

COGGESHALL ROLL OF HONOUR

1914 - 1918

1939 - 1945



This Book of Remembrance for the men of Coggeshall who lost their lives in two World Wars has been compiled by Malcolm and Shirley Ratcliffe, volunteers at Coggeshall Museum.

It is just a small tribute to the men whose names are inscribed on the war memorial in Coggeshall so they will be remembered, and to give just a brief, in some cases very brief, insight into their lives.

Coggeshall's war memorial was erected in 1920 and paid for by public subscription. The granite obelisk is topped by a bronze winged figure holding a trumpet and a garland. The field on which the memorial stands was bought at the same time and designated as 'open space in perpetuity' and is included as part of Coggeshall's war memorial. Both are in the care of Coggeshall Parish Council.

Research has led to the discovery of several men who are not on the war memorial but whose names are inscribed on family memorials in the burial grounds. Further research revealed that the omission of the names was mainly because they had moved away from Coggeshall, even though some of their family had remained here.

To make research easier, these men are listed in a separate section at the end of the war in which they died.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Every effort has been made to be accurate but the elapse of time means that mistakes are inevitable and apologies are made for any errors. Errors will be corrected, so please let the curator know so this can be done.

The following records have been consulted in compiling the page:

- Birth, Marriage and Death records
- Census records
- Military records
- Regimental histories
- Medal Rolls
- Commonwealth War Grave Commission records
- Memorial inscription records from Essex Society for Family History
- The London Gazette
- The Coggeshall Almanack
- Local and other newspapers
- Pictures from the collection at Coggeshall Museum
- Records held at Essex Record Office
- Records from the National Archives of Australia
- Personal family photographs

Thanks are expressed to those who have added their personal memories and loaned precious family photographs, and special thanks to Malcolm Ratcliffe who has done so much of the military research.

The pictures of the cemeteries come mainly from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. Permission has been granted for use of these pictures in this book but the copyright remains with CWGC and thanks are expressed for the permission to use them.

The pictures of war graves in Coggeshall cemetery are copyright of Coggeshall Museum but may be used in personal research only.

For the Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Visit <http://www.cwgc.org/>

Shirley Ratcliffe
Volunteer Curator, Coggeshall Museum
2011



COGGESHALL ROLL OF HONOUR



1914 - 1918

'Lest We Forget'



ANTHONY FREDERICK ALSTON

S/15366 Rifleman
1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own)

Anthony was born in 1892 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Frederick Alston, a seedsman foreman, and Emma his wife. The family lived in Tilkey.

In 1911 he was living in Stoneham Street with his aunt, Sarah Dalton and his younger sister Beatrice, and is listed on the census of that year as a shop assistant in a seed warehouse.

He was living at Kentish Town when he enlisted into the Army at St Pancras, Middlesex. He was attested on 9th December 1915 and mobilised on 11th February 1916, being posted to the Rifle Brigade. He was described as 5 feet 7³/₄ inches tall and weighing 132 lbs, with a scar in his right eyebrow.

He embarked at Southampton on 10th May 1916 and the next day disembarked at Rouen and was sent to the Front on 1st June 1916. He was killed in action on 1st July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, age 24, having served just 143 days.

He is buried at Serre Road Cemetery No.2. The village of Serre is 11 kilometres north-east of Albert in France and once stood right on the edge of the battlefield dubbed as 'No Man's Land'. There are 7,127 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery, mostly dating from 1916 and of these 4,944 are unidentified.





SIDNEY PERCY BAILEY

13275 Private

8th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)

Sidney was born on 1st August 1886 in Coggeshall, the son of Samuel Bailey, a farm labourer, and Sarah his wife. He was one of 14 children and the family lived in West Street, Coggeshall. He was baptised on 15th October of the same year at St Peter's church.

On the 1901 census Sidney is shown working, at the age of 14, as an 'oil boy' and living in the family home in Stoneham Street.

The 1911 census shows him as single, still living at home and his occupation is given as baker.

He was living in Chelmsford when he enlisted in the 8th Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). It is not known at what date he joined his battalion in France.

He was killed in action on 6th December 1917, age 30. He is buried at Jeancourt Communal Cemetery Extension.

Jeancourt was a German hospital centre and the extension to the communal cemetery was used alternately by Commonwealth and German troops. The Commonwealth burials began in April 1917, continued until February 1918, and were resumed in September 1918. Further graves were added after the Armistice when burials were brought in from the surrounding battlefields and other smaller cemeteries. The extension contains 492 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War, 207 are unidentified. The extension also contains 168 German burials.

Jeancourt, Aisne, France is a small village situated approximately halfway between Peronne and St. Quentin.





WILLIAM ALFRED BAKER

Warrant Mechanician, Royal Navy
H.M.S. "Warspite"

William was born in 1878 in Clapham, London, the fourth son of James Baker, a boiler smith, and Mary his wife.

He served in the Boxer Rebellion and in the South African War whilst a member of the engine-room crew on HMS "Terrible", a 1st class cruiser.

On 1st January 1908 he married Maud Bibby Everett at the church of St Peter-ad-Vincula in Coggeshall.

On the 1911 census he is shown as a Mechanician in the engine room of HMS "St Vincent" at anchor in Weymouth harbour.

The Coggeshall Almanack states that in 1914 he was serving on HMS "Queen Mary".

He had been awarded the Naval Long Service & Good Conduct Medal.

He was serving with HMS "Warspite", a battleship which had been at the Battle of Jutland, when he was fatally injured after a boiler room caught fire. He died on 3rd March 1918, age 40, on board a hospital ship.

His body was returned to Coggeshall and buried in Coggeshall Cemetery with full military honours. The Coggeshall Almanack gives the following account.

DIARY.

COGGESHALL.

NAVAL MAN'S FUNERAL.—On March 9th, the funeral took place in the Church Cemetery of Mr. William Baker, warrant mechanician, R.N., who died from injuries accidentally received on one of H.M. ships. The Vicar (the Rev. F. S. Stoney) conducted the service. The coffin was covered with the Union Jack, the deceased's sword being placed on the top. The bearers were six men of the Royal Defence Corps, under Sergt. Aldersley.





JACK HENRY BIBBY

43 Private

3rd Division Cyclist Company, Army Cyclist Corps

Jack Bibby was born on 30th September 1891, the fourth child of Henry Bibby, a wood and coal merchant living in Little Coggeshall, and Emily his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's church on the 15th November 1891.

In 1911 Jack is shown on the census as a general labourer.

His service record (Territorials) shows that he served with 8th Cyclist Battalion, Essex Regiment from 16th November 1911 and volunteered for overseas service on 3rd October 1914.

He was discharged for the purpose of enlisting in the Regular Army on 14th November 1914. His regular service records show that he was single, stood 5ft 4 inches tall and weighed 132 lbs.

He was attested on 15th November 1914 in Shepherd's Bush, Middlesex and appointed to the Army Cyclist Corps. He embarked for France on 23rd November 1914.

He died on 21st May 1915 of wounds received in action during the second battle of Ypres and is buried at La Clytte Military Cemetery.

The hamlet of La Clytte(now De Klijte) was used as Brigade Headquarters, and the burials were carried out by Infantry, Artillery and Engineer units. There are 1,082 casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery and 238 of the burials are unidentified.

La Clytte Military Cemetery is located 8 kilometres west of Ieper(Ypres) on the road connecting Ieper to Dikkebus, Klijte and on to Loker.





LEONARD WILLIAM BUTCHER

250664 Private

1st/6th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry

Leonard was born in Coggeshall in 1885, the third son of Isaac Butcher, a malster's workman, and Eliza his wife. The family lived in Colne Road.

The 1901 census shows that he was a carpenter's apprentice, still living at the family home in Colne Road, age 15.

By 1911 he had moved to London and was living with his brother Joseph and his family in Forest Gate. The census lists him as a carpenter and joiner.

He married Ellen Mary Foster on 29th June 1912 in the Congregational Church, Forest Gate.

He enlisted at East Ham. His service record says that his occupation was a map mounter and that he stood 5ft 6inches tall.

He was attested on 2nd December 1915 to the Army Reserve, and was a reservist from 3rd December 1915 until 12th June 1916.

He was mobilised on 13th June 1916 into 24th Battalion, King Royal Rifles but was transferred on 31st August 1916 to 1st/6th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry and went to France with that Battalion on 5th November 1916.

He was killed in action on 11th April 1918, age 33, and is commemorated on The Ploegsteert Memorial, panel 8 and 9.

The Ploegsteert Memorial commemorates more than 11,000 servicemen who died in this sector during the Great War and have no known grave. Most of those commemorated were killed in the course of the day-to-day trench warfare which characterised this part of the line, or in small engagements, carried out in support of the major attacks taking place elsewhere.

The Ploegsteert Memorial stands in Berks Cemetery Extension, on the road leading from Ieper (Ypres) to Mesen (Messines), and is 3 kilometres beyond Mesen, opposite Hyde Park Corner Royal Berks Cemetery.

The sounding of the Last Post takes place on the first Friday of each month at 7 pm.





WALTER CHEEK D C M

9305 Sergeant

2nd Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment

Walter Cheek was born on 28th March 1888 in Coggeshall, the youngest son of Jordan Cheek, an agricultural labourer, and Rachel Anne his wife.

He enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment at Colchester in 1909. He arrived in France on 16th January 1915 and a month later was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, one of four from the 2nd Battalion to receive the medal that day. He was the only private among the recipients.

9305 Pte. W. CHEEK 2nd Bn.

For conspicuous gallantry on 17th February 1915, at Zwarteleen; was wounded early in the action but continued to work his gun with great coolness and disregard of personal safety, under heavy rifle and shell fire, until the gun emplacement was blown down. (1.4.15)

He sailed with his battalion from Marseilles at the end of October 1915 and arrived at Salonika, via Egypt, in early December. He was promoted to Acting/Sergeant.

At the beginning of October 1916, the British, in co-operation with their allies on other parts of the front, began operations on the River Struma towards Serres. The campaign was successful with the capture of the Rupell Pass and advances to within a few miles of Serres.

Walter Cheek was killed in action on 2nd November 1916, aged 28.

He is buried in Struma Military Cemetery, Greece which is 65 kilometres north-east of Thessaloniki, before the village of Kalokastro and on the way to Serres town. Struma Military Cemetery contains 947 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 51 of them unidentified.





ARTHUR CHURCH

33704 Private
1st Battalion, The Border Regiment
Formerly 178598, Royal Field Artillery

Arthur was born on 21st January 1896 in Little Coggeshall, the youngest son of Samuel Church, a farm labourer, and Martha his wife. His brother William also served and died in the Great War.

In 1911 he was living in the family home and was employed as an office boy.

He enlisted in the Army at Woolwich, Kent, joining the Royal Field Artillery and at a later date was transferred to the Border Regiment.

He was killed in action on 23rd April 1917, aged 21, probably in the assault on the village of Monchy-le-Preux during which the barrage of shells from both sides was so intensive that it was impossible to see.

156 Battalion casualties are listed from the fighting of that day with 21 men missing, Arthur among them.

He is commemorated on Bay 6 of the Arras Memorial.

The Arras Memorial commemorates 35,000 men from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and August 1918 and have no known grave.

The Memorial stands in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is on the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras, Pas de Calais, France.





WILLIAM CHURCH

29694 Private
16th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own)

William was born on 24th June 1884 in Little Coggeshall, the fifth child of Samuel Church, a farm labourer, and Martha his wife. The family lived at Grange Hill Cottages on the Kelvedon Road.

On the 1901 census he is shown as working as a labourer in the gelatine factory in West Street with his father and his brother Frederick.

In 1911 the family are recorded as living at Ebenezer Villa at Coggeshall Hamlet and William's occupation is shown as a general gardener. He was still single.

He enlisted in the 16th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own) at Warley, Essex.

He was killed in action on 18th August 1917 and is buried in Artillery Wood British Cemetery near Boezinge, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Until July 1917, the village of Boezinge directly faced the German front line over the Yser canal, but at the end of that month, the German line was pushed back and Artillery Wood, just east of the canal, was captured by the Guards Division.

Boezinge is located north of the town of Ieper (Ypres) on the road in the direction of Diksmuide. The Cemetery is located in the Poezelstraat, east of the village.





BERTIE CYRIL CLARK

145866 Gunner

"A" Battery, 66th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Bertie was born in Coggeshall on 22nd November 1896, the ninth child and youngest son of James William Clark, an architect, surveyor and auctioneer, and Clarinda his wife. Bertie was baptised on 29th January 1897 at St Peter's church. The family lived in Ivy Lodge, Church Street.

On the 1911 census Bertie was listed as still being at school.

He enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery in Witham, Essex, but the date is unknown.

He died on 24th July 1917 in Baghdad, aged 20.

As the record of his death says 'died' and not 'died of wounds' it is probable that he succumbed to an illness and was being cared for in one of the two Stationary Hospitals, as by the end of April 1917, Baghdad had become the Expeditionary Force's consolidated base.

He is buried in the Baghdad (North Gate) Cemetery.

The cemetery was not reachable during the recent conflicts and in the immediate period afterwards. The CWGC has now started restoration of this cemetery and we are indebted to Maurice Riley who has visited the cemetery on several occasions and has photographed Bertie's headstone.





PERCY RYAN CLARK

202578 Private

1st/5th Battalion The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Percy was born on 11th April 1889 in Coggeshall, the eighth of twelve children of James William Clark, an architect, surveyor and valuer, and Clarinda his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's church on 26th June 1889 and was a choir boy there in his youth.

The family lived in Church Street, Coggeshall, and on the 1911 census he is shown as still living in the family home and working as a seedsman.

In the late summer of 1913 he married Edith Kitcher in Andover, Hampshire.

No details of his enlistment can be found, however it is known that the 1st/5th Battalion, The Buffs, served in India and Mesopotamia throughout the First World War. The medal roll shows that he was awarded the British War Medal.

He died, after the Armistice, in a Paris hospital on 9th March 1919 whilst on his way back from serving with the Army in India. He was age 30, and is buried in City of Paris Cemetery, Pantin.

The British War Graves in the neighbourhood of Paris fall into three main groups. The earliest are those of soldiers who died of wounds in French and British hospitals in or near Paris in 1914, when the ambulance trains ran south-westward from the Aisne and the Marne. The second group is due to the presence of British troops in the Aisne and the Marne in the summer of 1918. The third is a number of graves of men who died after the Armistice.

The Commonwealth graves form a small plot in Division 6, at the west end of the City of Paris Cemetery, among French military graves. There are now nearly 100 casualties from the 1914 -18 war commemorated on this site.

Percy is shown on his parents' memorial stone in Coggeshall cemetery as is his younger brother, Bertie Cyril, who is interred in Baghdad.





FREDERICK HENRY CLARKE

157307, Private

29th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Frederick was born in 1887 in Earls Colne, Essex, the third son of Henry Clarke, a carpenter, and Harriet, his Coggeshall-born wife. He was baptized at St Andrews church, Earls Colne on 8th May 1887.

On the 1901 census the family are shown as living in Robins Bridge Road, Coggeshall and Frederick is working as a seedsman clerk in Coggeshall.

The 1911 census records Frederick as working as a shop assistant, still living in the family home at Mill Lane, Coggeshall and still single.

At some time he moved to Walthamstow and enlisted in the 19th London Regiment with the army number 615644, at Stratford, but the date of this enlistment is not known. The London Regiment was unique as all of its battalions belonged to the Territorial Force.

It is not known when he was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps, which came into being as a Corps in October 1915. From his medal index record card it can be stated that he did not go to the European theatre of war until after the end of December 1915 as there was no award of the 1914/15 star shown on it. He was almost certainly attached to an infantry unit, but to which one and whereabouts cannot be ascertained.

He was killed in action on 22nd October 1918, age 37, and is buried at Harlebeke New British Cemetery which was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefields of 1918 and, in 1924-25, from German cemeteries or plots in Belgium.

Harlebeke was in enemy hands throughout the war until taken by the 9th (Scottish) Division on the night of 19th -20th October 1918. The cemetery now contains 1,116 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 181 of the burials are unidentified.

Harlebeke New British Cemetery is 32 kilometres east of Ieper (Ypres) on a road leading from the N8 which connects Ieper to Kortrijk .





PERCY CLARKE

A/200945 Sergeant
2nd Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Percy was born in 1889 in Earls Colne, the sixth child of Henry Clarke, a carpenter, and Harriet his Coggeshall-born wife.

On the 1891 and 1901 census the family are shown as living in Robins Bridge Road, Coggeshall.

The 1911 census records Percy working as seedsman and living on Grange Hill as a lodger with the Dunningham family. Their son Hugh worked as a seedsman alongside Percy and also died in the Great War.

He married Amy P. Perry in the winter of 1911. She was originally from the nearby village of Feering and was in service with the King family who were seedgrowers.

He enlisted in the Essex Regiment at Witham and was transferred later to the 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps.

The medal roll shows that he arrived in France in 1916 or after. There is no indication at what date he was promoted to Sergeant.

He died of his wounds on 20th September 1918, age 29, and is buried at Ste. Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, France.

During the First World War, Le Havre was one of the ports at which the British Expeditionary Force disembarked in August 1914. By the end of May 1917, it contained three general and two stationary hospitals, and four convalescent depots.

There are 1,690 Commonwealth burials of the Great War in this cemetery, 8 of which are unidentified.

Ste. Marie Cemetery is one of the town cemeteries, but is actually situated in Graville-St. Honorine, overlooking Le Havre from the north.





JOHN COWELL

13553 Private
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

John Cowell was born on 30th July 1893 in Coggeshall, the fifth son of Henry Cowell, a roadman labourer, and Harriet Anna, his wife.

On the census in 1901 he was shown as a 7 year-old living at Orchard Mill Cottages, West Street, with his 8 siblings.

The 1911 census lists him as a labourer, single, and still living in the family home on The Gravel.

He enlisted at Colchester and joined the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment.

He went to France on 14th April 1915 and was killed in action during the Second Battle of Ypres. This was the first time that poison gas was used on a large scale on the Western Front.

He was listed as 'presumed dead' on 13th May 1915, age 22 and is commemorated in Ypres on the Menin Gate Memorial, panel 39.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The memorial now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

Ypres (now Ieper) is a town in West Flanders. The Memorial is situated at the eastern side of the town on the road to Menin. Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.





SAMUEL COWELL

2863 Private
5th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Samuel was born on 21st February 1895 in Coggeshall, one of the nine children of Henry Cowell, a roadman labourer, and Harriet Anna, his wife. He had five older brothers, two of whom were also destined to die in the Great War.

The 1911 census shows that the family were living at The Gravel, West Street and that Samuel was employed as a butcher's labourer.

He joined 'D' Company, 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment for a 4 year Territorial Force engagement on 8th November 1914.

His records describe him as 5ft 8½ inches tall with good physical development. He was single and his occupation was given as a butcher.

He was discharged from the Army on 16th May 1915 as being no longer physically fit for War Service. He was graded 100% disability due to tuberculosis of the lungs and was awarded a pension of 20/- per week for 12 months commencing in March 1916.

He was admitted to Colchester Sanatorium and later died on 7th January 1917, aged 21.

He was buried in Coggeshall cemetery on 13th January 1917.





WILLIAM GEORGE COWELL

29792 Private

2nd/5th, Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

William was born on 28th June 1889 in Coggeshall, the third son and one of nine children of Henry Cowell, a roadman labourer, and Harriet Anna, his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's church on 7th August of that year.

On the 1911 census he is shown as a labourer, living at the family home at The Gravel, West Street and he was single.

Army records show that he enlisted in the 11th Service Battalion, Essex Regiment (Army no. 12863) on 7th September 1914, but was discharged on 27th November 1914 as being medically unfit.

1/8th Battalion, Warwickshire Regiment were stationed in Coggeshall in early 1915, so it is possible that he was successful in enlisting in the Warwicks at that time, or just after, and was posted to the 2nd/5th Battalion.

This Battalion arrived in France on 21st May 1916.

He died on 3rd December 1917, aged 28, and is commemorated on Panel 3 of the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval.

The Cambrai Memorial commemorates more than 7,000 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South Africa who died in the Battle of Cambrai in November and December of 1917 and whose graves are not known. The memorial stands on a terrace at one end of Louverval Military Cemetery.

The small village of Louverval is on the Bapaume to Cambrai road.
Two of his brothers, Samuel and John, are also listed on Coggeshall's war memorial.





DOUGLAS GEORGE DODDS

7080 Private
2nd Battalion, Honourable Artillery Company (Infantry)

Douglas George Dodds was born in 1897 in Coggeshall to John Adamson Dodds and his wife Annie. His father was Coggeshall's postmaster and also a printer.

On the 1911 census he was listed as a scholar, age 14.

He enlisted in the Honourable Artillery Company on 2nd December 1915, giving his address as 63 Earlham Road, Norwich, and his occupation as bank clerk. He was 18 years and 10 months old and stood 5 feet 7 inches tall.

He served on the Army Reserve at home between 2nd December 1915 and 1st October 1916.

He was sent to France on 1st October 1916 and then onwards to the Front on 4th October 1916.

He was listed as 'missing in action, presumed killed', on 3rd May 1917, aged 20 and is commemorated on Bay 1 of the Arras Memorial.

The Arras Memorial commemorates 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7th August 1918 and have no known grave.

The Memorial is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is on the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras, Pas de Calais, France.





EDMUND A. DRURY

4176 Private
1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Edmund was born in 1876 in Little Coggeshall, the second son of John Drury, an agricultural labourer, and Ann his wife, and was baptised on 6th March at the church of St Peter-ad-Vincula, Coggeshall.

The 1891 census shows that he was still living in Little Coggeshall and working as an agricultural labourer, age 15.

He is shown to have joined the 1st Battalion, the Essex Regiment at Warley, but there is no indication of the date. The Christian name on all his military documents was given as Edward, so perhaps he gave his name as Ed or it was misunderstood on enlistment.

In 1911 he appears on the census as a private soldier, aged 35 and still single, with 1st Battalion, Essex Regiment, at Quetta, Baluchistan, India.

In August 1914 the Battalion was in Mauritius and returned to England in December 1914.

On 21st March 1915 the 1st Battalion sailed from Avonmouth for Gallipoli, going via Egypt and landed at Cape Helles on 25th April 1915. His medal roll provides proof that he was with them and states that he was killed in action on 28th June 1915, aged 39.

He is buried at Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery which was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from isolated sites and small burial grounds on the battlefields of April to August and December 1915.

Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery is in the Helles area, about 1 kilometre south-west of the village of Krithia, Turkey.





SYDNEY GEORGE DRURY

9647, Private
1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Sydney was born on 22nd February 1893 at 11 Parsonage Street in Halstead, Essex, the son of Alfred Drury, an ordinary labourer on the land, and Eliza his wife.

The 1901 census shows the family resident in Tilkey, Coggeshall, and it was from here that Sydney enlisted as a Regular soldier in the 1st Battalion, Essex Regiment at Colchester.

The 1911 census shows him at Warley Barracks near Brentwood. He was probably undergoing training there as this was the home depot of the Essex Regiment. The Coggeshall Almanack shows him on the list of Coggeshall men serving in 1914.

He left Avonmouth with his battalion on 21st March 1915, travelling via Alexandria and Mudros to arrive at Gallipoli on 25th April 1915. He must have been wounded on the first or second day as Records at the Essex Regiment Museum indicate that he died of his wounds on 29th April 1915 at sea, probably on one of the hospital ships, after landing at "W" Beach, Gallipoli. He was 22 years old.

He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Panel 144 to 150 or 229 to 233. Helles Memorial serves as a Commonwealth memorial for the whole Gallipoli campaign and a place of commemoration for many of those Commonwealth servicemen who died there and have no known grave. There are also panels for those who died and were buried at sea in Gallipoli waters. The memorial bears more than 21,000 names.

The Helles Memorial stands on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula. It takes the form of an obelisk over 30 metres high that can be seen by ships passing through the Dardanelles.





HUGH WILLIAM DUNNINGHAM

G/50731 Lance Corporal
32nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Hugh Dunningham was born on 9th June 1892 in Little Coggeshall, the second son of Harry Dunningham, a harness maker, and Florence his wife.

The census in 1911 records him working as a seedsman alongside Percy Clark who lodged with the Dunningham family and who also died in the Great War.

He was mobilised into the Territorial Force on 7th November 1914 and served with the 5th Battalion Essex Regiment on the Home Front until 4th April 1916 when he was discharged so that he could join the Regular Army. He enlisted into the Regular Army in Norwich, joining the 32nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). The 32nd (Service) Battalion Royal Fusiliers (known as the East Ham Battalion) was formed in London on 18th October 1915 by the Mayor and Borough of East Ham.

His army records state that he stood 5 ft 6³/₄ inches tall.

Hugh Dunningham landed with the Battalion in France on 5th May 1916 and was wounded in August 1917 during operations on the Flanders Coast. He subsequently died of his wounds on 14th August 1917, age 25.

He is buried in Poperinghe New Military Cemetery.

Poperinghe was of great importance during the First World War because, although it was occasionally bombed or bombarded at long range, it was the nearest place to Ypres which was reasonably safe. It was a centre for Casualty Clearing Stations, but by 1916 it became necessary to move these units further back and the field ambulances took their place. The New Military Cemetery was established in June 1915 and contains 677 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Poperinghe New Military Cemetery is located 10.5 kilometres west of Ieper (Ypres) in the town of Poperinghe (now Poperinge) itself.





ROBERT CHARLES ELLIOTT

32074 Private
1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Robert was born in Kelvedon on 20th January 1890, the eldest son of Frank Elliott, a farm labourer, and his Coggeshall-born wife Ellen. He was baptised in St Peter's church, Coggeshall on 19th March of that year. On the 1891 census the family are shown living at Monks Cottages, Kelvedon.

In 1901 he is shown on the census living at the George & Dragon Inn, Coggeshall Road, Kelvedon with his grandmother Sarah Elliott and his uncle David Elliott.

The 1911 census records him as a farm labourer, living with his family in Coggeshall Hamlet.

He moved to Southend-on-Sea and it was from there that he enlisted in the 1st Battalion, Essex Regiment. It is not known at what date or where he went after enlistment.

He was killed in action during the battle for Arras on 14th April 1917, age 27, and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, bay 7 and on his parents' memorial stone in Coggeshall cemetery.

The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7th August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave.

The Arras Memorial is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.





REUBEN EVANS

SE/19833 Private
Army Veterinary Corps

Reuben was born in Coggeshall in 1898, the eldest son of Reuben Smith Evans, a postman and shoe maker, and Sophia his wife.

The 1911 census shows him as still at school and living in Swan Street, Kelvedon, where the family had moved at some time after 1901.

He was attested at Braintree on 5th June 1916, was mobilized in 1917, just after his 18th birthday, and posted to the Army Veterinary Corps Depot in Aldershot.

He embarked at Southampton on 11th October 1917 and disembarked at Salonika on 6th November 1917.

He was admitted to 64 General Hospital on 7th November 1917, where he was diagnosed as suffering from malaria. He was invalided to Malta on 2nd March 1918 and then to the UK on 11th May 1918. He was admitted to Fusehill War Hospital, Carlisle, on 20th May 1918 and transferred to No.1 Western General Hospital, Liverpool, on 10th June 1918.

He was posted to Woolwich in August 1918 in Category B1 and underwent a Medical Board following which he was discharged under Paragraph 329 XVI Kings Regulations – 'No longer physically fit for War Service' on 4th November 1918. He was awarded 40% disability from 5th November 1918 due to malaria.

He returned home to Coggeshall, still very ill, on Armistice Day and died on 2nd December 1918. He was buried in Coggeshall cemetery.





GEORGE THOMAS EVERETT

1086 Private
2nd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

George was born on 14th October 1883 in Coggeshall, the fifth of 9 sons of Charles Everett, a gardener, and Mary Ann his wife, living in Tilkey. He was baptised at St Peter's church on 16th January 1884. Four of the Everett sons died in the Great War.

The 1901 census shows him living in the family home in Mill Lane, Robins Bridge Road and working as a stockman on a farm.

Late in 1908 he married Mary Ellen Everett and on the 1911 census he is shown living in Tilkey with his wife and their one year-old son, Herbert.

He enlisted in Colchester in 1914 and was posted to 2nd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment. He went to France on 24th March 1915 to the Ypres sector and just one month later, on 25th April 1915, he was posted as 'presumed dead', age 32.

He is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres on Panel 34.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The Menin Gate Memorial now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

Ypres (now Ieper) is a town in the Province of West Flanders. The Memorial is situated at the eastern side of the town on the road to Menin. Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.





HARRY SIDNEY EVERETT

26003 Private

8th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Harry was born on 10th March 1886 in Coggeshall, the sixth of 9 sons of Charles Everett, a gardener, and Mary Ann his wife, living in Tilkey. He was known in the family as Sidney. Four of the Everett sons died in the Great War.

The 1901 census shows him living in the family home in Mill Lane, Robins Bridge Road and working as a fish monger's boy.

On the 1911 census he is recorded as living with the family and working in a mineral water manufacturers.

On 9th April 1913 he married Rosa Georgiana Eve in the church of St Peter-ad-Vincula, Coggeshall.

He enlisted at Warley in the Norfolk Regiment (No. 32220) and later was transferred to 8th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.

He went to France and almost certainly took part in the major battles in which the 8th Battalion were involved and was wounded during one of these. He was nursed in a German military hospital and died of his wounds on 28th March 1918, age 32.

He is commemorated at Ribemont Communal Cemetery Extension at Aisne in France.

The Communal Cemetery was extended by the Germans, but the German graves, 320 in number, have been removed. There are now over 30 World War One casualties commemorated in this site, and a small number are unidentified.

Ribemont in the Department of the Aisne is a village 14 kilometres south-east of St. Quentin, adjacent to the Canal de Sambre.





HERBERT ARTHUR EVERETT

8611 Private
9th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Herbert was born on 10th March 1886 in Coggeshall, the seventh son of Charles Everett, a gardener, and Mary Ann his wife, living in Tilkey. He was baptised in St Peter's church on 9th May 1886. Four of the Everett sons died in the Great War.

The 1891 census lists him as a scholar. He was living in the family home with his mother and six brothers. Their father Charles was working away from home in Wandsworth as a gas stoker.

On the 1901 census he is shown living in the family home in Mill Lane, Robins Bridge Road and working as a hand in a mineral water factory.

The 1911 census shows that he was a regular soldier serving with the 1st Battalion Essex Regiment in South Africa. He returned to England in October 1914 and then took part in the Gallipoli campaign with the 1st Essex. He was wounded and evacuated to Malta and later to the military hospital in Liverpool.

He was posted to 9th Battalion, Essex Regiment and his records give his residence as Grays, Essex. The Battalion was sent to France at the end of March 1915 but the actual date of his arrival in France is not known, although late in 1915 he married Lily Ward in Paddington.

He was killed on the third day of the Battle of the Somme, 3rd July 1916 at the age of 30. He is commemorated on Thiepval Memorial on pier and face 10D.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.





RICHARD HUGH EVERETT

10089 Lance Corporal
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

Richard was born on 10th May 1892 in Coggeshall, the eighth of 9 sons of Charles Everett, a gardener, and Mary Ann his wife, living in Tilkey. Four of the sons died in the Great War.

In 1911 he is shown on the census as working as a labourer on a farm and still living in the family home in Mill Lane, Robins Bridge Road, Coggeshall.

He joined the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment some time between 1911 and 1914 and must have been a Regular as he was already a Lance Corporal when the war began.

He went to France on 22nd August 1914 and was killed in action on 21st October 1914, age 22.

The Coggeshall Almanack shows him as one of the first of Coggeshall's young men to die in the Great War. He is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, panel 7.

The Ploegsteert Memorial commemorates more than 11,000 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in this sector during the First World War and have no known grave. Most of those commemorated were killed in the day-to-day trench warfare which characterised this part of the line, or in small scale set engagements, usually carried out in support of the major attacks taking place elsewhere.

The Ploegsteert Memorial stands in Berks Cemetery Extension, 12.5 kilometres south of Ieper on the road leading from Ieper (Ypres) to Mesen (Messines). The sounding of the Last Post takes place at the memorial on the first Friday of every month at 7 p.m. The Cemetery lies 3 kilometres beyond Mesen opposite Hyde Park Corner Royal Berks Cemetery.





FREDERICK GEORGE FAIRCLOTH

43262 Private
10th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Frederick was born in Leytonstone in 1892, the son of Francis George Faircloth, an iron and brass founder, and Edith Ann, his wife. The 1901 census shows the family living at Dartford, Kent.

In 1911 Frederick was still living in the family home at Abbey Wood, Kent and is shown on the census as an 18 year-old student teacher.

On 17th October 1914 he took up the post of supply teacher at the National School in Coggeshall in place of John Turner who had left for military service. Previously he had been teaching at Bocking Street school in Braintree.

He remained at the school until 30th July 1915 when he left because he had enlisted in the 10th (Service) Battalion, Essex Regiment in Coggeshall as part of Kitchener's Army. It is not known when he went to France.

He was killed in action on the Somme probably during the Battle for Regina Trench which took place on the day of his death, 21st October 1916. He was age 24, and is buried in Regina Trench Cemetery, Grandcourt.

Regina Trench was a minor operation - an advance of 250 yards, and the capture of a single trench. However, the 10th Essex captured over a hundred Germans, revealing the importance attached to Regina Trench by the enemy.

The original part of the cemetery was made in the winter of 1916-1917. The cemetery was completed after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields of Courcellette, Grandcourt and Miraumont; most date from October 1916 to February 1917. Regina Trench Cemetery now contains 2,279 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 1,077 of the burials are unidentified.

The approach to the cemetery is down a single track lane and lies about 1.5 kilometres from Courcellette, a village about 8 kilometres north-east of Albert.





LEONARD FRENCH

202532 Private
5th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment

Leonard was born in 1896 in Coggeshall, the son of James French, a general labourer, and Emma his wife, and was the eighth of ten children.

On the 1911 census he is listed as a domestic errand boy, age 15, living in the family home in Tilkey.

He enlisted into the Essex Regiment at Chelmsford but was then transferred to the 5th Battalion, Princess Charlotte of Wales's Royal Berkshire Regiment.

From his medal roll it is known that he went to France in 1916 or 1917, probably as a battle casualty replacement.

He was killed in action during the Arras offensive on 28th March 1917, age 21 and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, bay 7.

The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7th August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave.

The Arras Memorial is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.





ALBERT EDWARD GALLEY

14196 Private
7th Battalion, King's Shropshire Light Infantry

Albert Edward (Bertie) Galley was born in 1894 in Feering, Essex, the third child of Charles Galley, a brewer's drayman, and Alice his wife.

On the 1901 census he was listed as a scholar, living in Church Street, Coggeshall, with his parents, sister and two brothers.

By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved to Colne Road. He was living in the family home and had a position as an assistant hairdresser.

He enlisted in the 7th Battalion, Kings Shropshire Light Infantry at Ludlow, Shropshire and went to France on 28th September 1915.

He was killed in action on 2nd December 1915, aged 21.

He is buried at Bedford House Cemetery, Ieper (Ypres), West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, which is located 2.5 kilometres south of Ieper town centre.

Zillebeke village was in the hands of Commonwealth forces for the greater part of the war, but the number of cemeteries in the neighbourhood bears witness to the fierce fighting in the vicinity from 1914 to 1918. Bedford House was the name given by the Army to the Chateau Rosendal, a country house in a small wooded park with moats. Although it never fell into German hands, the house and the trees were gradually destroyed by shell fire.

It was used by field ambulances and as the headquarters of brigades and other fighting units. In all, 5,139 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War are buried or commemorated in Bedford House Cemetery.





ARTHUR ERNEST GLIDEWELL

14277 Lance Corporal
Scots Guards

Arthur was born in 1881 in Clapton, the eldest son of Arthur Glidewell, a tobacconist foreman, of St Georges East, London and Emily his wife, who was born in Bushey Hertfordshire.

The 1891 census lists him as a scholar living in the family home at Rushmore Road, Hackney.

In 1901 he is recorded as a commercial clerk and still living in the family home in Hackney.

The 1911 census shows him as a boarder at the 'Cricketers' Inn in West Street, Coggeshall. His occupation is given as clerk, but it is not known where he was employed. He was still listed as a lodger there on the 1914 electoral register.

He enlisted in Hackney into the Scots Guards as a guardsman but the date is not known. His younger brother Herbert was also in the Scots Guards and was killed in January 1915.

His medal roll shows that he went to France in 1916 and the entry of his death on 25th September 1916 on the same roll indicates that he was killed in action in the First Battle of the Somme, 1st July to 18th November 1916.

He is buried in Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval which is a village about 13 kilometres east of Albert.

Caterpillar Valley was the name given by the army to the long valley which rises eastwards, past "Caterpillar Wood", to the high ground at Guillemont. The ground was captured, after very fierce fighting, in the latter part of July 1916. It was lost in the German advance of March 1918 and recovered by the 38th (Welsh) Division on 28 August 1918. After the Armistice, this cemetery was hugely increased when the graves of more than 5,500 officers and men were brought in from other small cemeteries, and the battlefields of the Somme. The great majority of these soldiers died in the autumn of 1916 and almost all the rest in August or September 1918.





HARRY GODFREY

G/14556 Lance Corporal
2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

He was born in 1889 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Harry Godfrey, an engine driver, and Mary Ann his wife.

On the 1901 census he is shown living in West Street with his parents and five other siblings. The 1911 census lists him as a plumber, age 22 and single.

He enlisted in Coggeshall and was shown on the Army records as Essex Regiment (No.660) and the Coggeshall Almanack lists H. Godfrey as a member of 8th Battalion Essex (Cyclist) Territorials. Coggeshall had its' own company, B company, of cyclists and their role was to guard the coast of Britain against invasion. In reality, many members were transferred to other regiments or battalions as battle casualty replacements and served in the trenches.

At some time he was transferred to 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment and went to France and took part in the Battle of the Somme.

He was killed in action on 22nd November 1916, age 27, and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, pier and face 7C.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The Memorial is next to the village of Thiepval, France, off the main Bapaume to Albert road. Each year a major ceremony is held at the memorial on 1st July.





FREDERICK THOMAS GOMER

75585 Private
1st/6th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers

Frederick was born on 2nd May 1899 in Coggeshall, the second son of Frank Gomer, a roadman for Essex County Council, and Eliza, his wife.

On the 1901 census the family are shown as living in East Street. There were three sons, of whom two, Frederick and his older brother Robert, were destined to die in the Great War.

In 1911 the family are shown living on Grange Hill. Frederick was working as a butchers errand boy, age 12.

He enlisted in Braintree and was sent to join 1st/6th Battalion (Territorial) Northumberland Fusiliers. His medal roll indicates that he probably went to France as a battle casualty replacement after 1915.

The Battalion went to France in April 1915. It took part in the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915, the Battle of the Somme in 1916, the Arras Offensive and the Second Battle of Passchendaele in 1917. In 1918 it again saw action on The Somme and Battles of the Lys and Hindenburg Line.

He died on 4th October 1918, age 19. The annotation 'died' and not 'died of wounds' indicates that he probably succumbed to a fatal illness.

He is buried in Glageon Communal Cemetery Extension. There are over 300 Great War casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over 10 are unidentified. The Extension covers an area of 2,202 square metres.

The village of Glageon is about 3 kilometres west of Trelon. The Communal Cemetery and Extension lie west of the village.





ROBERT GOMER

10523 Private

1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Robert was born on 1st November 1893 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Frank Gomer, a roadman for Essex County Council, and Eliza, his wife. He was baptised in St Peter's church on 10th December of that year.

On the 1901 census the family are shown as living in East Street. There were three sons of whom two, Robert and his younger brother Frederick, were destined to die in the Great War.

In 1911 the family are shown living on Grange Hill. Robert was working as a 17 year-old farm labourer.

He enlisted in 1st Battalion, Essex Regiment, but the date is unknown. From his Army medal roll it is known that he was serving in 1915 and it is almost certain that he left England with his Regiment bound for Gallipoli in March 1915. Records show he landed at Gallipoli on 24th April 1915.

He was killed in action on 6th August 1915, aged 21. The records state 'presumed dead'.

He is buried at Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery which was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from isolated sites and small burial grounds on the battlefields of April to August and December 1915.

There are 3,360 First World War servicemen buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 2,226 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate many casualties known or believed to be buried among them, including 142 officers and men of the 1st Essex who died on 6th August 1915.

Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery is in the Helles area, about 1 kilometre south-west of the village of Krithia, Turkey.





THOMAS JOHN GOODSON

52868 Private

9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

Thomas was born on 3rd March 1883 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Samuel Goodson, a farm labourer, and Esther his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's on 11th April 1883.

On the 1901 and 1911 census he is shown as living in the family home in Stoneham Street, Coggeshall and his occupation as farm labourer.

Late in 1913 he married Rose Elizabeth Hammill. At some time the couple must have moved to Kensington as this is shown as his place of residence on his enlistment record.

He became part of 27th Reserve Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers (No.2130) and later was transferred to the 9th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) and went to join them in France.

He was killed in action on the first day of the Arras Offensive on 9th April 1917, age 34. He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Bay 3.

The second battle of Arras was the British contribution to the Allied spring offensive of 1917. The British attack had made impressive progress, but did not achieve a breakthrough on the first day. This allowed German reinforcements into the gap, launching a series of counter-measures and slowing down the British attack. A renewed British effort at Bullecourt on 11th April failed to make progress and the attack was suspended.

The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7th August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave.

The Arras Memorial is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.





JOHN GRIGGS

9541 Lance Corporal
1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

John Griggs was born on November 17th 1895 in Boxted, Essex, the son of John Griggs, a horseman on a farm, and Ruth his wife.

On the 1911 census he is listed as working on a farm in Marks Hall Lane, Coggeshall, feeding the stock, aged 14. His father was the horseman on the same farm.

He enlisted at Chelmsford in the 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment. It can be established from the medal roll that he arrived in France to join his battalion in 1916. He died of his wounds on 6th September 1916, the last day of the Battle of Guillemont, age 19.

Guillemont was a subsidiary attack of the Somme Offensive launched at midday on 3rd September 1916. With its maze of underground tunnels, dugouts and concrete emplacements, Guillemont was a veritable fortress.

He is buried at La Neuville British Cemetery, Corbie, France.

In April 1916, No.21 Casualty Clearing Station came to La Neuville and remained there throughout the 1916 Battles of the Somme, until March 1917. La Neuville British Cemetery was opened early in July 1916 and most of the burials date from this period.

La Neuville British Cemetery contains 866 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Corbie is a village 15 kilometres south-west of Albert. The cemetery is west of the village on the road from La Neuville to Daours.





FREDERICK CECIL HARRINGTON

40365 Private
2nd/5th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers

Fred Cecil Harrington was born in Great Wigborough, Essex in the summer of 1898. He was the eighth child and third son of William Robert Harrington and his wife, Coggeshall-born Ellen Emma Harrington, nee Thurgar.

At the time of the 1901 census his father was the farm bailiff at Abbots Hall, Great Wigborough.

By 1911 the family had moved to Bury Cottages, Feering, where William was a farm bailiff; the older two sons were also working on the farm. Fred was still at school.

At some time Fred moved to Corringham, Essex and his Army records give this as his residence when he enlisted at Grays, Essex. The records indicate that he was firstly in the Bedfordshire Regiment with the Army No. 37108, and later in the 2nd/5th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers.

He went to France and was involved in the battle around the hamlet of L'Homme Mort in March 1918 where he was killed in action on 25th, aged 20.

He is buried at L'Homme Mort British Cemetery, Ecooust-St. Mein, Pas de Calais, France

Ecooust-St Mein is a village 10 kilometres north-east of Bapaume and L'Homme Mort is a hamlet nearly 3 kilometres to the south-west. The Cemetery is near the east side of the Braucourt to St Leger road. The cemetery contains 166 burials of the First World War, 104 of them unidentified.





WILLIAM HERBERT HEARD

11258 Guardsman
3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards

William was born in 1883 in Great Tey, the son of William Heard, an agricultural labourer, and Eliza his wife and was one of 6 children.

On the 1901 census he is recorded as working as an agricultural horseman on a farm in Earls Colne.

He is shown on the 1911 census at the Guards Depot in Caterham as a Private. He had enlisted in 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards at Halstead.

On 29th November 1913 he married Thirza Eliza Alleston in the church of St. Peter-ad-Vincula, Coggeshall.

He arrived with his Battalion in Le Havre, France on 26th July 1915.

He was killed in action on 14th September 1916 and is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial, pier & face 8D.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

The Thiepval Memorial will be found next to the village of Thiepval, France, off the main Bapaume to Albert road. Each year a major ceremony is held at the memorial on 1st July.





REGINALD BYNG TOWER HILL

Captain

8th Cyclist Battalion Essex Regiment

Reginald was born on 15th April 1894 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Reginald Duke Hill and Flora his wife. The family were wealthy landowners who lived at Holfield Grange, a country house in the parish of Coggeshall. He was baptized in St Peter's on 4th May the same year.

The 1911 census records 16 year-old Reginald as a boarder at Harrow School. The Coggeshall Almanack shows that he enlisted in 8th (Cyclist) Battalion (Territorial), Essex Regiment in 1914.

The medal roll indicates that in May 1917 he went to France and that he had been posted to 11th Battalion Essex Regiment, based near the town of Lens in Northern France, and manning trenches facing the enemy just east of Loos.

Reginald was killed in action on 3rd June 1917, age 23, and is buried at Philosophe British Military Cemetery, Mazingarbe.

The cemetery was started in August 1915. In 1916 it was taken over by the Division holding the Loos Salient and their dead were brought back to the cemetery from the front line and this continued until October 1918. After the Armistice, this cemetery was used for the concentration of isolated graves from the battlefields around Loos. There are 1,996 Commonwealth burials of the Great War in the cemetery, 277 of them unidentified. Philosophe lies between Bethune and Lens, Pas de Calais, France.

ON JUNE 3RD, Lieut. Reginald B. T. Hill, 1/8th, Essex Regt., Cyclist Battn., the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Hill, of Holfield Grange, Coggeshall, was killed in action in France. He was only 23 years of age and had grown up amongst us so that we feel a sense of personal loss, his happy disposition and exceptional charm of manner endeared him to every one.

A Memorial Service was held at Coggeshall, on June 15th, at which many of his brother officers were present and men of "D" Company.

From the Coggeshall Almanack





JAMES HUME

DM2/224399 Private

46th Division Mechanical Transport Company, Royal Army Service Corps

James was born on 28th November 1887, the eldest son of James Hume, an agricultural labourer, and Sarah his wife. He was baptised in St Peter's church on 24th February 1888.

The family lived in Robins Bridge Road and on the 1911 census he is listed as a plumber. He married Alice Mary Sach of Tiptree on 24th May 1913 and they were living in Queen Street, Coggeshall when he was mobilised.

From his service record it is known that he stood 5ft 8 ins tall and weighed 137lbs. He had dark brown hair, blue eyes and a fresh complexion.

On 4th December 1915 he was attested for the Army Service Corps and served on the Army Reserve from 4th December 1915 to 20th September 1916. The following day he was mobilised for Active Service with the Army Service Corps. On 20th March 1917 he embarked at Portsmouth for France, disembarking at Rouen 3 days later.

On 14th November 1918 he was admitted to a medical unit suffering from his wounds and influenza which led to pneumonia.

He died at No. 37 Casualty Clearing Station, 6 Division, on 2nd December 1918, age 31. He is buried at Busigny Communal Cemetery Extension, France.

Busigny was captured on 9th October 1918, in the Battle of Cambrai, and in the course of the next two months the 48th, 37th and 12th Casualty Clearing Stations came successively to the village. The majority of the burials were from these units.

Busigny Communal Cemetery Extension contains 670 First World War burials, 64 of them unidentified.

Busigny is a village about 10 kilometres south-west of Le Cateau and 24 kilometres north-east of St. Quentin. The Communal Cemetery and Extension are a short distance west of the village.





ALFRED GEORGE KELLICK

12156 Corporal
9th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Alfred was born in 1895 in Little Saling, Essex, the son of Ada Kellick (later Childs). His stepfather was Ephraim Childs, a horseman on a farm.

In 1901 he was living at New Brighton, Halstead, Essex with the family which included two half - siblings.

In 1911 he was shown on the census as living with his grandparents, George and Sophia Kellick, at Lyon's Cottages, Lyons Hall, Bocking and was listed as a day man labourer.

He enlisted at Chelmsford in the 9th Battalion, Essex Regiment and his medal roll shows that he arrived in France on 30th May 1915. His name has been spelled Kellock on his documents and his headstone.

He fought in the Arras offensive and was killed in action on 20th September 1917, age 22. He is buried in Monchy-le-Preux British Cemetery.

Monchy village, has a relatively high and commanding position. It was from here that the Germans bombarded Arras and destroyed the bell tower. It was captured by Commonwealth forces on 11th April 1917 and the cemetery was begun at once. There are 581 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 58 of the burials are unidentified.

Monchy-le-Preux is a village in the department of Pas-de-Calais on the main road from Arras to Cambrai. Monchy British Cemetery is nearly 2 kilometres west of the village and is down a one kilometre track not suitable for cars.





GEORGE LAND

242276 Private
2nd/5th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment

He was born on 18th January 1899 in Coggeshall, the third son of George Land, a mineral water carman, and Annie Louisa his wife. The family lived on Grange Hill in Little Coggeshall.

The 1911 census shows George as still at school.

He enlisted at Coggeshall in the Essex Regiment (Army No.3423) and at some later date was transferred to 19th Battalion, London Regiment with a new number(6660).

He was moved later to 2nd/5th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment, with yet another Army number (242276) and went to France.

He died of his wounds on 16th April 1918, age 19.

He is buried at Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez, Pas de Calais , France.

The cemetery was begun by Commonwealth troops in March 1916 and used until August 1917, and then at intervals until September 1918. It was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when more than 7,000 graves were brought in from the battlefields of Arras and from 103 other burial grounds in the Nord and the Pas-de-Calais. The cemetery now contains 7,655 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, more than half of them unidentified.

Souchez is a village 3.5 kilometres north of Arras. The cemetery is about 1.5 kilometres south of the village on the main Arras-Bethune Road.





FREDRICK CHARLES LAWRENCE

27598 Private

'C' Company, 7th Battalion, Border Regiment

He was born 1897 in Braintree, the third son of Thomas Alfred Lawrence, a labourer on a farm, and Sarah his wife.

On the 1901 census he is shown as living in Feering with his parents and 6 siblings.

In 1911 the census shows him living with his widowed father and his siblings at Gypsy Lane, Feering. He is listed as a farm labourer.

He first enlisted in the Essex Regiment at Coggeshall (Army No. 5917). He was later transferred to the Border Regiment with the Army No. 5600.

From the medal roll it is known that he did not arrive in France before 1916, so was probably sent as a replacement for one of the many men wounded or killed during the offensives of 1915.

He was killed in action on 23rd March 1918, aged 21, in what was to be one of the last German offensives on the Hindenberg line.

He is buried at Cambrai East Military Cemetery, Nord, France. This was made by the Germans during their occupation and laid out with the greatest care, with monuments erected in it to the French, Commonwealth and German dead. The cemetery contains 501 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War.

Cambrai is a town about 32 kilometres south-east of Arras on the main road to Le Cateau.





GEORGE LAWRENCE

4762 Sergeant
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

George Lawrence was born in the late summer of 1881 in Little Coggeshall, the son of Thomas Lawrence, an agricultural labourer and his wife Eliza.

The 1881 census records the family living at Mill Lane in Coggeshall Hamlet.

By 1891 they had moved to the Cottages, Kelvedon Road and George, who was then ten years old, is shown on the census as a scholar.

The 1901 and 1911 census returns show the family still living in Little Coggeshall but George is not among them. It is probable that sometime during the ten years following the 1891 census George joined the Army and this is borne out by the fact that he was already a sergeant in a Regular battalion at the onset of war in 1914.

His Army record states that he enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment in Colchester, but the date is not shown. A marriage to Teresa McGrath is recorded on the Indian sub-continent in 1907.

The 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment landed in France on 24th August 1914 and George was killed in action just two days later, almost certainly at the battle of Le Cateau which took place on the 26th August. He was age 36.

He is buried in Esnes Communal Cemetery.

In the corner of the Communal Cemetery are five graves; one (marked also by a French memorial) contains the bodies of soldiers of the 4th Division who fell in August, 1914. There are now over 100 casualties from the Great War commemorated in this site and over half are unidentified.

Esnes is a village in the Department of the Nord, 8 kilometres south-east of Cambrai. The Cemetery is north-east of the village on the road to Langsart.





HERBERT J. LAWRENCE

8162 Private
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

Herbert was born in 1879 in Blackmore End near Wethersfield, the second son of William Lawrence, an agricultural labourer and Mary Ann his wife.

By 1891, at the age of 12, Herbert was working as an agricultural labourer.

He was living in Bulmer, right up on the border with Suffolk, when he enlisted in the Essex Regiment at Braintree, but the date is not known.

In the late Spring of 1914 he married Alice E Willis, the marriage being registered in Sudbury.

He went to Flanders and was killed in action on 25th May 1915, age 36.
He is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres, Panel 39.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The Menin Gate Memorial now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

Ypres (now Ieper) is a town in the Province of West Flanders. The Memorial is situated at the eastern side of the town on the road to Menin. Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.

His brother Stanley was killed in 1918, but his brother Sidney survived the war and returned to Blackmore End.





STANLEY LAWRENCE

T/202564 Private
10th (R. East Kent and West Kent Yeomanry) Battalion,
The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Stanley was born in 1889 in Blackmore End near Wethersfield, the eighth child of William Lawrence, an agricultural labourer and Mary Ann his wife.

The 1901 census shows the family still living at Blackmore End but Stanley's father is now listed as a chicken dealer and journeyman butcher.

In 1909 Stanley married Louisa Barnard from Gosfield, Essex.

The 1911 census records him working as a groom and living at Surrex, near Coggeshall, with Louisa and 1 year-old Cyril.

He enlisted at Braintree and was mobilized into the 10th (R. East Kent and West Kent Yeomanry) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). His mobilization must have come quite late in the war as the 10th Battalion was not formed until early in 1917.

He was killed in action on 13th August 1918, age 29, and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, panel 15 to 19.

The Loos Memorial forms the sides and back of Dud Corner Cemetery, named thus due to the large number of unexploded shells found in the area after the Armistice. The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Greenway.

Loos-en-Gohelle, Pas de Calais, France, is a village 5 kilometres north-west of Lens, and Dud Corner Cemetery is located about 1 kilometre west of the village. His brother Herbert was killed in 1915, but his brother Sidney survived the war and returned to Blackmore End.





ALBERT LESTER

35453 Private
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

He was born in 1897 in Bures, Essex, the sixth child of Shadrack Lester, a horseman on a farm, and Emma his wife.

In 1901 the family were living in Tilkey, Great Coggeshall.

The 1911 census shows him working as an agricultural labourer, aged 14 and living with his parents and older brother, John, in Robins Bridge Road, Coggeshall.

He enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment at Witham, but the date is not known. His older brother John was serving with 8th Battalion, Essex Cyclists Territorials in 1914.

Albert was killed in action in France on 1st July 1917, aged 20.

He is buried at Tilloy British Cemetery, Tilloy-Les-Mofflaines, Pas de Calais, France. The cemetery contains 1,642 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 611 of the burials are unidentified.

Tilloy-Les-Mofflaines is a village 3 kilometres south-east of Arras, on the south side of the main road to Cambrai.

