

## **FIRST WORLD WAR STREET SHRINE, CHRIST CHURCH, WATFORD**

There are two First World War memorials at Christ Church, North Watford – one outside the Church and one inside. The one inside the Church consists of a glass-fronted oak frame containing two wooden plaques, on which are inscribed 190 names. It is explained that:

“In a nearby street this shrine was used during the Great War to keep in prayerful remembrance those away ‘on Active Service’...

The wooden cross above marked for many years the last resting place of an Unknown British Soldier...

The Cross and Shrine are here preserved that future generations may never forget the sacrifice of those who died – that they may live.”

Street shrines were common throughout the country during the First World War. The shrines were used not simply as a focal point for remembering the dead, but also to pray for the living who were away on active service. Many shrines contained a list of those on active service as well as of those who had died.<sup>1</sup>

The Church of England actively promoted street shrines during the war.<sup>2</sup> They provided a means of expressing and mobilising collective emotions and values, and helped to recruit support for the Church as well as the war effort.<sup>3</sup> The Vicar of Christ Church at this time was Frank George Hunt, and the Churchwardens were E Ashby and Ralph Alfred Thorpe. Ralph Thorpe was also a Councillor for Callow Land ward, and involved in many local activities, including chairing at least one Army recruitment meeting in Callow Land.<sup>4</sup>

On March 24<sup>th</sup> 1917, the Vicar of Christ Church led a dedication ceremony of 4 ‘War Shrines’. The West Herts and Watford Observer reported that:

“After a brief service in Christ Church at 3.30, a procession, headed by the Christ Church Scout Band and Troop...and the choirs of the two churches, preceded by the ‘National Mission’ banner, was formed, and marched to the shrines, which had been erected in Leavesden-road, and in front of St. George’s Church (facing Sandringham-road), the Vicarage (facing St Alban’s-road), and Christ Church (facing St Albans’s-road) respectively...

the Vicar giving a short address after the unveiling and dedication of each shrine, and reminding those present that the shrines stood there as one of the results of the work of the National Mission in the parish, and that they were to be looked upon as a special call to prayer.”<sup>5</sup>

The Shrines were described as being made of oak, with a raised gilded cross, and of dormer pattern, designed by Mr G.W.Chilton. There were said to be 1,100 names, but that many more would be added “as the existing ‘Rolls’ represent the outcome of a house-to-house canvass of the parish, carried out under the auspices of the ‘National Mission’ Committee some time since.”<sup>6</sup>

The decision to place one of the shrines inside the Church was initiated on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1931, when the following resolution was passed:

“The Church Council of Christ Church Watford approve the proposal of the Vicar and Churchwardens (1) to place on the west end wall of the church, just inside the doorway, one of the old street shrines used during the war, containing a list of the fallen & to be used as a suitable place where flowers may be placed in their memory. (2) to place over the shrine a wooden cross from an unknown soldier’s grave.”<sup>7</sup> [given by the Imperial War Graves Commission]

The Vicar and Churchwardens immediately applied for permission to the Bishop of St Albans to place the shrine and cross inside the Church, expressing the hope that this could be done in time for Armistice Day on 11<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>8</sup> This was achieved.

The Vicar at this time was Edmund Dixon Parkin Kelsey, and the Churchwardens were James William Beach, of 44, Bruce Grove and Frederick Ford Pulman, of 137, Gammons Lane. Both James Beach (born c1869) and Frederick Pulman (born 1865) had lived in North Watford since at least 1901. In 1901, James Beach was already living in Bruce Grove, employed as a commercial clerk, and Frederick Pulman was a carpenter with 3 young sons, who would have reached service age by the time of the First World War.<sup>9</sup> So they would both have been familiar with the street shrine during the war.

The two plaques inside the shrine which is now inside Christ Church contain 190 names of people from the whole parish. These names have clearly been rewritten in (almost) alphabetical order. It seems then that the original shrines contained the names of people from their locality and included those away on active service, whereas the shrine now inside Christ Church has incorporated names from the whole parish, but only the names of those who died.

The names as written on the plaques are listed below,<sup>10</sup> together with additional information where it has been possible to determine this with a reasonable degree of certainty.<sup>11</sup> It is hoped that others may be able to add further information and correct any inaccuracies.

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**FIRST WORLD WAR STREET SHRINE, CHRIST CHURCH, WATFORD**

<b>NAME ON PLAQUE</b>	<b>DATE OF DEATH</b>	<b>ADDRESS (usually of next of kin)</b>	<b>REGIMENT</b>	<b>CEMETERY/MEMORIAL</b>
ALLEN G				
APPLETON HE	6/11/16	Shakespeare St	Kings Royal Rifle	Thiepval
ATKINS WR	10/9/16	Watford	Grenadier Guards	Thiepval
AUSTIN FAA	30/9/18	Leavesden Rd	Border Regiment.	Hooge Crater
BAKER WT				
BAKER C	24/11/15	Watford	Royal Field Artill	Bois-Grenier
BASSIL JW	9/9/16	Parker Street	Royal West Kent	St Sever, Rouen
BARNES RA	11/4/17	Judge Street	Bedfordshire	Henin Crucifix
BATES AW	25/9/15	Leavesden Rd	Bedfordshire	Loos
BEASLEY H	7/8/16	Watford	Bedfordshire	Thiepval
BECK PV	7/5/17	Cromer Road	Royal Army Medical Corps	Chester Farm Cemetery
BLACKLEDGE WF	10/4/18	Market Street	Wiltshire	Strand Military Cemetery
BLEWITT A	17/5/15	Watford	Bedfordshire	Le Touret
BOLTON AG	4/8/17	Acme Road	Norfolk	Monchy British
BODSWORTH CF				
BONE JT	31/7/17	Leavesden Rd	Lincolnshire	Ypres (Menin Gate)
BOULTWOOD F	30/5/18	Brighton Road	Royal Engineers	Longuenesse (St Omer) Souvenir
BOWLER R	3/5/17	Copeswood Rd	Middlesex	
BRACE WC	30/3/18	Hatfield Road	Bedfordshire	Ramleh War Cem.
BRANDON A				
BRANDON G				
BRIGHTMAN H	20/3/16	Bushey	Bedfordshire	Watford Cemetery
BROWN G				
BRULTY FC				
BUDD RJ				
BUDD SF				
BULLING WH	9/9/16	Balmoral Rd	London (Royal Fusiliers)	Thiepval
BUTLER C	16/6/17	Parker Street	Bedfordshire	Wancourt British
BUTTON HJ	23/4/17	Yarmouth Rd	Border Regiment	Arras
BUTTON SG	23/4/17	Yarmouth Rd	Middlesex	Arras
CARPENTER AF	30/8/18	Brixton Road	Suffolk	Ecoust-St. Mein British Cemetery
CASSOP CH				
CHAPLIN FJ	1/5/18	Jubilee Road	London Scottish	Jerusalem War Cemetery, Israel
CHAPMAN E	15/3/17	Regent Street	Bedfordshire	Achiet-Le-Grand

CLARKE JW				
COOKE CJ [COOK]	23/8/18	Copsewood Rd	Essex	Foncquevillers Military Cem.
COOKE EW [COOK]	20/07/18	Jubilee Road	King's Yorkshire Light Infantry	Chambrecy British Cem.
COSTER W	21/1/17	Regent Street	Hertfordshire	Ste. Marie, Le Havre
COX RS	11/4/17	Water Lane	Bedfordshire	St Martin Calvaire British
COX WW	28/12/18	Watford	Leicestershire	Hollybrook, Southampton
CROOK MG				
CUMMINGS T				
CUMMINGS P				
DADSON JW	10/2/17	Watford	Essex	Cambrin Military
DARRIL J [DARVILL]	21/4/17	Regent Street	Royal Garrison Artillery	Beaurains Rd Cem.
DAVEY AT [AJ]	7/10/16	Cecil Street	Rifle Brigade	Thiepval
DAY G				
DODWELL AH	11/9/15	St Albans Rd	Hertfordshire	Cambrin Military
DOGGETT GP	17/7/16	Judge Street	Hertfordshire	Gorre British & Indian Cemetery
DUNHAM SH	19/10/16	St Albans Rd	Hertfordshire	St Sever, Rouen
DURRANT J	23/4/17	Hatfield Road	Bedfordshire	Canadian Cem., No 2, Neuville-St., Vaast
DYER A				
EARL A				
EARL T				
EBBING WG				
EDENS R	7/7/18	Sandringham Rd	Central Ontario	Watford Cemetery
ELLIS B	17/2/17	Salisbury Rd	Royal Fusiliers	Thiepval
EDMONSTONE J	14/10/15	Bruce Grove	Mercantile Marine	Tower Hill
ELLINGHAM VE	2/10/17	Bradshaw Rd & Bruce Grove	Leicestershire	Tyne Cot
EVANS GW	23/3/18	Milton Street	Hertfordshire	Pozieres
FELLOWS WP				
FOSTER EW				
FOWLER HG				
FRIPP W				
GIBBS W				
GINEDALE LEL [GINELACK LFL]	18/9/16	Watford	London	Abbeville Communal Cem.
GLENN AP				
GOODING F	30/11/17	Watford	Rifle Brigade	Cambrai, Louverval

GOODYER A	22/6/17	Milton Street	Northamptonshire	Dickebusch New Military Cem.
GRAMLICH H				
GREEN RW	12/4/18	Stanmore Road	Monmouthshire	Ploegsteert Mem.
GRAY J	13/11/17	Hatfield Road	Hertfordshire	Menin Road South Military Cem.
GREGO R	23/04/15	St Albans Rd	Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry	Ypres (Menin Gate)
GREEN FR				
GRIFFITHS RJ [GRIFFIN]	29/9/18	Yarmouth Road & Aylesbury	Northamptonshire	Unicorn Cem., Vend'huile
GRIFFITHS ETO [EJD]	6/9/18	Salisbury Rd	Machine Gun Corps	Tehran Mem.
GROSSE EE	31/05/16	Harwoods Rd	Royal Navy	Portsmouth Naval
GROVER AP				
HALL HA	25/7/16	Cecil Street	King's Royal Rifle Corps	Mericourt-L'Abbe
HAMMOND AE				
HAMMOND TW	15/9/16	Bradshaw Road	London	Thiepval
HARE T	8/8/17	Ridge Street	Bedfordshire	Voormezele
HARDWICK M				
HARDWICK R [HARDWICKE]	26/4/18	Victoria Road & Sandringham Rd	Essex	Pozieres
HARRIS CW	27/9/17	Regent Street	Suffolk	Tyne Cot
HAYLOCK SG	1/2/17	Shakespeare St & Abbots Langl	Royal Engineers	Guards' Cem., LesBoeufs
HEARNDON J [HEARNDEN]	15/1/15	Ballad's Buildings	Bedfordshire	Ypres (Menin Gate)
HEATH C	16/8/16	Watford	Royal Fusiliers	Thiepval
HEMMING S	19/4/17	St Albans Rd	Bedfordshire	Loos
HERBERT EW	26/3/17	Victoria Road	Queen's (Royal West Surrey)	Jerusalem Mem.
HEWITT AE				
HILL SG	25/9/15	Watford	Bedfordshire	Loos
HISCOCK TG	23/4/17	Ashby Road	Norfolk	Arras
HOARE FH	21/3/18	Watford	Royal Engineers	Arras
HODGKIN RW				
HOLMES G	6/11/18	Shakespeare St	Royal Engineers	Kezelberg Military
HORN JB	11/11/18	Railway Cottages	Bedfordshire	Watford Cemetery
HOWARD W				
HULTEY J				
HULTEY R				
JUDGE FD	1/2/15	Parker Street	Coldstream	Cuinchy Communal

			Guards	Cem.
KEEN G	4/5/16	Watford	Bedfordshire	St Amand British
KEMSLEY NGM	7/5/18	Watford	Royal Field Artillery	Chocques Military Cem.
KNIGHTS RF	7/10/15	Bruce Grove	Rifle Brigade	Ypres (Menin Gate)
KNIGHT F	15/7/16	Brightwell Rd	Bedfordshire	Thiepval
KING H				
LANGSTON W	16/5/17	Regent Street	London (Royal Fusiliers)	Arras
LEACH EG	6/10/17	Leavesden Rd	Lincolnshire	Outtersteene Communal Cem., Bailleul
LEDDER EC [LEADER]	9/8/18	Milton Street	London, City of London Rifles	Villers-Bretonneux Military Cem
LEA JGE				
LING SA	14/1/17	Railway Cottages	Royal Fusiliers	Loos
LINSELL MW	2/9/16	Sandringham Rd	Middlesex	Delville Wood Cem., Longueval
LLOYD TP	17/7/16	Acme Road	Bedfordshire	Abbeville Communal Cem.
LODGE HFW	10/11/18	Shaftesbury Rd	Essex	Kantara
McKENZIE EE				
MASON HT				
MACMILLAN G				
MEAD AW	10/7/15	Bedford Street	Bedfordshire	Ypres (Menin Gate)
MILES W	7/11/15	Watford	Hertfordshire	Bethune Town
MILLER F	2/5/15	Victoria Road	Bedfordshire	Bailleul Communal Cem., (Nord)
MORGAN H	11/12/17	Watford	Norfolk	Ramleh War Cem.
NEEDLE F	17/3/17	Oxon & Leavesden Road	Royal Navy	Portsmouth Naval
NORMAN H				
NORRIS H	27/3/18	Lowestoft Rd	Bedfordshire	Arras
PALMER TE				
PARKER ET [EJ]	26/12/17	Watford & Kent	Bedfordshire	Watford Cemetery
PARKER HJ				
PARRY F				
PEARCE EJ	19/2/17	Copsewood Rd	Bedfordshire	Watford Cemetery
PERKINS C				
PERKINS H				
PICTON AE	12/4/17	Brixton Road	Northamptonshire	Arras
PITCHESS EJ				
POINTER RT	26/7/16	Leavesden Rd	Bedfordshire	Thiepval
PRATT WS	7/8/18	Copsewood Rd	Royal Fusiliers	Beacon Cem.,

				Sailly-Laurette
PRITCET R				
RAE JE	15/1/18	Fuller Gardens	Royal Field Artillery	Baghdad (North Gate)
RANDALL WH [RANDLE]	13/2/19	Milton Street	Royal Army Medical Corps	Watford Cemetery
READHEAD W [REDHEAD]	29/8/15	Stanmore Road	Dorsetshire	Voormezeele
RICHARDSON E [FT]	12/5/15	Ridge Street	Bedfordshire	Wimereux Communal
RICHARDSON A	20/12/15	Bedford & Watford	Bedfordshire	Ypres
RIDDEFORD J				
RODNEY P [R]	6/11/15	Judge Street	Bedfordshire	Guards, Cuinchy
RAWLINS C				
RUSSELL C	13/7/16	Watford	Oxford & Bucks	Arras
SALMON AN				
SALT G	14/11/15	Sandringham Rd	Manchester	Lancashire Landing Cem.
SAYELL J				
SAUNDERS A				
SAUNDERS H				
SCOTT WT [WJ]	20/11/17	Brighton Road	Bedfordshire	Ribecourt British C
SENNOR H [SENIOR]	12/5/18	Stanmore Road	Bedfordshire	Merville Communal Cem.
SHORTLAND J	6/7/17	Salisbury Rd & Leavesden	Army Cyclist Corps	Oak Dump Cemetery
SHRIMPTON J				
SHULTY S				
SILLS TW	28/7/16	Regent Street	Bedfordshire	Thiepval
SMITH WF				
SMITH W				
SMITH R	28/6/17	Watford	Royal West Kent	Railway Dugouts Burial Ground
SMITH AW	21/3/17	Watford	Royal Garrison Artillery	Ecoivres Military, Mont-St. Eloi
SPENCE ET [EJ]	21/3/18	Gammons Lane	Royal West Kent	Pozières
STAPLETON WH	22/4/18	St Albans Rd	Machine Gun Corps	Lillers Communal Cem.
STONE L	1/7/16	Watford	Bedfordshire	Thiepval
STEVENS FE				
TANELEY J				
TAYLOR A	25/9/15	Parker Street	Bedfordshire	Loos
THOMPSON F				
THOMPSON W				

THWAITES CH	8/10/18	Ridge Street	Royal Field Artillery	Five Points Cem., Lechelle
WARE RG	22/7/17	Parker Street	East Surrey	Dickebusch
WALTER A	21/3/18	Watford & York	East Yorkshire	Pozieres Memorial
WARREN FF	15/9/16	Garfield Street	London (Civil Service Rifles)	Flatiron Copse Cem., Mametz
WEAVER R				
WEAVER WT				
WEBB BE	4/1/18	Cromer Road	Royal West Surrey	Wimereux Communal Cem.
WEBB G				
WEBBER E				
WELCH HJ [HR]	2/7/18	Copsewood Rd	Royal West Kent	Mere
WESTON JCG	28/4/17	Sandringham Rd	Essex	Arras
WHITING J				
WHITTINGHAM H	21/9/17	Copsewood Rd	London (Royal Fusiliers)	Ypres
WHITE HT				
WILMORE E				
WINTERS H				
WINTERBOURNE J	3/5/17	Judge Street	Bedfordshire	Arras
WOOSTER G	27/3/18	Sandringham Rd & Edmonton	King's Royal Rifle Corps	St Hilaire Cem., Frevent
WORTHY FT	9/5/15	Watford	Rifle Brigade	Ploegsteert
WRIGHT SW				
YATES FG	5/8/15	Watford	Royal Horse Artillery	Alexandria (Chatby) Cem.
YOUNG L				

<sup>1</sup> King, A, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain*, 1998, p47-8

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p49

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p49-50

<sup>4</sup> *Watford Illustrated*. No 7, Sat Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, 1914, p2

<sup>5</sup> *West Herts and Watford Observer*, Sat March 31, 1917, p8

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Papers re *Street Shrine, Christ Church, Watford*. Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, Ref: DSA2/1/26/64

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> 1901 Census

<sup>10</sup> In some cases names have been differently recorded in other places, eg the War Graves Commission records. This is indicated in square brackets in column 1 of the table.

<sup>11</sup> The main source for additional information is the War Graves Commission records, but where necessary and possible this has been cross checked with other sources eg British Army WW1 Service Records eg for address.