
 - **Father:** Charles Hutchins
 - **Mother:** Alice Hutchins
 - **Siblings:** Ellen, Beatrice, Emily, Rose, Arthur, May
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 20229
 - **Memorial:** Bouchoir New British Cemetery, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/308521/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2025892
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** V J Hutchins
 - **War Memorial (original):** V J Hutchins
 - **War Memorial (current):** V J Hutchins

W Hyde

- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Hyde
- Additional details:
 - W Hyde was not included on the original war memorial inscription or the church roll of honour. He was added at a later date to the war memorial.

Private F J Jenkins

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F J Jenkins
 - **War Memorial (original):** F J Jenkins
- Additional details:
 - F J Jenkins does not appear on the current war memorial.

Private George Albert Jenkins

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1887, Sutton, Surrey
 - **Death:** 17th May 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** His brother and parents lived in Thatcham in 1911.
 - **Father:** Edward Jenkins
 - **Mother:** Rachel Jenkins
 - **Siblings:** Thomas, Private Harry Victor Jenkins, Winifred, Frederick
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Edward and Rachel Jenkins, of Station Rd., Thatcham, Berks. Native of Sutton, Surrey.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 12th (Prince of Wales's Royal) Lancers
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 1289
 - **Memorial:** Hazebrouck Communal Cemetery, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/44575/jenkins,-george-albert/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2090988 or livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2092353
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Jenkins
 - **War Memorial (2018 panel):** G A Jenkins
- Additional details:
 - G Jenkins was one of nine soldiers added to the Thatcham war memorial in November 2018.

Private Harry Victor Jenkins

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1895, Sutton, Surrey
 - **Death:** 1st October 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harry was living in Station Road at the time of the 1911 census. He was recorded as a Grocers Assistant.
 - **Father:** Edward Jenkins
 - **Mother:** Rachel Jenkins
 - **Siblings:** Thomas, Private George Albert Jenkins, Winifred, Frederick.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Edward and Rachel Jenkins, of Station Road, Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 7th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 40333
 - **Memorial:** Leicester (Welford Road) Cemetery, Leicestershire, UK
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/379314/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2093003
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H V Jenkins
 - **War Memorial (original):** H V Jenkins
 - **War Memorial (current):** H V Jenkins

Private J Jenkins

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Jenkins
 - **War Memorial (current):** J J Jenkins

R F Jenkins

- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (current):** R F Jenkins

R J Jenkins

- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** R J Jenkins

Leading Stoker Joseph Omer Jennings

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c. 1890, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 31st May 1916, killed at the Battle of Jutland
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Joseph was living in Broad Street (The Broadway) in 1891 and 1901.
 - **Father:** Henry Jennings
 - **Mother:** Bridget Jennings
 - **Siblings:** Mary, Ann, John, Kate, Rose, Frederick
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Henry and Bridget Jennings, of Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Royal Navy
 - **Ship:** HMS Invincible
 - **Rank:** Leading Stocker
 - **Service number:** K/2433
 - **Memorial:** Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Hampshire, UK
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/3036845/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6378590
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** O Jennings
 - **War Memorial (current):** O Jennings

Joseph signed up for service in 1908 at the age of 17 being placed in 6th Battalion, of the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment). By 1911 he was stationed in Portsmouth and listed as a Stoker. The Reading Mercury, 10 June 1916, reported that Joseph had served 8 years in the Navy.

Private Frederick George Lawrence

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1893, Brimpton, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 1st July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick was living in 1901 at Model Cottages (behind the Travellers Friend) at Crookham. He was listed in 1911 working as a Gardener. This area is also known as “The Green”.
 - **Father:** Alfred Lawrence
 - **Mother:** Mary Lawrence
 - **Siblings:** Unknown
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Alfred and Mary Lawrence, of The Green, Crookham Common, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 20090
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/799607/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2321082
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F C G Lawrence
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Lawrence
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Lawrence

Private G Lawrence

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Lawrence
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Lawrence

Private William Long

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1886, Hungerford, Berkshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** William and his brother, Arthur, were boarders in 1901 at Mortimers in Thatcham. Mortimers Cottages is today named Four Winds on Floral Way.
 - **Father:** Arthur Long
 - **Siblings:** Arthur
 - **Additional:** Also known as Willie.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W Long
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Long
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Long
- Additional details:
 - Had enlisted in the military by 1911.

Private Henry Charles Mace MM

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1896, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 27th April 1918, France
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Henry was born and lived in Thatcham. The family were, in 1911, living at Yew Tree Cottage in Crookham.
 - **Father:** George Mace
 - **Mother:** Mary Mace
 - **Siblings:** Edward, Louisa, William, Alice, Albert, Maud, Joseph, Harry, Private James Mace, Daisy, Elizabeth
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Mace, of Yew Tree Cottage, Crookham Common, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15600
 - **Memorial:** Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1584727/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2872620/ /or livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/5066820
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H C Mace
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Mace
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Mace
- Additional details:
 - MM stands for Military Medal, this was introduced in 1916 and awarded for 'acts of gallantry and devotion to duty under fire'.

Private James Mace

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1899, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 20th September 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** James was born and lived in Thatcham. The family were, in 1911, living at Yew Tree Cottage in Crookham.
 - **Father:** George Mace
 - **Mother:** Mary Mace
 - **Siblings:** Edward, Louisa, William, Alice, Albert, Maud, Joseph, Harry, Private Henry Charles Mace MM, Daisy, Elizabeth.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Mace, of Yew Tree Cottage, Crookham Common, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 8th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 42365
 - **Memorial:** Vis-en-artois Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1746306/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2872656
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Mace
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Mace
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Mace

Corporal Frank Marchant

- Civilian
 - **Death:** 31st July 1917
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 25th Company, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)
 - **Rank:** Corporal
 - **Service number:** 17848
 - **Memorial:** Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/905872/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2912467
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Marchant
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Marchant
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Marchant

Private Archibald George Millson

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1894, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 9th July 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Archibald lived with his parents at the Volunteer Inn at Crookham.
 - **Father:** George Millson
 - **Mother:** Emily Millson
 - **Siblings:** Henry
 - **Additional:** The Reading Mercury, 21st August 1915, notes Private A G Millson of the 1st Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment was killed in France. He was the son of Mr G W Millson of the Volunteer Inn.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 16472
 - **Memorial:** Ypress (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/906963/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3053289
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Millsom
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Millsom
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Millsom

Private Henry Nailor

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1881
 - **Death:** 4th March 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Henry was with his parents at Colthrop Farm in 1901. By 1911 Henry was shown as a Cow Man on a Farm.
 - **Father:** Tom Nailor
 - **Mother:** Eliza Nailor
 - **Additional:** The CWGC lists him as the son of Mrs. E. Nailor, of Chapel St., Thatcham, Berks, and the late Mr. T. Nailor.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** "D" Company, 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15717
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1546957/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3198836
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Nailor
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Nailor
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Nailor
- Additional details:
 - Some records show the surname as Nailor and some as Naylor.

Private Henry George Nailor

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1893
 - **Death:** 14th July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Henry was recorded as being born in the third quarter of 1893 as Henry George Naylor. Henry in 1901 was living in Chapel Street with his parents although he is recorded as Harry. In 1911, still listed as Harry, he is working as a 'Wood Japaner'.
 - **Father:** George Nailor
 - **Mother:** Ann Nailor
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the "Son of George and Arm Naylor, of Chapel St., Thatcham, Berks." Presumably 'Arm' should be Ann.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 3788
 - **Memorial:** St. Vaast Post Military Cemetery, Richebourg-L'Avoue
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/570300/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3209326
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H G Nailor
 - **War Memorial (original):** H G Nailor
 - **War Memorial (current):** H G Nailor
- Additional details:
 - Some records show the surname as Nailor, some as Nayler and some as Naylor.



Private J Nightingale

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Nightingale
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Nightingale
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Nightingale

Private Thomas John Nightingale

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1887
 - **Death:** 15th September 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** On the 1901 census the family are at Malt House Cottage, Crookham. CWGC record his father as living in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** Thomas Nightingale
 - **Mother:** Adelaide
 - **Siblings:** Thirza, Edith, Alice, Herbert, James, Ethel.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records his as the son of Thomas Nightingale, of Chapel St., Thatcham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 10th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 32492
 - **Memorial:** Lahana Military Cemetery, Greece
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/333984/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3248344
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:**
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** T J Nightingale
 - **War Memorial (original):** T J Nightingale
 - **War Memorial (current):** T J Nightingale

The CWGC record him as J Nightingale but the Reading Observer, 13th October 1917 and Weekly Casualty List (War Office & Air Ministry) 9th October 1917 have Private T J Nightingale of Newbury.

Private F Palmer

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Palmer

Private Arthur Joseph Pearce

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898
 - **Death:** 31st July 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family lived at Thornford with most working on a nearby farm.
 - **Father:** William Pearce
 - **Mother:** Emily Pearce (née Haines)
 - **Siblings:** Private William John Pearce, George, Albert, Charlotte, Frederick, Dorothy, Edward
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 26966
 - **Memorial:** Ypress (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1623718/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3444239
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A J Pearce
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Pearce
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Pearce

Private William John Pearce

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1892
 - **Death:** 13th October 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family lived at Thornford with most working on a nearby farm.
 - **Father:** William Pearce
 - **Mother:** Emily Pearce (née Haines)
 - **Siblings:** George, Albert, Private Arthur Joseph Pearce, Charlotte, Frederick, Dorothy, Edward
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 8th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 14538
 - **Memorial:** Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1766534/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3448249
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:** <http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP00723S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W J Pearce
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Pearce
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Pearce



The Reading Observer, 27 November 1915, notes Sergeant W Pearce, 14538 of the 8th Battalion, Royal berks Regiment as missing. The Reading Mercury, 15 July 1916, reported Drummer W Pearce, 14538 (Crookham, Hants) as killed. Presumably this was an error and should have been Berkshire.

Private Pearce by West Berkshire War Memorials

William Pearce was born in late 1892, the eldest child of William and Emily. At the time of the 1901 and 1911 censuses the family are living at Thornford, a farmstead on the Hampshire border, south of Greenham Common where William was employed as a farm worker. By 1911 William was working, along with two younger brothers, George and Arthur as 'waggoners on farm'. Presumably they had found employment on Thornford Farm though William became a groom at Chamberhouse Farm, on the north side of Greenham Common, before he signed up with the Royal Berks during the early days of the war.

He was assigned to the 8th Battalion, a new unit, one of several formed from the wave of volunteers who rushed to enlist in the patriotic fervour at the start of the war.

By October 1915 the Battalion, was in France and had already seen heavy action the previous month at the start of the Battle of Loos, the so-called 'big push'. On the 25 September the Battalion, suffered appalling losses (17 officers and 500 other ranks) during the opening attack of the Battle, despite these losses the Battalion, was back in the line on the 12 October, with fresh troops drafted from the 9th Battalion, to help make up the numbers.

The Battalion, war diary tells the story:

Oct 12 1915

The Battalion, assumed its battle position at 11:30pm on the night of the 12/13th instant, with the Black Watch Regiment on its left and the London Scottish on its right flank. The Battalion, occupied a frontage of two hundred yards, with two companies in the front line and two companies in support, its objective

being the German trench on the east side of the main road not more than two hundred yards from our own trench.

Oct 13 1915

Precisely at 1:00pm the Chlorine gas discharge began and was continued at intervals until 1:50pm. During this time smoke bombs were thrown out by our men from the front line trench. The wind seemed very favourable and carried the gas and smoke towards the enemy's trench. 1:50pm. The gas discharge ceased, the artillery lifted and the Battalion, wire-cutters accompanied by men carrying smoke bombs went forward under cover of the smoke. During the whole time of the smoke discharge hostile machine gun fire from our right flank could be heard. 2:00pm. The remainder of the two companies in the front line went over. From reports I have since received it appears that only about six of these men reached the Estimate across the road owing to heavy machine-gun fire from the right flank which seemed to come from the direction of the chalk pits. These men remained at the Estimate until dark and then crawled back. 2:10PM. At 2:10PM a report reached me that our first lines had attained the road but were being enfiladed; I then ordered two platoons of the supporting companies to go over. As these men crossed our first line, the Machine Gun Officer, with his team, joined them. This Officer reports that by this time the smoke was beginning to thin and that his team only got about 75 yards beyond our parapet when they came under machine-gun fire and were cut down. From inquiries I have made from NCOs it appears that about fifteen men of this line reached the road but did not cross it. They report that there was little rifle fire from the German trench. Hand grenades were thrown at them from the enemy's trench, but these fell short by about ten yards. 2:20PM. The remainder of the Battalion, went over, but were no more successful than the others in reaching

their objective. During the night those men who had escaped crawled back to our front-line trench. I Attribute the failure of the attack to the inability of our artillery to silence the German machine-guns, and to the complete absence of support.



William Pearce's name on the Loos Memorial

Newbury Weekly News, 6 June 1916

Mr and Mrs W Pearce, of Crookham, have been officially informed that their son William, who has been missing since October 13th, 1915, must be considered as killed in action on that date. He was a private in the 8th Batt Royal Berks Regiment, and was 23 years of age. Before joining the Army he was groom at Chamberhouse Farm.

William's body was never identified, he is commemorated on Panel 95 on the walls of the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner just outside the small town of Loos.

Private Wilfred James Pike

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 20th November 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:**
Wilfred was born and lived in Thatcham. In 1901 and 1911 the family were living in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Pike
 - **Mother:** Eliza Pike
 - **Siblings:** Beatrice, Leslie, Lilian
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Pike, of Chapel St., Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 34110
 - **Memorial:** Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1755958/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3519622
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W J Pike
 - **War Memorial (original):** W J Pike
 - **War Memorial (current):** W J Pike



Rifleman Arthur Pinnock

- Civilian

- **Birth:** 19th August 1884, Thatcham, Berkshire
- **Death:** 30th October 1914
- **Connection with Thatcham:** The Pinnocks arrived in Thatcham c.1815 with many branches including this one being wood turners. In 1891 Arthur was in Broad Street (The Broadway). By 1901 they were in Station Road where Arthur is described as a Painters Apprentice but by 1911 was involved in the family business.
- **Father:** Stephen Pinnock
- **Mother:** Harriet Pinnock (née Fletcher)
- **Siblings:** Alfred, Eliza, William, Ernest, Edith, Hubert
- **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Stephen Raymond Pinnock and Harriet Pinnock, of Thatcham, Berks.



- Military

- **Service:** Army
- **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps
- **Rank:** Rifleman
- **Service number:** 4735
- **Memorial:** Ypress (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
- **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1624354/
- **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3525851

- Thatcham memorials

- **Church roll:** A Pinnock
- **War Memorial (original):** A Pinnock
- **War Memorial (current):** A Pinnock

Lance Corporal Ernest William Pope

- Civilian

- **Birth:** 1875, Chieveley, Berkshire
- **Death:** 13th October 1915
- **Connection with Thatcham:** The CWGC have Ernest's widow, Elizabeth, living in Station Road.
- **Father:** Robert Pope
- **Spouse:** Elizabeth Pope
- **Children:** William, Alfred, Archibald, Adeline, Katherine
- **Additional:** Son of Robert Pope, of Chieveley, Newbury; husband of Elizabeth Pope, of 2 Station Rd., Thatcham, Newbury, Berks. The family were in 1911 living in Theale and presumably moved to Thatcham sometime after.



- Military

- **Service:** Army
- **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
- **Rank:** Lance Corporal
- **Service number:** 9940
- **Memorial:** Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
- **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1766930/
- **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3554710

- Thatcham memorials

- **Church roll:** E Pope
- **War Memorial (original):** E Pope
- **War Memorial (current):** E Pope

- Additional details:

- Ernest was shown as a Private on the original war memorial.

Private C Powell

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C Powell
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Powell
 - **War Memorial (current):** C Powell

Private James Preston

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1884, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family lived, in 1891, at Georges Farm in Crookham. He was in Padworth in 1911 working on a farm.
 - **Father:** James Preston
 - **Mother:** Ann Preston
 - **Siblings:** Charles, George, Ann, Alice
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of James and Ann Maria Preston, of Crookham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 8th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 13199
 - **Memorial:** Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1767064/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3588591
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Preston
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Preston
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Preston



Private William Thomas Preston

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1896, Crookham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family were all born in Crookham and living at Holly Bush Cottage.
 - **Father:** Thomas Preston
 - **Mother:** Rose Preston
 - **Siblings:** Emily, George, Albert, Henry, Mary, Milford
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Thomas William and Rose Annie Preston, of Holly Bush Cottage, Crookham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 8th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 14400
 - **Memorial:** Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/1767069/preston,-william/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3589652
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W T Preston
 - **War Memorial (original):** W T Preston
 - **War Memorial (current):** W T Preston

Lance Corporal Frederick Joseph Prouting

- Civilian

- **Birth:** c.1888, Snelsmore, Berkshire
- **Death:** 3rd November 1914
- **Connection with Thatcham:** Born in Snelsmore he moved to Thatcham between 1894 and 1898.
- **Father:** Albert Prouting
- **Mother:** Mary Prouting (née Seymour).
- **Siblings:** Charles, Albert; half-siblings: Lucy Gibbs, Alice Gibbs, Ada Gibbs, George Gibbs, Emily Gibbs
- **Additional:** Frederick's father died in 1888 and his mother married a James Gibbs in 1890.



- Military

- **Service:** Army
- **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
- **Rank:** Lance Corporal
- **Service number:** 8562
- **Memorial:** Poperinghe Old Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
- **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/485533/
- **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3612832

- Thatcham memorials

- **Church roll:** F J Prouting
- **War Memorial (original):** F J Prouting
- **War Memorial (current):** F J Prouting

Private Alfred Thomas Quelch

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1898, Chieveley, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 3rd January 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Alfred's parents were living in Thatcham according to the CWGC records.
 - **Father:** John Quelch
 - **Mother:** Alice Quelch.
 - **Siblings:** Arthur, William, Private Charles James Quelch, Frederick, Albert, Harold
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of John and Alice Quelch, of Turnpike House, Thatcham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 11th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 34895
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/830056/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3630270
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A T Quelch
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Quelch
 - **War Memorial (current):** A T Quelch
- Additional details:
 - There seems to be some confusion over where Alfred was born. The IWM has Hampshire but all other records suggest Chieveley in Berkshire.
 - Assumption is F Quelch was corrected to A T Quelch on the War Memorial.
 - It would appear he is also on the Midgham War Memorial shown as Alfred J Quelch.

Private Charles James Quelch

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1897, Boxford, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 2nd April 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Parents are known to have lived in Thatcham.
 - **Father:** John Quelch
 - **Mother:** Alice Quelch.
 - **Siblings:** Arthur, William, Private Alfred Thomas Quelch, Frederick, Albert, Harold.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the “Son of John and Alice Quelch, of 49, Cox's Lane, Midgham, Reading.” When his brother Alfred’s records were created the parents were living in Thatcham so presumably this is the connection with Thatcham.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 200942
 - **Memorial:** Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/1587120/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3630279
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C J Quelch
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Quelch
 - **War Memorial (current):** C J Quelch
- Additional details:
 - It would appear he is also on the Midgham War Memorial shown as James Quelch.

Private Charles Radbourne

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1895, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 24th August 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Born in Thatcham, Charles was living on Harts Hill in 1901. By 1911 the family had moved to Turn Fields and Charles was working as a Paper Maker, presumably at Colthrop.
 - **Father:** Isaac Radbourne
 - **Mother:** Mary Radbourne
 - **Siblings:** Edward, Matilda, George, Kate
 - **Additional:** The CGWC records him as the son of Isaac and Mary Ann Radbourn, of Turn Fields, Thatcham, Newbury.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 7th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15348
 - **Memorial:** Karasouli Military Cemetery, Greece
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/623752/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3637300
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C Radbourne
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Radbourne
 - **War Memorial (current):** C Radbourne



Lance Corporal George Charles Rogers

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1894, Wood Green, Middlesex
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** When George enlisted his residence is recorded as Thatcham.
 - **Mother:** Annie Rogers
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Mrs. Annie Rogers, of 72, Pipers Lane, Thatcham, Newbury.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Lance Corporal
 - **Service number:** 16310
 - **Memorial:** Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/867834/rogers,-george-charles/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3807218
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G Rogers
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Rogers
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Rogers

Private Frank Rolfe

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 27th December 1898, Peasemore, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 23rd April 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frank's parents are recorded by CWGC as living at Turnpike House.
 - **Father:** Charles Rolfe
 - **Mother:** Martha Rolfe
 - **Siblings:** Private Joseph Rolfe, William
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Charles and Martha Rolfe, of Turnpike House, Thatcham, Newbury, Berks. Native of Beedon, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 4th R.M. Battalion, Royal Marine Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** CH/2580(S)
 - **Memorial:** Dover (St. James's) Cemetery, Kent, UK
 - **CWGC:** <https://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/365713/rolfe,-frank/>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Rolfe
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Rolfe
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Rolfe
- Additional details:
 - Frank is also listed on the Beedon War Memorial.

Private Joseph Rolfe

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 27th July 1893, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 26th October 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Joseph was born in Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Charles Rolfe
 - **Mother:** Martha Rolfe
 - **Siblings:** William, Private Frank Rolfe
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd R.M. Battalion, R.N. Div. Royal Marine Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** PO/1886(S)
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/828131/rolfe,-joseph/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6948974
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Rolfe
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Rolfe
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Rolfe
- Additional details:
 - Joseph is also listed on the Beedon War Memorial.

Private F Rose

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Rose
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Rose
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Rose

Private Harold Rosier

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1897, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 3rd July 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Harold was born in Thatcham. In 1901 and 1911, living in Park Lane with the Lovegrove family. In 1901 he was described as a Nurse Child and in 1911 an Errand Boy.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 15694
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/810063/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3825405
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Rosier
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Rosier
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Rosier

Lance Corporal Cecil Rutter

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1895, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 17th February 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Cecil was born in Thatcham living in 1901 and 1911 in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Rutter
 - **Mother:** Sophia Rutter (née Tyrell)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, George, Sergeant Percy Harold Rutter, Charles, Nellie, Marguerite, Wilfred, Corporal Gordon Tyrell Rutter, Vera
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 6th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Lance Corporal
 - **Service number:** 21818
 - **Memorial:** Aveluy Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/186541/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3868017
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C Rutter
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Rutter
 - **War Memorial (current):** C Rutter
- Additional details:
 - Also remembered in the family grave plot in Thatcham Cemetery.

Corporal Gordon Tyrell Rutter

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1897, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 22nd August 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Gordon was born in Thatcham, living in 1901 and 1911 in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Rutter
 - **Mother:** Sophia Rutter (née Tyrell)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, George, Sergeant Percy Harold Rutter, Charles, Nellie, Marguerite, Wilfred, Lance Corporal Cecil Rutter, Vera
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of George T. and Sophia Rutter, of 5, Chapel Street, Thatcham, Berks. His brother, Percy Harold also fell.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Corporal
 - **Service number:** 201245
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/7531805/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3868188
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G T Rutter
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Rutter
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Rutter
- Additional details:
 - Also remembered in the family grave plot in Thatcham Cemetery.

Sergeant Percy Harold Rutter

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1883, London
 - **Death:** 14th October 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Percy was born in Thatcham, living in 1901 and 1911 in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Rutter
 - **Mother:** Sophia Rutter (née Tyrell)
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, George, Charles, Nellie, Marguerite, Wilfred, Lance Corporal Cecil Rutter, Corporal Gordon Tyrell Rutter, Vera.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of George T. Rutter, of 5, Chapel St., Thatcham. His brother, Gordon Tyrrell also fell.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Sergeant
 - **Service number:** 441
 - **Memorial:** Thatcham Cemetery, Thatcham, Berkshire, UK
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/648823/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** P H Rutter
 - **War Memorial (original):** P H Rutter
 - **War Memorial (current):** P H Rutter



Private W T Savager

- Civilian
 - **Death:** c.1916
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W Savager
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Savager
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Savage



Gunner Sydney Maurice Simpson

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1882, Rougham, Suffolk
 - **Death:** 14th October 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1911 Sydney was living with his family in Harts Hill where he was listed as Head Game Keeper.
 - **Father:** Henry Simpson
 - **Mother:** Eva Simpson
 - **Spouse:** Alice Simpson (née Brown)
 - **Children:** Ethel, Albert, Evelyn, Olive, Rosalind
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Henry and Eva Simpson, of Bury St. Edmund's; husband of Alice Ada Simpson, of Harts Hill, Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 26th Heavy Bty. Royal Garrison Artillery
 - **Rank:** Gunner
 - **Service number:** 95379
 - **Memorial:** Aeroplane Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/449991/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4048014
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** S M Simpson
 - **War Memorial (original):** S M Simpson
 - **War Memorial (current):** S M Simpson

Stoker 1st Class George Southey

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1888, Durrington, Wiltshire
 - **Death:** 31st May 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family were living in Chapel Street in 1901. In 1911, still in Thatcham, George was described as a Labourer.
 - **Father:** William Southey
 - **Mother:** Sarah Southey
 - **Siblings:** Charles, Albert, Rosina, John, Ethel, Frederick.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of William J. and Sarah Southey, of Park Lane, Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Navy
 - **Ship:** HMS Queen Mary
 - **Rank:** Stoker 1st Class
 - **Service number:** K/11582
 - **Memorial:** Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Hampshire
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/3038577/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6387730
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** G Southey
 - **War Memorial (original):** S H Southey
 - **War Memorial (current):** G A Southey

Private Edwin James Stevens MM

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1895, Thatcham, Berkshire.
 - **Death:** 26th September 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Edwin was born in Thatcham and living, in 1901, in Green Lane. By 1911, still in Green Lane, Edwin was working as a Wood Turner.
 - **Father:** William Stevens
 - **Mother:** Emily Stevens
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Petty Officer William Henry Stevens, Emily, Ernest, Thomas, Herbert, Harold, Alice.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, of "The Bungalow," 135, East Millway Rd., Andover, Hants. Native of Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 132nd Field Amb. Royal Army Medical Corps
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 65880
 - **Memorial:** Godewaersvelde British Cemetery, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/24222/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/5097624 or livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4256063
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** E J Stevens
 - **War Memorial (original):** E J Stephens
 - **War Memorial (current):** E G Stephens MM
- Additional details:
 - MM stands for Military Medal, this was introduced in 1916 and awarded for 'acts of gallantry and devotion to duty under fire'.

Petty Officer William Henry Stevens

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 19th October 1887, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 22nd September 1914
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1891 the family were living in Station Road but by 1901 had moved to Green Lane.
 - **Father:** William Stevens
 - **Mother:** Emily Stevens
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Emily, Ernest, Thomas, Private Edwin James Stevens MM, Herbert, Harold, Alice
- Military
 - **Service:** Navy
 - **Ship:** HMS Hogue
 - **Rank:** Petty Officer
 - **Service number:** 226024
 - **Memorial:** Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/3050155/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6173100
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W H Stevens
 - **War Memorial (original):** W H Stephens
 - **War Memorial (current):** W H Stevens

The 1891 census has surname as Stephens but later census has Stevens. He enlisted in 1905 where his previous occupation is listed as Wood Turner.

Petty Officer William Henry Stevens was the first person from Thatcham to die during the war that has been identified so far. He was born 19 October 1887 in Thatcham. Initially the family lived in Station Road but later moved to Green Lane. His parents were William and Emily. William had eight brothers and sisters who are Emily, Ernest, Thomas, Edwin, Herbert, Harold and Alice. There is a record of another sibling but their name is unknown.

William joined up with the Navy and last served on the HMS Hogue. The ship was part of the Southern Force in the North Sea on 22 September 1914 when a German U-boat, U-9, on patrol surfaced and fired a torpedo. The U-boat dived again, and the torpedo hit one of the ships. The U-boat rose again and fired more torpedoes this time hitting HMS Hogue. A number of ships were hit causing about 1,450 deaths.

Private William J Street

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1894, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** William was living in Lower Way.
 - **Father:** Frederick Street
 - **Mother:** Annie Street
 - **Siblings:** Elsie, Dorothy, Nellie, Winifred, Annie, Gladys
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 16835
 - **Memorial:** Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/868931/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4300356
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W Street
 - **War Memorial (original):** W Street
 - **War Memorial (current):** W Street



Private J Thorne

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** J Thorne
 - **War Memorial (original):** J Thorne
 - **War Memorial (current):** J Thorn

Private Frederick William David Tidbury

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1883, Greenham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 9th April 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frederick was born and lived in Greenham. He later moved, with his wife, to Crookham Common.
 - **Father:** William Tidbury
 - **Mother:** Sarah Tidbury
 - **Siblings:** Rosina, Sidney, Charlotte, Albert, Edith, Emily
 - **Spouse:** Annie Tidbury (née Seward)
 - **Children:** Albert.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the husband of A. Tidbury, of Crookham Common, Newbury.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 19th Battalion, Manchester Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 41901
 - **Memorial:** Dury Crucifix Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/254290/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4445412
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** D Tidbury
 - **War Memorial (original):** D Tidbury
 - **War Memorial (current):** D Tidbury
- Additional details:
 - There is also a memorial in St Mary's Church at Greenham but reading 'F Tidbury'.

Private G Tull

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (original):** G Tull
 - **War Memorial (current):** G Tull

Second Lieutenant Alexander Buller Turner VC

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 22nd May 1893, Reading, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 1st October 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family lived in Thatcham House.
 - **Father:** Charles Turner
 - **Mother:** Jane Turner (née Buller)
 - **Siblings:** Charles (half-brother), Janey, Victor, Mark, Cecil
 - **Additional:** Son of Major and Mrs. Charles Turner, of Thatcham House, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Second Lieutenant
 - **Service number:**
 - **Memorial:** Chocques Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/167294/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4515669
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A B Turner
 - **War Memorial (original):** A B Turner VC
 - **War Memorial (current):** A B Turner VC



Alexander's grandfather, Charles Turner, married Ella Thornton in 1886 and she died a year later due to complications after giving birth. This first son, Charles, followed his father into military service and was awarded the MC. Charles (senior) remarried, in 1892, Jane Elizabeth Buller and they had five children Jane (aka Janey, Milly), Alexander, Victor, Cecil and Mark.

Cecil went into the Royal Navy whilst Victor went on to be awarded a VC in the Second World War. Mark served in the Royal Horse Artillery and was awarded both the DSO and MC.

Alexander was awarded, posthumously, the VC for his actions at the Battle of Loos in 1915. A soldier, Corporal W Hawkins, wrote a letter about the action. Hawkins writes:

“Our lads were very weary and tired after being twenty-four days in trenches, but still, there was work to do and it fell to our dear old regiment to do it, and they fought like heroes everyone. We were fired on from all sides, and the German ‘bombers’ tried to cut us off, but Lieutenant Turner and Private Sparrow went forward and bombed them back. Lieutenant Turner got right up to the German parapet, stood up and hurled bombs at them as fast as ever he could. A pluckier deed I never saw. I am sorry to say that he was wounded and he has since died. I am proud to have served under such an officer, and I know Thatcham will be proud of him too. This deed was done in daylight and seen by the majority of the regiment. His friends will have the consolation of knowing that he met his death courageously carrying out dangerous duty.”

Corporal Hawkins is said to be from Thatcham and is possibly Walter Hawkins, born in Cold Ash and was living in Thatcham in 1891 and 1901. Another member of the regiment, Private Joseph Tedder, also wrote a letter of the action which appeared in several newspapers:

“We were making a night attack, and after a few hours’ hard fighting we were very hard pressed, for we were attacking all uphill, and the enemy had the advantage over our brave fellows, for they were well supplied with bombs. When we got part of the way up the hill they simply showered bombs down

upon us, so that we had to retire a little way and reorganise. Then the daylight came, and we had to give up the attempt, or we should have been wiped out. But the Huns had not finished – they bombed us from a short communication trench that ran near ours. Then our time came; I was nearly mad at seeing our chaps being bowled over and at not being able to get at the Germans. One of our officers named Turner called for volunteers to go and bomb them from the trench, and two of us went with him and succeeded, after throwing several boxes of bombs, and also getting some dozens thrown at us and having volleys fired at us from the hill. Then the officer was hit three times, and died next day from his wounds. I was slightly grazed on the shoulder, and that finished me for the time. Then we were relieved, after having had a very trying time. The officer is recommended for the V.C.”

It was estimated by Colonel Carter who led the rear-guard that the action saved 200 to 300 lives. Private Sparrow is most likely to be Private William Sparrow, service number 8777. William was from Salford, wounded at the Somme, he died 3rd August 1916.

Private Charles William Wallington

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 26th August 1896, Thatcham Berkshire
 - **Death:** 19th May 1917, Newbury, Berkshire
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family in 1901 and 1911, and presumably when Charles was discharged, living in Chapel Street.
 - **Father:** George Wallington
 - **Mother:** Ada Wallington (née Bosley)
 - **Siblings:** Alice, Alfred, Minnie, Arthur, Albert, Rose
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 3595
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4594008
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** C W Wallington
 - **War Memorial (original):** C Wallington
 - **War Memorial (current):** C Wallington
- Additional details:
 - Charles enlisted on 5th January 1915 and was discharged on 20th July 1916 due to illness. His record card puts the exact cause to “Sickness Para 392 XVI KR”. This refers to him being no longer physically fit for service.

Private Frank Westall

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1886, Shaw, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 3rd October 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Frank was living in Shaw, part of which was classed as Thatcham and in 1901 as Cold Ash.
 - **Father:** James Westall
 - **Mother:** Edith Westall (née Head)
 - **Siblings:** 7 older siblings
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Mrs. E. Westall, of 73, Shaw Crescent, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 7497
 - **Memorial:** Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/584441/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4705437
 - **West Berkshire War Memorials:**
<http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/texts/stories/WBP01015S.php>
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** F Westall
 - **War Memorial (original):** F Westall
 - **War Memorial (current):** F Westall
- Additional details:
 - Frank can also be found on the Shaw War Memorial and Newbury War Memorial.

Private Westall by West Berkshire War Memorials

Frank was born in Shaw in 1886 the fourth son, eighth and youngest child of James Westall and his wife Edith (née Head). James was a farm

worker, originally from Boxford, who seems to have worked on the Shaw Estate. The estate spanned the parish boundaries between Newbury, Shaw and Cold Ash (formerly part of Thatcham) and the family can be found in various cottages in census returns.

At the time of the 1901 census Frank was a 14-year-old schoolboy, about to leave full-time schooling for the adult world of work. By 1911 he was working as a general labourer and living with his parents at 32 Shaw Crescent, Newbury. Between the two censuses it would appear that Frank signed up with the Royal Berkshire Regiment; judging by his service number this was probably in 1903 (aged 17). He would have signed up for a standard 7/5 term – seven years with the regiment as a regular soldier followed by five years in the reserves. By 1911 he would have been back in civvies, probably thinking that his uniform would



only be needed for an occasional training session, perhaps a parade or two; but that all changed in August 1914 when war was declared on Germany. Reservists were immediately mobilised, many arriving with their regiments in the opening days of the war. Frank reported for duty at Brock Barracks in Reading and was with the 1st Battalion, of the Royal Berks when they crossed to France on 13 August 1914.

Frank Westall's grave in France

The Battalion, saw action from the first engagement at Mons, took part in the long retreat back to the Marne, turned and fought the Germans to a standstill, then pushed them back into Belgium where both armies dug in and began the years of trench warfare.

In early 1915 Frank's father, James, died aged 73. Frank was away in the trenches and was unable to attend the funeral, but he did get home on leave later in the year, returning to his unit on 22 September.

A few days later, on 25 September 1915 the British launched an offensive known to history as the Battle of Loos. The battlefield was a coal mining area around the small town of Loos-en-Gohelle, just south of the Belgian border. An early target was a mine known as Fosse 8; German positions on a large slag heap overlooked the British troops advancing towards them and they were able to repel several attacks. On 28 September the 1st Royal Berks were tasked with another attempt on Fosse 8. Against determined opposition the Battalion, fought its way as far as the slag heap, some men getting half way up it. During the action Lt Alexander Buller Turner from Thatcham won the regiment's first VC of the war; his, and many other acts of individual heroism were in vain. Losses were heavy; a total of 13 officers and 275 other ranks were killed, wounded or missing.

Frank was among the 143 men missing, their fate unknown. His family were informed:

Newbury Weekly News, 11 November 1915 - Local War Notes
Pte F Westall, 1st Royal Berks, youngest son of Mrs Westall, of 32, Shaw Crescent, has been reported missing since September 28. A letter from him of that date has been received by his sister, evidently hurriedly written. A nephew in the same regiment, but in another company, writes that his uncle was killed, but of this there is no confirmatory evidence. His friends would be glad to hear of any information with regard to him. Mrs Westall has two sons and two grandsons fighting in France.

By this time everyone knew that 'missing' all too often meant dead, but missing men did turn up as prisoners in German hands. Relatives

would eagerly read every new list of prisoners of war in the hope of finding the name of their loved one. Some were lucky, many were not. Frank's family did hear, eventually, that he was taken prisoner, but the news was not good:

Newbury Weekly News, 9 March 1916 - Died of Wounds

WESTALL - Died of wounds received in action at Vermelles on September 28th, 1915, whilst a prisoner of war in Germany. Pte Frank Westall, 1st Royal Berks, and youngest dearly loved son of the late James and of Mrs Westall, 32, Shaw-crescent, aged 28 years.

*Far away cross the ocean in a distant land he is laid,
We do not know the pain he bore,
We did not see him die;
We only know that he is gone,
And could not say goodbye.*

From his loving mother and sister Ida.

More details were printed in the news columns:

Newbury Weekly News, 9 March 1916 - Local War Notes

After nearly six months of anxiety and suspense, official notification has now been received, together with a letter of sympathy from the King, of Pte Frank Westall, 1st Royal Berks, and youngest son of Mrs Westall, 32, Shaw-crescent, who has been missing since the 28th September, 1915 – he has since died of severe wounds received in action of that date, at Vermelles, whilst a prisoner in Germany. Pte Frank Westall was a reservist, and was called up to rejoin his regiment August 6,

1914, and left for France a week later. He was home for a few days leave after 13 months, and was reported missing just six days after he returned to the front. Although prepared for the worst, the sad news is particularly painful to his mother and sister.

Later that year his mother marked the anniversary of his death:

Newbury Weekly News, 28 September 1916 – In Memoriam

In ever loving memory of Private Frank Westall, of the Royal Berkshire Regt, reported missing after the Battle of Vermelles, September 28th, 1915, reported died a prisoner of war in February, 1916.

*Far and often our thoughts do wonder
To that grave so far away;
The unknown grave is the bitterest blow,
None but aching hearts can know.
None know how sad the parting was,
Or what the farewell cost;
But God and His bright Angels
Have gained what we have lost.*

Never forgotten by his sorrowing Mother and Sister.

Frank's story was not quite over, in January 1918 a final chapter was recorded in the local paper:

Newbury Weekly News, 10 January 1918 – Local War Notes

News has now been received of the late Pte Frank Westall, 1st Royal Berks, and son of Mrs Westall, of Shaw Crescent, who

was first reported missing September 28th, 1915; then later as having died a prisoner of war in Germany between that date and the 5th February 1916. Now a report which has been received by the War Office through the Geneva Red Cross, in which his name appears in the German official list of dead:- "7497 Pt F Westall, 1st Royal Berks Regt, died 3rd November, 1915. Buried Seolin Dep Nord Military Cemetery grave 123." The deceased was a reservist, and re-joined his regiment in August 1914, going first to Reading and Aldershot, and crossed to France a week later. He came home on leave after thirteen months, and had only returned to the front six days. His last letter was received in September, 1915, two days after he was taken prisoner.

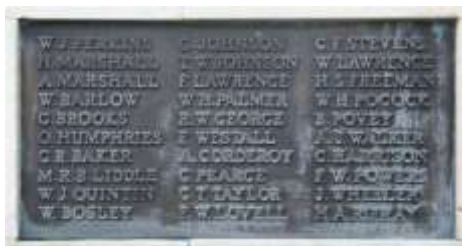
Later that year the family remembered Frank on the third anniversary of his death:

Newbury Weekly News, 3 October 1918 – In Memoriam

In ever-loving memory of Pt. Frank Westall 1st Batt. Royal Berks. Reg. died a PoW in Germany October the 3rd 1915 reported missing in September, taken prisoner 6 days after returning to the front from a few days leave.
How sad is the parting so many now know
No grave to watch over our great love to show
But well done dear boy you so nobly gave
Your life for your country to free and to save
Not dead to us we loved him dear
Not lost but gone before
He lives with us in memory still and will for evermore.

From Mother and Sisters Ida (Shaw Crescent) and Charlie (in France)

Frank died on 3 November 1915 and was buried in a German military cemetery at Seolin. After the war there was a large programme of



rationalisation of graves during which Frank was moved from Seolin to Cabaret Rouge British Cemetery on the outskirts of the village of Souchez. He lies in grave VIII. J. 12.

Frank's name on Newbury War Memorial (centre)

Locally he is remembered on the Newbury Town War Memorial, as well as village memorials in Shaw and Thatcham, and a memorial board in St Mary's, Thatcham.

In the first newspaper item above it is noted that Frank's mother, Edith, had two sons and two grandsons serving their country. It is not easy to state for certain which of the many Westalls who served were her children or grandchildren but two have sufficiently unusual names to identify them. These are Edith's second youngest son, Albert Jesse (Bertie) Westall (Cpl 2397, Army Veterinary Corps), and Jack Claude Westall (Pte 304724, Tank Corps), the son of her eldest son, Henry. More work on the family tree may turn up several others; the article was written in 1915, before conscription would have scooped up some more of Edith's grandsons.

Private A Wheeler

- Civilian
 - **Death:** c.1916
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 2nd Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** A Wheeler
 - **War Memorial (original):** A Wheeler
 - **War Memorial (current):** A Wheeler



Private H Wigmore

- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Rank:** Private
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:**
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Wigmore
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Wigmore

Private Walter John Wigmore

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 15th June 1884, Bucklebury, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 15th November 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1891 the family are recorded as being at Harts Hill.
 - **Father:** Walter Wigmore
 - **Mother:** Mary Wigmore
 - **Siblings:** Florence, James.
 - **Additional:** The 1891 census records his birthplace as Ontario. The 1901 though shows birthplace as Bucklebury. With both records the family are in Harts Hill.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 47th Battalion, Canadian Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 790493
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/465171/wigmore,-/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/5788686
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** W J Wigmore

Private Harold Albert Witts

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1894, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 16th August 1917
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The family lived in Chapel Street and by 1911 Harold was working as a Wood Turner.
 - **Father:** Albert Witts
 - **Mother:** Annie Witts (née Hobbs)
 - **Spouse:** Unknown, Hilda, Albert, Kathleen, Edward
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Albert Edward and Annie Blanche Witts, of Shenton Cottage, Chapel St. Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** "C" Company, 1st/4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 201514
 - **Memorial:** Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/search-for-war-dead/casualty/875538/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4841763
- Thatcham memorials
 - **Church roll:** H Witts
 - **War Memorial (original):** H Witts
 - **War Memorial (current):** H Witts

New additions

Research to find soldiers that have been missed off the town's War Memorial was led by Town Councillor Nathan Gregory. On Saturday 10th November 2018 the Thatcham Memorial Hall and Playing Fields Foundation unveiled a new plaque on the War Memorial to commemorate the nine soldiers detailed in this section.

Stoker 1st Class James Henry Allen

Please see Stoker 1st Class James Henry Allen on page 15.

Private Ernest William Brown

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 16th April 1898
 - **Death:** 16th July 1920
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** In 1901 the family were living in Station Road. By 1911 they had moved to Thatcham Newtown.
 - **Father:** Henry Brown
 - **Mother:** Elizabeth Brown
 - **Siblings:** Unknown, Unknown, Nellie, Harry, Maggie
 - **Additional:** Son of Mr & Mrs E Brown, Turnfields, Thatcham
- Military
 - **Service:** Royal Navy
 - **Regiment:** Royal Marine Light Infantry
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** PO/19752
 - **Memorial:** CWGC headstone in Thatcham Cemetery
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/75197805/brown,-ernest-william/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6924247
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panel):** E W Brown

Ernest was discharged, invalided, from service 27 November 1919 and died a year later the result of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and Pneumothorax.

Captain John Filtness

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1888, Brighton, Sussex
 - **Death:** 22nd May 1918
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The Newbury Weekly News indicates his parents, if not John himself, were living in Thatcham.
 - **Father:** David Filtness
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of the late David Filtness, of Brighton, Sussex; also served in the German South-West African campaign.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** D Battery, 161st Brigade, Royal Field Artillery
 - **Rank:** Captain
 - **Memorial:** Bac-du-sud British Cemetery, Bailleulval, Pas de Calais, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/18714/filtness,-john/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/1237199
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** J Filtness

The Newbury Weekly News notes John as “*Son of the late Mr Filtness and Mrs Young of the Highlands, Thatcham.*” Now within Bucklebury, The Highlands is at the top of Harts Hill Road and at the time was within the Thatcham Parish boundary.

Private George Albert Jenkins

Please see Private George Albert Jenkins on page 115.

Lieutenant Colonel Aylmer Richard Sancton Martin

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 1870, Thatcham, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 9th May 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Aylmer was born and lived for a period in Thatcham, at Thatcham House with his parents, Rev Hezekiah and Isobel Martin.
 - **Father:** Hezekiah Martin
 - **Mother:** Isabel Martin (née Tull)
 - **Spouse:** Mary Martin
 - **Siblings:** Henry, Helen, Isabel, Albert, Victor, Florence, Charles, Ethel, Constance, Victoria, Hezekiah (half-brother)
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the husband of Mary Beatrice Martin, of 3, St. Alban's Mansions, Kensington Court Place, London, W.8. Served in the South African Campaign.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment)
 - **Rank:** Lieutenant Colonel
 - **Service number:** unknown
 - **Memorial:** Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/906086/martin,-aylmer-richard-sancton/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/2939608
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** A R S Martin

The war diary for the battalion reads:

May. HUTS WEST OF YPRES. 4th May. The Bn. were resting in the huts. The following reinforcements arrived on the 3rd May: Other Ranks 240. 7 p.m. Orders were received to march out to the trenches and relieve the 5th Bn. The King's Own Regt. 8.30 p.m. The Battalion marched out and took over trenches in front

of FREZENBERG. The trenches were new trenches and had not been completed. 'A' and 'D' Coys. were in the first line. 'B' and 'C' Coys. in support. 'B' Coy. acting as support to the 3rd Monmouths. 5th -7th May. Battalion in the trenches. Enemy shelled trenches intermittently. 8th May. 7 a.m. Enemy shelled trenches blowing them in, and rendering them untenable. The enemy advanced and captured the front line trenches; they then advanced against the support dugouts. The O.C. 3rd Monmouths called for one company to support the line and 'B' Coy. under Captain Forwood at once moved across the road and occupied some old trenches east of the burial ground in the rear of the Monmouth's trenches. 10 a.m. Enemy commenced attack in the support dugouts but were held in check when 200 yards from them. The enemy were observed moving in a westerly direction on both flanks of the position. Major Clough assumed command on the death of Colonel Martin. 11.35 a.m. Message received to retire on POTIJZE. 'B' Coy. was ordered to retire first followed by the 3 platoons of 'C' Coy. on the North of the YPRES - ZONNEBEKE Road. The following officers were present during the engagement. (Here Lt. Col. A. R. S. Martin, is one of the officers listed killed) After the retirement regiments got mixed up. Some of the Bn. retired through the POTIJZE line and some remained in the trenches till the 9th May. 9th May. The remainder of the Battalion were withdrawn from the front line and sent back to the huts. The total casualties during this last tour in the trenches from 4th May till 9th May were:- Officers: Killed 4, Wounded 5, Wounded and Prisoners 2, Wounded and Missing 1, Missing 4. Other Ranks: Killed 36, Wounded 110, Wounded and Missing 31, Missing 721. This last entry gives some indication of the extreme pressure that the 2nd Kings Own had been under: most of the battalion were recorded as casualties. The Official History adds that at 08.30hrs the German infantry rose and assaulted the exposed front on

Frezenberg Ridge and the attack was driven off. After another half hour bombardment a second attempt failed in like manner, but by this time practically all the men in the front line trenches had been killed wounded or buried. It was impossible to send reinforcements and a third assault at about 10.00hrs succeeded. The Kings Own on the left, its front line having held out until overwhelmed, and Lt Col ARS Martin killed, now also defended its support trench.

Corporal Allen Viler Owen

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1881, Lambourn, Berkshire
 - **Death:** 8th August 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** Margaret was living, in 1911, in Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Frank Owen
 - **Mother:** Margaret Owen
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Margaret Emma Owen, of Bath Rd., Thatcham, Newbury, Berks, and the late Frank Owen.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 17th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment
 - **Rank:** Corporal
 - **Service number:** F/281
 - **Memorial:** Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/807591/owen,-allen-viler/
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** A V Owen

Private G Pearce

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1894
 - **Death:** 13th November 1914
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** His father lived at Colthrop Farm.
 - **Father:** Francis Pearce
 - **Mother:** Naomi Pearce (née Sprules)
 - **Siblings:** Muriel, Martha, Frances, Frederick, Henry, Dorothy, Caroline, Gladys, Alfred
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Mr. F. Pearce, of 67, Colthrop Farm Cottage, Thatcham, Newbury, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 1st Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment
 - **Rank:** Private
 - **Service number:** 10023
 - **Memorial:** Poperinghe Old Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/485523/pearce,-/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/3445695
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** G Pearce

Major Harold Hamer Grey Stansfeld

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** 17th February 1870, Calcutta, West Bengal, India
 - **Death:** 25th September 1915
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The CWGC note his wife as being at Beverley House, Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Henry Stansfeld
 - **Mother:** Katherine Stansfeld (née Grey)
 - **Spouse:** Agnes Stansfeld (née Slessor)
 - **Siblings:** Cyril, Margaret, Aldith
 - **Children:** Hamer.
 - **Additional:** The CWGC records him as the son of Gen. H. H. Stansfeld and Mrs C. C. Stansfeld; husband of Agnes Stansfeld, of Beverley House, Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 74th Punjabis
 - **Rank:** Major
 - **Memorial:** Pont-du-hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, Nord, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/597275/stansfeld,-harold-hamer-grey/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4231405
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** H H G Stansfeld

2nd Corporal Walter Sydney Whiting

- Civilian
 - **Birth:** c.1883
 - **Death:** 30th June 1916
 - **Connection with Thatcham:** The CWGC note he is a native of Thatcham.
 - **Father:** Frederick Whiting
 - **Mother:** Eliza Whiting
 - **Siblings:** Amy, William
 - **Additional:** Son of the Rev. Frederick William Whiting, of "The Manse," Wickham Brook, Newmarket, Suffolk, and the late Eliza Whiting. Minister of the Free Church. Native of Thatcham, Berks.
- Military
 - **Service:** Army
 - **Regiment:** 4th Signal company, Royal Engineers
 - **Rank:** 2nd Corporal
 - **Service number:** 84689
 - **Memorial:** St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France
 - **CWGC:** www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/172841/whiting,-walter-sydney/
 - **IWM:** livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/4734240
- Thatcham memorials
 - **War Memorial (2018 panels):** W S Whiting

Acknowledgements

The names of the soldiers have been researched by Dr Nick Young with help from Thatcham Town Councillor Nathan Gregory, Phil Wood (West Berkshire War Memorials), Clive Williams and Sue Ellis.

Additional help has been provided by Newbury Library, Reading Library, Newbury Weekly News and Mrs A Cole.

The research will continue and if you have any information that you would like to contribute to this project then please contact Thatcham Town Council enquiries@thatchamtowncouncil.gov.uk or Dr Nick Young nick@nickbits.co.uk.

If you are interested in exploring more of Thatcham's history then please visit the Thatcham Historical Society website www.thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk.

How a town remembered them

In early 2014 Thatcham Town Council established a working party of Councillors and community representatives to explore what activities the Town Council should undertake to commemorate WW1.

The Town Council held a number of events over the following 4 years:

- 6th August 2014 Service to mark the centenary of the start of WW1
- 9th-14th November 2014 Exhibition of historical mapping from the Royal School of Military Survey
- 15th November 2014 Guided tour of the war graves at Thatcham Cemetery
- 25th April 2015 Dawn service to mark the centenary of Anzac Day
- 28th September 2015 Unveiling of the commemorative stones for Thatcham's three Victoria Cross recipients
- 1st July 2016 Service to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme
- 4th November 2017 Guided tour of the war graves at Thatcham Cemetery
- 11th November 2018 WW1 Armistice Centenary Beacon Lighting & Concert at St Mary's Church – at which this book was first distributed

This book and the events listed here would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of members of the working party including Dr Nick Young; the Thatcham Branch of the Royal British Legion; and the Royal School of Military Survey at Denison Barracks.

Written by Dr Nick Young

Research by Dr Nick Young, Phil Wood, Clive Williams and Sue Ellis

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