

FLETCHING PARISH

A brief history behind the men
remembered on the Fletching
Memorial from World War I



Memorial for those who gave their lives from Fletching in WWI and WWII

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FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL



Memorial plinth in Fletching church

INTRODUCTION

The Fletching War Memorial, by the Churchyard of St Andrew and St Mary the Virgin Church, was dedicated on Sunday 13 November 1921, some three years after the guns on the Western Front had fallen silent. It was unveiled by no less a personage than Lieutenant General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, Chief Scout. At the time, Baden-Powell lived in Hampshire and had no obvious connection to Fletching; as a well-known public figure he was a very high profile individual for the village to secure. His attendance at least guaranteed large crowds, and a number of Boy Scout troops were in attendance.

The local paper – the Sussex Agricultural Express- was slightly patronising about Fletching, describing it as a “remote” village. The band from Maresfield Army Training Camp played music appropriate to the ceremony.

For the dedication itself, the congregation processed out of the church while singing the hymn “ O God, our help in ages past”. For many present, memories of lost ones – sons, brothers, husbands, sweethearts – would still have been very raw.

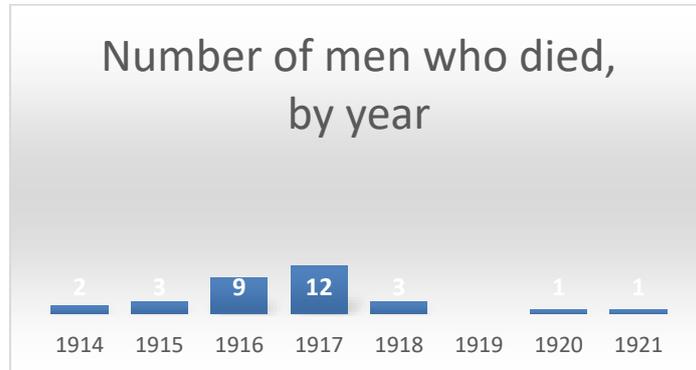
General Baden-Powell gave a rousing oration, based on the themes of self-sacrifice and selflessness. As a veteran of many conflicts, from the Ashanti Wars to the Siege of Mafeking, at least he was well qualified to make a speech of that nature. He mentioned that on four occasions "the number killed who had gone from this quiet little centre was something Fletching could always be proud of”.

The men of Fletching, by and large, either worked on the land, were shopkeepers, or were drawn from local land owning families. Of the thirty men on the Memorial, twelve were farm labourers, carters, cowmen or dairy workers. Three were in the military before the War; and three were grocers or butchers. The officers were clerks, schoolmasters, or in one case an importer of Japanese goods.

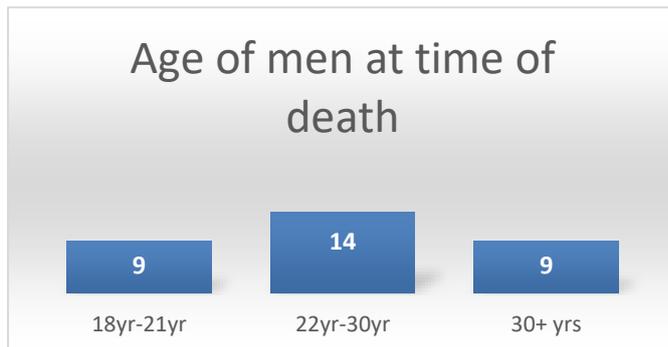
Putting the 30 men who died and are remembered on the Fletching Memorial from the 1st World War in context it is interesting to reflect that in November 1915 the Fletching Roll of Honour, as

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reported in the Sussex Agricultural Express, 57 men in service; 45 men listed as serving with the army; 8 with the Navy and 4 with the Royal Flying Corps.



Of those who lost their lives their ages varied from 18 to 40. In fact, nine were 21 or younger. The vast majority served in the Army, but there was one sailor (Fred Staplehurst) and one airman (Ernest Neale). Most served and died on the Western Front, but five died at home and are buried at Fletching. Three were killed in the Middle East, either Palestine or Salonika.



Almost one hundred years later, and the War Memorial and Plaque within the Church still remind all villagers, and visitors to the village, of that sacrifice. This little booklet is an attempt to address that lack of knowledge – an attempt to paint a picture, no matter how sketchy, of the men behind the names. During the course of this research we became aware of 2 headstones in Fletching graveyard of which the soldiers are not mentioned on the Fletching Memorial, Albert Edward John Payne and Frederick William Fieldwick. (Frederick Padgham’s memorial was also found but after completion of our research.)

Alastair Shepherd Christopher Rothery

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NAME	RANK and UNIT	AGE	WHERE DIED	CONNECTION TO FLETCHING
Percy Bish	Private 9 th Royal Sussex Regiment	23	Messines Ridge 11 June 1917	Born Wonersh. Working in Fletching in 1915
Sydney Arthur Brooks	Private, 12 th Royal Sussex Regiment	18	Ferme Du Bois, France, 30 June 1916	Born Fletching, lived Fletching and Newick
Lancelot Curteis	2 nd Lieutenant, 8 th Border Regiment	23	Thiepval, Somme 3 July 1916	Born Fletching, lived Piltdown
William George Day	Lance Corporal, 9 th Royal Sussex Regiment	19	Ypres, 15 May 1916	None established, connections to Uckfield
John Ellis	Private, 11 th Royal Fusiliers	34	Ypres, 10 August 1917	Born Fletching, lived Chailley
Dennis Arthur Elphick	Private, 7 th Border Regiment	19	Arras 19 April 1917	Born and lived at Fletching
Gabriel Roy Fitzpatrick	Captain, 3 rd Welsh Regiment, attached 2 nd Welsh Regiment	29	Aisne 14 September 1914	Married Fletching woman, lived briefly in Fletching
Edward Gladman	Private, Royal Field Artillery	25	Zandvoorte, Ypres 31 October 1914	Parents lived in Fletching after the war
Thomas Frederick Gladman	Private, 2 nd /5 th Royal Warwickshire Regiment	23	Cambrai 5 December 1916	As above
Harry Cecil Grover	Private, 1 st Northumberland Fusiliers	20	Scarpe 6 May 1917	Born and lived in Fletching, family in Fletching from at least 1841
Richard Albert Grover	Private, 1 st East Surrey Regiment	28	Home 27 November 1918	As above
Henry (Harry) Harding	Private, Royal West Surrey Regiment	29	Cambrin 1 November 1915	Lived in Fletching
Frederick (Fred) Harding	Not clear	Born 1893		Lived in Fletching
Oswald Hood	Lieutenant, 11 th Royal Sussex Regiment	30	Mailley Wood, Somme 3 September 1916	Lived in Fletching
Robert Kenward	2 nd Lieutenant, 7 th Royal Sussex Regiment	21	Ovillers, Somme 7 July 1916	Born and lived in Fletching
Matthew Roland King	Private, Labour Corps	19	Rouen 1 July 1918	Born and lived in Fletching

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Jesse Mitchell	Private, 1 st /4 th Royal Sussex Regiment	28	Palestine 6 November 1917	Born and lived in Fletching
George Alfred Moore	Private, 26 th Royal Fusiliers	35	St Eloi, Ypres 7 June 1917	Born in Fletching
Thomas Brown Morling	Lance Corporal, 11 th Royal Sussex Regiment	21	Fletching 11 May 1916	Born Nutley, lived and died in Fletching
Ernest Neale	Royal Flying Corps	35	Fletching 22 May 1920	Born, lived and died in Fletching
John William Newnham	Private, 11 th Cheshire Regiment	29	St Quentin 21/22 March 1918	Born Fletching, lived Piltdown
George Page	Private, 2 nd Royal Sussex Regiment	19	Cuinchy 29 January 1915	Not clear
Raymond Edward Pollard	Private, 8 th Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry	19	Salonika 28 July 1917	Lived Fletching
William Reed	Private, 12 th Royal Sussex Regiment	29	Ferme Du Bois 1 July 1916	Born and lived in Fletching
Charles Staplehurst	Private, 1 st /4 th Essex Regiment	40	Palestine 3 November 1917	Born Fletching, lived Piltdown
Frederick Thomas Staplehurst	Leading Seaman, Royal Navy	37	Fletching 5 March 1921	Born Fletching, lived Nutley and Surrey
George Staplehurst	Private, 7 th Royal Sussex Regiment	23	Pozieres, Somme 6 August 1916	Born Fletching, Lived in Fletching
Percy David Welch	Private, 23 rd Royal Fusiliers	33	Scarpe, Arras 3 May 1917	Born Nutley, Lived Fletching
Henry (Harry) Welfare	Private, 15 th Essex Regiment	37	Fletching, 9 July 1917	Born, lived, and died at Fletching
Robert Winchester	Private, 5 th Royal Sussex Regiment	22	Bethune 9 April 1915	Worked in Piltdown. Born Havant or Eastbourne?

Headstones from the 1st World War in the Fletching Graveyard not mentioned on the War Memorial

NAME	RANK and UNIT	AGE	WHERE DIED	CONNECTION TO FLETCHING
Frederick William Fieldwick	Corporal, 15 Canadian Infantry	31	Somme, 28 September 1916	Born and lived in Fletching
Albert Edward John Payne	Private, 15 Welsh Regiment	25	Langemarck, 8 September 1917	Lived and worked in Fletching

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PERCY BISH



PRIVATE, 9th ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Percy Bish was born in Wonersh, Surrey, in February 1894. His parents, Peter and Sarah Bish, both worked with gunpowder – his father was described as a gunpowder maker and his mother as a packer in a gunpowder works. It is of course ironic that gunpowder almost certainly contributed to their son's death. The Chilworth Powder Factory was founded by the East India Company in 1626 and closed down shortly after the Great War, during which it produced cordite for shells.

Peter hailed from Balcombe, Sussex, but his son Percy was brought up in Wonersh. His father was dead by the time Percy was seven; his widowed mother, aged 40 in 1901, had four children at home while she worked in the gunpowder works. However she remarried a Surrey Cowman, Charles Howich, and settled in Westhampnett with some of her children. By this stage (1911) Percy was 17 and working as a Cowman, perhaps with his step father.

His connection with Fletching seems to be remote; indeed his connection with Sussex is remote. However he may have been working in the Fletching area by 1915, as he appears on the Newick Roll of Honour in the Sussex Agricultural Express in March 1915, and he joined the Royal Sussex Regiment, initially the 2 "South Downs" Battalion, although he was serving with the 9 Battalion when he was killed.

9 Royal Sussex were formed at Chichester in September 1914, and served with 73 Brigade in 24 Division. Bish would almost certainly have been with his Battalion when they landed at Boulogne on 1 September 1915, having set out from Woking. He would have fought at Loos, Delville Wood, and Guillemont.

Bish was killed in action on 11 June 1917. On 11 May the Battalion was inspected by General Capper, and by 7 June had moved to assembly trenches at Chateau Segard, Dickebusch. They then took part in the Battle of Messines Ridge. By 11 June the War Diary states that the Battalion was holding the line gained, but enemy shelling increased each day. 31 other ranks were killed between 8 and 11 June, including Bish.

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His body was never recovered, and his name is inscribed on the Menin Gate, along with around fifty thousand others. His sacrifice is recalled every night at 8pm at the Menin Gate when the Last Post is sounded by the Ypres Fire Brigade.

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SYDNEY ARTHUR BROOKS



PRIVATE, 12 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Brooks was born and lived his short life in Fletching and Newick; he is the youngest Great War military man on the War Memorial, at the tender age of 18. In fact, as he was mentioned in the Newick Roll of Honour published in December 1915, he must have enlisted at age 17. If he declared his age on enlistment, he should not have been in Belgium in 1916, as the minimum age for overseas service was 19.

Brooks' family lived at Cherry Tree Cottage on Fletching Common. In 1901, the household consisted of Jared Brooks, Sydney's father, who was a 32 year old journeyman bricklayer, born in East Grinstead; his mother Frances; three children, including 3 year old Sydney; and Frances Brooks' 82 year old father, William Hart, who was born in Newick.

By 1911 the family had lost William Hart, and one of the daughters had left home, but otherwise was the same. Sydney was at school with his brother William and sister Lily. In three short years Sydney and William were to replace School with the Army.

On 11 November 1914 Sydney and his brother William enlisted into the 12 Royal Sussex Regiment at Brighton. Sydney was 16; William, who survived the war, was 17. No doubt they helped each other to lie to the recruiting Sergeant.

On 4 March 1916, 12 Royal Sussex left Witley Camp for Le Havre, via Southampton. By 29 June they were in the front line at Ferme Du Bois, Richebourg. 12 Royal Sussex were also known as the 2 South Downs Regiment, and were very proud of their local roots. They fought with 116 Brigade in 39 Division.

1 July 1916 is a day rightly revered in British history as the first day of the Battle of the Somme, but less attention is paid to 30 June 1916 "the day Sussex died". On that day the 11, 12 and 13 Royal Sussex attacked Richebourg in what became known as "the Battle of the Boar's Head". 12 Royal Sussex, with the 18 year old Brooks in their ranks, moved out of their front line at 0305 hours on the 30th; Brooks would not see the end of that fateful day.

The Germans had anticipated the attack and were well dug in and prepared. One of the combatants that day was the war poet Edmund Blunden who wrote – "What the Brigade felt was summed up by some sentry who, asked by the General next morning what he thought of the attack, answered "Like

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a butcher's shop." The War Diary of 12 Royal Sussex explains the withdrawal by commenting that the supply of bombs and ammunition ran out, and that there were no reinforcements.

The Battle of the Boar's Head lasted less than five hours, did not fool the Germans for one minute that it was the start of the major offensive, and cost the lives of 17 officers and 349 men of Sussex, let alone the wounded and captured.

Sydney Brooks' body was never recovered, and his name is inscribed on the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner Cemetery, Loos.

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LANCELOT CURTEIS



SECOND LIEUTENANT, 8 BORDER REGIMENT



The exotically named Lancelot Curteis was one of the four officers from Fletching who were killed in the Great War. He was born at Fletching in 1893, and was educated at Parkside School, Ewell, then moved to his Public School, Radley College, where he played for the First XI Association Football team. He left Radley in 1911.

His parents were Robert Mascall Curteis and Florence Curteis. Robert was in both 1901 and 1911 “living on his own means” so clearly had amassed or inherited sufficient funds not to have to work. Florence was born in Uckfield, as had been her mother. Lancelot was a twin, his brother Gerald served in the Royal Navy both before and during the War. He survived, and Captain Sir Gerald Curteis KCVO died in 1972 and is buried in Edinburgh.

In 1901 the family were staying with Florence’s widowed mother at Winkenhurst House, Hellingly, where she employed nine live in servants, but in 1911 they were at home at The Manor Cottage, Piltdown. This had been the Curteis home since at least 1891. Gerald was on naval service on Census night. However after the war, the Curteis parents stayed at Fernhurst, Uckfield.

Before the War, the Curteis family are frequently mentioned in the local papers in connection with Hunt Balls and local weddings. For instance in April 1910 the East Sussex Hunt Ball at Bexhill (“a brilliant gathering”) boasted no less than seven members of the family. This was hardly surprising, as Lancelot’s Grandfather had been the Master of the Hunt, as well as the local MP.

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In September 1914 Lancelot lost no time in joining up, initially in the Public Schools Corps, more correctly the 18 Royal Fusiliers. Most of its members were in fact Officer material, and were moved to other Regiments on being commissioned – Curteis ended up in the 8 Border Regiment. As far as can be ascertained, he had no connection with this part of the world.

A meeting of the Uckfield Primrose League (a Conservative political organisation) in April 1915 noted with approval that members Gerald Curteis and Lancelot Curteis were both serving with the colours.

Curteis went to France with his Regiment in December 1915. On 1 July 1916 the Battalion were in reserve at Martinsart Wood on the Somme when they were called into the front line near Thiepval. At 0600 hours on the 3 July they attacked in waves but made little progress. The Battalion War Diary notes baldly that 4 Officers were killed and 10 wounded, with 430 casualties among the other ranks. This was another typical day on the Somme.

As his body was never recovered, his name is inscribed on the impressive Thiepval Memorial, very close to the trenches they tried to capture.

Plaque in Fletching Church in memory of Lancelot Curteis

His death was not reported in the local papers until 28 July, as initially he would have been reported as missing, believed killed. On 4 August an appreciation was published – “2nd Lieutenant Lancelot Curteis, Border Regiment, who was killed in action on July 3rd, was the twin son of Mr and Mrs R M Curteis, of Piltdown, Uckfield.

He was educated at Parkside, Ewell, and Radley College and joined the University and Public Schools Corps in September 1914. He obtained his commission in the Border Regiment in May 1915 and went to France in December 1915. His Company Commander writes “Your son was a splendid officer, and the men were simply devoted to him. He led them magnificently in our charge on the German trenches as steadily and coolly as on parade. He was shot soon after we occupied them, fighting hard and cheerily to the last. He died as he had lived, a very gallant gentleman.”



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WILLIAM GEORGE DAY



LANCE CORPORAL, 9 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Lance Corporal Day was born in Faizabad, India in 1896. It is presumed his father, later described as a bookmaker and repairer, was on military service. Day's parents (John Thomas and Sally) had been married in the Uckfield area in 1895, and his mother had died shortly after his birth in 1898, aged only 26. Perhaps the climate in India did not suit her.

By 1911 Day's father and stepmother (they had married in 1910) were living at 3 Baker Street, Uckfield. There is no record of where William Day was on Census Day.

Day enlisted in Chichester, and joined the 9 Royal Sussex Regiment, a Battalion that had been formed in September 1914 in Chichester, and fought with 73 Brigade in the 24 Division. They landed at Boulogne on 1 September 1915.

By 12 May 1916 they were in trenches near Red Lodge and Stinking Farm, near Plogstreet Wood, Ypres. According to the War Diary, 15 May was "quiet" but on 14 May "Stinking Farm shelled again".

Day was 19 when he was killed. On his gravestone at Ration Farm (La Plus Douve) Annexe Cemetery is inscribed "My duty done I rest in Christ".

His connection to Fletching is not clear, although there are plenty of associations with Uckfield. His name also appears on the Buxted War Memorial, in which town his mother is buried.

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JOHN ELLIS



PRIVATE, 11 ROYAL FUSILIERS



Many of the Fletching war dead were either agricultural labourers or otherwise worked on the land, and John Ellis was one of the many men who fitted this description. He was born at Fletching (some records have Chelwood Gate) in 1884; his father was also a farm labourer, who had been born in Nutley. In the 1901 Census the family were living at Fletching Common, and by 1911 he and his young wife were at Helmsley Cottages, Piltdown. His father was boarding with his daughter's family in Chailey in 1911; he is described as a Widower, and although 66 was still working as a farm labourer.

Ellis married Florence Welch, a Fletching girl, in 1907 and by the time of his death was living at 2 Stone Croft Cottages, Piltdown. (Florence was the sister of Percy Welch who is also on the Fletching War Memorial and died in 1917 aged 33.) He had three children, Jack, Florence Edith, and Eveling. They were 8, 6 and 2 when their father was killed in action.

Ellis joined the Royal Fusiliers in 1916 in Uckfield. His Battalion, 11 Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) was a New Army Battalion. In August 1917 they were in trenches near the Hooge – Menin Road, and attacked towards Glencorse Wood with the 7 Bedfordshire Regiment. This was one of the early actions in the Third Battle of Ypres, otherwise known as the Battle of Passchendaele. The

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Fusiliers were very early on "in difficulties" and by 6am all their Officers had fallen. The NCOs took charge and no fewer than five DCMs were awarded afterwards. According to the CWGC, 129 Fusiliers were killed on 10 August 1917, the vast majority of whom are commemorated on the Menin Gate, as their bodies were never identified.

As well as the Menin Gate and the Fletching War Memorial, his name is remembered in Chailey but is not inscribed on the Chailey War Memorial.

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DENNIS ARTHUR ELPHICK



PRIVATE, 7th BORDER REGIMENT

Dennis Elphick was one of the six teenagers from Fletching who were killed in the Great War. Elphick's family had lived in or near Fletching for generations; his father is listed as an Agricultural Labourer at Sheffield Park, aged a mere 11, in 1861.

Elphick was born in Fletching in 1898. The family lived at Cherry Tree Cottage, Fletching Common, from at least 1901 to 1920, having moved from Bridge Cottage, Sheffield Park. His father by 1901 was described as a bricklayer, and had five children aged between 16 and 3. By 1911 the father, aged 61, was described as "cripple/bricklayer" but three of their sons still lived at home namely Tom (Farm Labourer), Bert (Bricklayer) and Dennis (School). By that stage two of their siblings had died.

Dennis Elphick was mentioned in the local papers in 1909 for winning the prize for the best arranged hand bouquet of wild flowers, but by 1916 the newspaper report was of much weightier matters. A Fred Watson had asked a Military Tribunal for exemption for Elphick, who was engaged in general dairy work. It was stated that Elphick had to undertake "heavy work which could not be done by women". The shortage of labour was so serious that the dairy employed two platelayers from the railway after they had finished their day job, while cheese making had had to be abandoned. The Tribunal granted Elphick exemption but only until 1st October 1916.

After October, Elphick had no option but to enlist and this he did at Chichester, originally joining the East Surrey Regiment, but later transferring to 7 Borders. Perhaps he was just allocated a Regiment that needed fresh men, or perhaps he was influenced by Lancelot Curteis. Certainly there is no obvious local connection between Fletching and a Regiment based in Cumberland.

7 Border Regiment had started the war as Yeomanry Cavalry, but as trench warfare became the norm they dismounted. They fought with the 51 Brigade in 17 (Northern) Division.

Between 14 and 22 April 1917 they moved to the front line near Monchy, Arras, and attacked on 23 April 1917. Elphick died of wounds on 19 April, before the big attack. He is buried at Faubourg D'Amiens Cemetery, Arras, where his gravestone contains the inscription, no doubt chosen by his widowed mother, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh".

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Elphick's father had died at Fletching in May 1915; his mother Ellen died in February 1942; and his brother Bert died in September 1968, aged 81. All three are buried in Fletching.

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GABRIEL ROY FITZPATRICK



CAPTAIN, 3rd WELSH REGIMENT



Of the four Army officers on the Fletching War Memorial, Fitzpatrick, as a Captain, held the most senior rank. He was also the first to be killed, when the war was only a few weeks old.

Fitzpatrick was born in Chelsea in 1883. His father was described as being from Highgate; in 1891 the family were resident in High Road, Tottenham, the fact that they had three live in servants give an idea about their wealthy status. By 1901, still in Tottenham, the 17 year old Gabriel was described as an apprentice in an Oriental Warehouse. His father was not at home in the 1891 and 1901 Censuses, but in 1911, the family having moved to Highgate, he was at home and described as the Managing Director of a firm of Japanese Importers. Perhaps he was in the Far East in 1891 and 1901.

Gabriel was educated at the Jesuit College, Stamford Hill, and Ratcliffe College, a Catholic School in Leicestershire. Soon after leaving school, he started his military career by joining the City Imperial Yeomanry in which he served in South Africa between 1901 and 1902. Between 1905 and 1909 he served with the 3 Essex Regiment, but by August 1909 he was a Lieutenant in 3 Welsh Regiment, promoted to Captain in September 1914.

In 1912 Gabriel married Mabel Strey Attenborough, in a society wedding attended by the cream of Sussex society and widely reported in the press. Mabel Attenborough was the daughter of the Vicar of Fletching, but she was also the adopted daughter of the childless 3rd Earl of Sheffield. The Earl was an eccentric individual, and for generations his family had been major employers in Fletching; many of the war dead worked or had connections to the Sheffield estate. Mabel's father died in

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1898 after having been Vicar of Fletching for 35 years; he had also been the domestic chaplain to the Earl.

When the Earl died in 1909 he left Clinton Lodge, Fletching, and the equivalent of £14 Million to Mabel. Overnight her status changed from a daughter of the Church to millionaire. In 1912 she married Gabriel Fitzpatrick; she was 43 and he was 27. The wedding, not at her father's old Church but at Heron's Ghyll Roman Catholic Church, was a well-attended event; one of the guests was Lancelot Curteis. A presentation was made by the Parishioners of Fletching.

In 1914 Gabriel's regiment were based in Bordon, Hampshire, and they landed at Le Havre on 13 August 1914. Although when he was killed he was serving with 3 Welsh, he was almost certainly serving with 2 Welsh for the first few weeks of the war. 2 Welsh served with 3 Brigade in 1 Division, and were in the thick of fighting at Mons, and the retreat to the Aisne and Marne. The war diary of 2 Welsh on the day Fitzpatrick was killed, 14 September 1914, states that "the Battalion were ordered to seize high ground north of Beaulne, which was done under heavy rifle and shell fire, this position being maintained all day. Many Germans being killed by our rifle and machine gun fire and by shelling, the Regiment losing Major Kerrich and Lieutenant (sic) Fitzpatrick and 19 men killed."

A solemn Requiem Mass was sung at Uckfield Roman Catholic Church for the repose of his soul on 24 September. His body was never recovered and his name is commemorated on the Memorial at La Ferte sous Jouarre, as well as the Fletching War Memorial.

He had no children with Mabel, and she died on 22nd February 1952 at Suva, Fiji having married Major William Edmund Willoughby Tottenham (1878-1962) and settled in the Pacific island.

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EDWARD GLADMAN



GUNNER, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

It can be safely assumed that almost all casualties of the Great War in 1914 were pre-war regular troops, and Edward Gladman is no exception, having joined the Royal Field Artillery by at least 1911.

He was born in Croydon, Surrey in 1891. His mother was Clara Marden, and Edward appears as "Edward Marden" in the 1901 Census although by this stage his mother had married Frederick Gladman. Frederick was born in West Hoathley, and like his father was an agricultural labourer, and carter on a farm.

Clara Marden married Frederick a year after Edward was born, and by 1911 Edward was using his step father's name of Gladman while he served with the RFA in South Africa. He was in barracks at Temple, Orange Free State and was described as a "driver". In 1912 Temple Barracks were handed back to the Union Government.

He re-enlisted in the RFA on the outbreak of war at Eastbourne, and joined 104 Battery of 22 Brigade RFA. Fighting with the 7 Division, they landed at Zeebrugge on 6 October 1914.

Gladman only lasted some 25 days in Belgium, during which his unit was involved in some desperate fighting at Zandvoorte, near Ypres. The village was defended but lost after heavy shelling, and was not recaptured until September 1918. The British were so thin on the ground at this sector that "the German artillery simply wasted their ammunition trying to find us." Gladman was killed on 31 October 1914 and his body was never recovered.

He is commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ypres, along with others from the village. At the time the Imperial War Graves Commission gave his parents address as Moyse's Cottage (now Archers Cottage), Fletching. This is his only known connection to Fletching.

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THOMAS FREDERICK GLADMAN



PRIVATE, 2/5th ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT

Thomas Gladman was the half-brother of Edward Gladman. Like him, there is no familial connection to Fletching, except that his parents were resident in the village by the end of the war, but there is evidence that their son was working in Fletching by 1916.

He was born in Catsfield, near Bexhill in 1893, where his father was described as a Waggoner on a farm. By 1901 the family was still based in Catsfield, at that stage Mrs Gladman had five children; she would eventually have a total of eight, of whom one had died by 1911.

By 1911 the family had moved to Hellingly. The 17 year old Frederick (he seems never to have been called Thomas) was following in his step father's shoes by working as a carter's mate on a farm. Interestingly, Mr Gladman, who completed the return, added that his stepson was a "Soldier in..." before realising his mistake and crossing the entry out.

On 17 March 1916, Frederick tried to obtain exemption from conscription but failed. He was described as a carter in the employ of Mrs Mephram of Moyse's Farm; so we know that in 1916 he lived and worked in the Fletching area.

Frederick finally enlisted in Hillsea and although he spent some time in the Royal Field Artillery, like his half-brother, was serving with the 2/5th Royal Warwickshire Regiment when he was killed.

His battalion was a Territorial unit, formed in Birmingham in 1914. It fought with 182 Brigade, 61 Division. It landed in France in May 1916, and took part in the highly successful attack at Cambrai, where tanks were used for the first time. Although 61 Division were initially held in reserve, the enemy counter attacked on 30 November, and the Battalion were ordered into the line near La Vacquerie, and for some days was involved in a hard fight to stem the enemy attack. Gladman was killed on 1 December 1916, according to "Soldiers died in the Great War", or 5 December 1916 according to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. He is buried at Caudry British Cemetery, near Cambrai.

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HARRY CECIL GROVER



PRIVATE, 1 NORTHUMBERLAND FUSILIERS

The Grover family were, for many generations, the butchers in Fletching. There are at least twenty five Grovers buried in the village; Harry Cecil Grover is buried at Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun.

Harry and his family can be traced back in Fletching on the very first census in 1841. His grandfather was described as “pork butcher”, his father as “journeyman pork butcher” and later just “butcher”. They lived at Church Gate House, Fletching, having moved there from the Old Poor House, Splayne’s Green. By 1911 the family consisted of Alfred Isaac Grover, aged 63, Emma Grover (born in Wiltshire), and their sons Alfred, Bernard, Percy, and 14 year old Harry. Harry was some 10 years younger than his youngest brother, and one can imagine he was the apple of his mother’s eye. He was born at Fletching in 1897.

Not every young man enlisted in a patriotic frenzy in 1914, as can be seen from others in this work. On 30 June 1916, the day before the Battle of the Somme started, his father was pleading for exemption from military service for young Harry. This was only granted to 31 July; Harry was by that stage his father’s slaughter man, but the tribunal felt another brother would be able to give assistance at that job. During the month of July 1916 Harry continued his slaughtering activities, while over the Channel slaughter of a different kind was taking place.

Harry eventually enlisted at Brighton, and joined the 1 Northumberland Fusiliers. By this stage of the war, men were posted to regiments in need of men, and regional loyalties or wishes were ignored. The Northumberland Fusiliers had no fewer than 52 battalions during the war; the 1 battalion were a regular unit who had been in France since August 1914. They fought with 9 Brigade in the 3 Division.

The Third Battle of the Scarpe was fought near Arras between 3 and 4 May 1917; the 1 battalion had only one casualty on 6 May 1917, Harry Cecil Grover.

His gravestone in France contains the inscription – At Rest - “May we meet again when God comes in all his Glory”

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RICHARD ALBERT GROVER



1 EAST SURREY REGIMENT

Richard and Harry Grover are one of three sets of brothers from Fletching who laid down their lives in the Great War.

Richard Grover was born in Fletching in 1892; his father, as has been seen, was one of the butchers in Fletching. Although Richard was at home in 1901 above the butcher's shop, by 1911 he was living in Yalding, Kent, described as an Assistant Grocer. He was staying with a Mr William Killick, who was described as a Draper and Grocer. The house must have been quite busy, consisting of Mr and Mrs Killick, three of their children, two servants, and two Assistant Grocers.

Grover joined the East Surrey Regiment, who in November 1918 were based at Le Quesnoy; an entry in the War Diary in November 1918 mentions the opening of the Regimental Bath House, and the Rugby Match with 1 Devonshires, which was lost 36-0. Meanwhile Grover was at home, as he died in Fletching on 27 November, a few weeks after the Armistice was signed.



Only four Great War casualties are buried at Fletching, Grover is one of them. His gravestone records his name as Richard Aubrey Grover.

Memorial headstone in Fletching graveyard dedicated to Richard and Harry Grover (plot 411/Commonwealth War Grave)

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

HENRY (HARRY) CHILDS HARDING



1 ROYAL WEST SURREY REGIMENT

Henry Harding, always known as Harry, was born in Hamsey in 1886. His father was an agricultural labourer who had moved to Fletching by 1891, and stayed there for the next 20 years. Harry was baptised in Hamsey on 14 March 1886.

Harry was a member of a large family; in 1891 he lived at Snatts Cottages, Uckfield Road, Fletching with his parents and four siblings. The itinerant nature of agricultural work in the late nineteenth century is evidenced by the fact that his siblings were born in East Chillington, Chailey, Hamsey and Fletching.

By 1901 Harry's mother Ellen had died and Harry has left School and was employed as a Carter on a farm. Since 1891 he had acquired two more brothers, John and Fred. Harry's father, George, had six children to feed, although the older brothers were by now working. George died later in 1901 leaving the family with no parents.

In 1911 there is no trace of Harry although his older siblings are scattered across the village.

In the early days of the War, the Sussex Agricultural Express published a Roll of Honour and the Harding family featured strongly; Harry had been killed by then, but Jack's service with the RGA was mentioned, as was Fred with 11 Hussars.

Harry enlisted at Guildford, and his residence was noted at the time as Banstead, Surrey. At some point he had married, as his widow is mentioned as an A M Champion by the CWGC. Clearly she had remarried after the War. She did choose an engraving for his War Grave however, "Never Forgotten".

Harry's unit was 1 Royal West Surrey Regiment, which fought with 5 Brigade in 2 Division. They landed at Le Havre on 13 August 1914 and in 1915 fought at Festubert and Loos.

In October 1915, the West Surreys marched to Cambrin ("quiet day"), and the War Diary noted that the enemy appeared very inactive and were supposed to be Saxons; but on 31 October noted that their snipers were more active. On the day Harry was killed, 1 November, "Enemy still showing more activity with snipers, but no shelling on our section. Casualties 2 killed, 1 wounded." The supposition has to be that Harry was killed by a sniper.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Harry was buried at Cambrin Churchyard Extension, near Bethune. On his grave is the epithet "Never Forgotten".

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

FREDERICK HARDING



1 KING'S ROYAL RIFLE CORPS

Of all the men on the War Memorial, Fred Harding is the only one where there is some uncertainty about his service. Two Frederick Hardings were killed in the Great War, both serving in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. One was killed on 8 January 1915, with no age given, and one 29 June 1916, aged 21. As Harding was born in 1895, he could well be the latter one, but this cannot be stated with certainty.

What we do know is that Harding was born in Fletching in 1895 into the large Harding family; his brother Harry also served and died in the war. His father, as has been seen, was an agricultural labourer from Chailey. By the time Fred was 5, his mother was dead, and no doubt he was very close to his many siblings who must have played a large part in his upbringing.

By 1911 he was a boarder, aged 15, and working as a "Waggoner's Mate" at Lamb Cottages, Piltown. However three years later there is reference in the local papers to a meeting held in the Reading Room at Fletching on 3 September 1914, very early in the War, when seven young men enlisted (or at least promised to enlist) and their employers promised to keep their jobs open for them, no doubt assuming they would be back by Christmas. One was Frederick Harding. He seemed to keep his promise, as on 19 November 1915 the names of Jack, Harry, and Frederick Harding were listed on the Fletching Roll of Honour. This is another piece of evidence to suggest he was the Frederick Harding killed on 29 June 1916.

The Roll of Honour mentions the 11 Hussars, but by 1916 Harding was serving with 1 King's Royal Rifle Corps. This was a unit that in July 1916 was serving with distinction near Delville Wood, on the Ancre; however Harding was buried at Quatre Vents Military Cemetery, Estree-Cauchy, which is north of Arras. The Cemetery was in the vicinity of a number of dressing stations, and it must be assumed that Harding was brought in wounded but died at one of the dressing stations.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

OSWALD HOOD



LIEUTENANT, 11 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

A number of the Fletching war dead have a connection with the Vicarage; for instance Gabriel Fitzpatrick. Oswald Hood was directly connected to the Vicarage, as his father was the Vicar for many years, and was a well-respected member of the community.

Oswald Hood was born in Brixham, Devon, in 1886. His father, Reverend Edwin Hood, was born in London, as was Oswald's mother, Eleanor. He was educated at Ancaster House, Bexhill, and then at Wren and Gurney in London which was a coaching establishment for Army and Civil Service entry.

In 1911 he was in Fletching staying with his parents in the Vicarage; he was 25 years of age, and described as a schoolmaster. His elder brother John, aged 30, was also at home and also described as a schoolmaster. His three other siblings were not at home.

His first career after teaching appeared to be in the Imperial Chinese Customs, but he resigned his commission, and moved to Australia, from whence he returned to England on the outbreak of war.

On his medal card, it states that he started out his military service as a Private in the London Regiment, and the Sussex Express states that he joined the Artist's Rifles, which was one of the battalions of the London Regiment, and a popular one for early Public School educated volunteers.

However, by 1 November 1915 he had been gazetted Second Lieutenant in the Royal Sussex Regiment. He was involved in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, or as the papers called it at the time, the Irish Rebellion. However, all available troops were required for the big push that was planned for July 1916, and Hood transferred over to France, transferring from the 10 Battalion to the 11 Battalion.

The War Diary of the 11 Royal Sussex for 18 July 1916 mentions the arrival of four Lieutenants from the 10 Battalion; D'Ivernois, Hood, French, and Cassells. Two were to be killed in the next few weeks, two survived the war. The battalion marched to Festubert, gave riding lessons to the young officers, and by 1 September were at Mailley Wood, the battalion rested and were equipped for the coming action. The billets were shelled at intervals during both day and night. There is no mention of Hood's death, but his gravestone in Fletching provides a clue as to his death - "Killed by shell whilst spotting on the Somme."

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

On 3 September the battalion attacked at Beaumont Hamel. Eight officers were reported missing that day. By 4 September they were at Englebelmer, and it is in Englebelmer Communal Cemetery Extension that Hood was buried.

His Commanding Officer wrote that *"He was greatly respected in this Battalion, and his loss will be most keenly felt."*

Headstone in Fletching graveyard remembering Oswald Hood (plot 506)



The family gravestone at Fletching records the death of his siblings; John survived the Great War, indeed was promoted to Captain on the Somme, was 40 years a Prep School Master, and died in 1964; Basil was a Doctor and died in 1978 aged 102; Alban was a Vicar and died in 1963; Clare died in 1974 aged 95. It seems that longevity was a feature of the Hood family, but only if one avoided the horrors of war.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

ROBERT KENWARD



2 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT



Robert Kenward was born and lived all his life in Fletching; his family, farming at Barkham Manor, were well known in the Fletching area.

The 1911 Census places the family at Barkham; the head of the household was Robert, Senior, also born in Fletching, described as widower, farmer, and landowner. Although he was the father of five, only three were home that day, namely Mabel, John and Robert, together with one servant.

After school in Fletching, Kenward was a pupil at Hurstpierpoint College in West Sussex. At the age of 17 he was the Clerk to the Secretary of East Sussex Farmers' Co-operative Society, presumably his first job after leaving Hurstpierpoint.

"Pitdown Man" was of course found at Barkham Manor in 1908, and publicised in 1912, so a young Kenward must have had a front row seat as the controversy unfolded.

His family were regularly mentioned in the local papers; his father was on various agricultural committees, involved in the Fletching Root Show, on the River Ouse Salmon Board, and frequently reported buying and selling pigs and cattle.

Kenward enlisted as a Private in 5 Royal Sussex Regiment, but the CWGC states he was serving in the 2 Royal Sussex; however his School has him in the 7th, which places him in the right location for his death, and must be seen as correct. No doubt he was attached to the 7th just before his death.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

We know from the war diary of 7 Royal Sussex that on 5 July “in the intermediate line trenches, following working parties provided – 100 men of A Company under 2 Lts. Kenward and Burdett reported to 87 Company Royal Engineers.”

7 Royal Sussex fought with the 36 Brigade in the 12 Division. Their war diary states that on 6 July they advanced into trenches, and on 7 July, having got into position out of the trench at 0828, units advanced on the ruins of Owilliers but were stopped at the first German trench by continuous machine gun fire. The casualties for the 7th and 8th July were 20 officers and 508 other ranks.

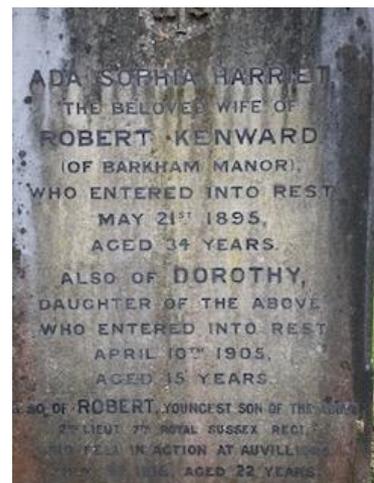
His School magazine gives more detail of his death. In 1914 it lists him as being on active service; in November 1915 “R Kenward has been recovering from a wound in the hand” and “after serving for a year in the ranks of 5 Royal Sussex he has now got a commission in 2 Royal Sussex”. Lastly “ R. Kenward has been missing since July 7th but there is every hope that he is alive and a prisoner, as he was last seen far within the German lines”.

The School also records a letter from a Corporal Swayne of 7 Royal Sussex – “I was at Owilliers on 7 July 1916. Our “A” Company was caught in a curtain of fire at 0830 and only 7 men escaped from 3 and 4 platoons. No prisoners were taken by the enemy, and it was here that Lt Kenward was killed”.

The Sussex Agricultural Express listed him as missing on 4 August.

*Headstone in Fletching graveyard remembering Robert Kenward
(plot 421)*

Kenward is commemorated on his School memorial; on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme; and also in Fletching Graveyard, where no fewer than 30 Kenwards are remembered.



FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

MATTHEW ROLAND KING



PRIVATE, LABOUR CORPS

Matthew King's family had deep roots in Fletching; in the 1841 census his Great Grandfather, John King, who was born in 1791, is listed in the village. The King family, over four generations, were all farm labourers.

In 1911 the King family were at home at Brewer's Row, Fletching. Father Frank, was aged 45; mother Alice 42; and four of their five children were at home, between the ages of 19 and 10, including the 12 year old Roland, who was at school.

Before the war, the only mention of Roland in the local press was in 1910 when Miss Attenborough, the Vicar's daughter, presented him with a special prize at the Sunday school.

Within four years, the world had changed, and King enlisted at Uckfield in the Suffolk Regiment.

He was probably wounded at some stage, as his unit at the time of his death was the Labour Corps, or more specifically 7 Labour Company, Northamptonshire Regiment, transferred to 145 Company, Labour Corps. The Labour Corps was formed in January 1917 and did much of the "donkey work" required during the war, and most members were returned wounded, below "A1" ranking.

King died on 1 July 1918 and is buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen. Rouen had up to fifteen hospitals and the St Sever Cemetery is a massive Cemetery with some nine thousand burials.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

JESSE MITCHELL



PRIVATE, 1/4 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Jesse Mitchell was one of the first to volunteer for war service from Fletching; his attestation form exists and shows that he signed up in Lewes on 7 September 1914 for three years or the duration of the war, if longer. He was 25 years, 348 days, and was a bricklayer by trade.

Jesse's family hailed from Maresfield and Buxted, but Jesse was born in Fletching and lived in various locations in the Village; in 1891 the family were at Merryfield Cottage, and consisted of Mr and Mrs Mitchell and eight children aged between 13 years and 8 months. By 1901 the family were living at Elms Cottage; and by 1911 there were still three children at home at Fern Cottage, Splaynes Green, namely Jesse (22, Farm Labourer), Beatrice (17, no occupation) and Dorothy (13, no occupation). By that time Jesse's mother had had 11 children, of whom 8 still survived.

On 3 September 1914, the BEF had withdrawn almost to the gates of Paris, and the Battle of the Marne was about to be fought. In Fletching a recruitment meeting was held in the Reading Room and eight volunteers stepped forward; Jesse Mitchell, Frederick Baker, David Neve, Ernest Matthoasen, William Elphick, Arthur Horscroft, Thomas Neve, and Frederick Harding. On the assumption that all these individuals actually signed up like Jesse, two were killed and six survived.

Jesse joined the 1/4 Royal Sussex Regiment, which was a territorial unit based in Horsham. It fought with 160 Brigade in 53 (Welsh) Division. On 9 August 1915 it landed at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, but by December 1915 the Division was reduced to 15% of its strength; Jesse was lucky to survive. By December 1915 the Battalion had been evacuated to Mudros, and thence to Alexandria. As it fought its way up to Jerusalem, Jesse was involved in the Battle of Romani in August 1916, and the Second and Third battles of Gaza.

The Royal Sussex then fought in the capture of Tell Khuweilfe between 3 and 7 November 1917. There was bitter fighting, and the Division was "having rather a bad time" but on 6 November 4 Sussex captured Hill 1706 in very close fighting. It was here in Palestine that Jesse Mitchell lost his life.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

The Battalion War Diary states that on 6 November “The Battalion marched off with the Brigade but was halted just north of Hebron. In the evening orders were received to take up an outpost line covering Hebron.”

Jesse Mitchell’s grave is at the Beersheba War Cemetery, Israel. Charles Staplehurst, who had been killed a few days before, is also buried in Israel.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

GEORGE ALFRED MOORE



PRIVATE, 26 ROYAL FUSILIERS

Although he is on the War Memorial as “George Alfred” he was born “Alfred George” and is named as such on his grave at Fletching, but the CWGC and Army authorities knew him as George Alfred. Perhaps he was known as George, and found it easier to reverse his names when joining the Army.

He was born in 1881 at Fletching into a large family, headed up by his father William Moore, gardener and landscaper. William and Fanny Moore had at least eight children; in 1891 and 1901 they lived at Culloden Cottage, Fletching, but by 1911 George had moved to Three Bridges, Worth.

George followed in his Father’s trade as at the age of 19 he was lodging at Cuckfield, and described as a “gardener at nursery”.

George married Emily Jane Moore in 1909; by 1911 he had given up the gardening, as he was described as a milkman, and at that stage they had no children. His parents meanwhile had moved to Newick, where his 63 year old father was still working as a “jobbing gardener”.

He enlisted in the Army at Horsham, by this time he was known as “George Alfred”. He joined the 26 Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, known as the City of London Regiment, or the “Bankers’ Battalion”. It fought with 124 Brigade in 41 Division, and landed in France on 4 May 1916.

On 7 June 1917, at 0310 hours, the Battle of Messines started with a massive detonation of mines under the enemy lines, the vibration of which was heard as far away as Dublin. Moore was close to St Eloi, opposite a German line of defences known as “the Damm Strasse”. His Division advanced with relatively light casualties once the mines had detonated. As his body was never recovered or identified, he is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres, where every evening the war dead are remembered by the people of Ypres.

He is also remembered on a family gravestone in Fletching. His parents died in 1919 and 1923; his brother Albert died in 1904 aged 16; his brother Frank is interred at Newhaven; and “Alfred George” is stated as having been killed at St Eloi at the age of 35.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

THOMAS BROWN MORLING



LANCE CORPORAL, 11 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Thomas Morling was one of the few professional soldiers on the War Memorial; he signed up in January 1913, one month after his eighteenth birthday.

He was born in Nutley, and in fact has more connections with Nutley than Fletching. In 1891 his parents, George and Mary Morling, were living in Maresfield; but by 1901 the family were living at a house described as "side of Main Road, Fletching". George Morling was described as a general labourer, and by that time three of his eight children were living at home.

By 1911 Thomas's parents had moved to Vine Cottage, Black Ven, Fletching, but only two children were at home, 21 year old Frederick and 9 year old Hester. Of Thomas there was no trace.

His early career as a "vanboy" was clearly not fulfilling enough, and so in 1913 he signed up for seven years' service. His preferred Regiment was the Rifle Brigade. In true Army fashion, this preference was ignored and he joined the 11 Royal Sussex. He enlisted at Uckfield, where the attestation was added by a Sergeant in the Royal Sussex Regiment.

In October 1914 his name, along with 29 others, was proudly listed on the Nutley Roll of Honour. In November 1915 the Roll had increased to 62.

Morling's unit was one of the South Downs Battalions, and his Army Number – SD1078 – reflects this. After training, when presumably his Regular Army skills would have been of value, the Battalion landed at Le Havre on 6 March 1916. It fought with 116 Brigade, 39 Division. It is not known when or where Morling was wounded, but around the time of his death his unit was in trenches at Le Touret, near Loos.

Thomas died at Tankerton Hospital, Whitstable on 11 May 1916. Tankerton was a large military hospital, and Thomas likely died of wounds received. He was interred at Fletching on 14 May; one of three men on the War Memorial who rest in Fletching. His gravestone mentions that his parents were of Black Ven, Fletching. His CWGC gravestone includes the inscription "For so He giveth his beloved sleep. RIP."

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL



Thomas Morling's CWGC gravestone in Fletching graveyard (plot 339)

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

ERNEST NEALE



SERGEANT, ROYAL FLYING CORPS

Ernest Neale merits no mention in the CWGC records, probably as he did not die on active service, but few would deny his right to have his name inscribed on the Fletching War Memorial.

He was born in Fletching in 1885, the son of James and Esther Neale, of Whites Cottages, Fletching. James Neale was a shoemaker by trade, born in Forest Row. Ernest grew up in Fletching with his two brothers and two sisters; Ernest was the youngest sibling.

By the age of 16, Ernest was a Grocer's Assistant staying in Cuckfield with Frank Wallis, Postmaster, and his wife. By the age of 26 he was staying in the Post Office at Hadlow Down, Uckfield. He was by this point described as a Shopkeeper, Grocer and Draper. The Post Office in Hadlow Down was run by his brother in law, Percy Ireland, who was married to his sister Kate. Clearly running shops or Post Offices ran in the blood of the Neale family.

In the November 1915 Fletching Roll of Honour in the Sussex Agricultural Express, 45 men are listed as serving with the Army; 8 with the Navy; and 4 with the Royal Flying Corps. Two of the RFC members were Neales; Ernest and his brother Frank. A third brother, Fred, was a regular soldier having joined the Army Service Corps in 1901 and risen to the heights of a Sergeant with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Ernest had joined the RFC in June 1915, and trained at Farnborough. He was discharged as no longer physically fit for war service on 9 February 1918.

In May 1920 the Express reported on his funeral at Fletching, after "a long illness". The obituary notice mentions that "some years ago he was in business with his brother-in-law, Mr P Ireland, where they carried on the business of a general stores and Post Office."

On his gravestone at Fletching is the dedication "Until the Day Break".

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL



Headstone on Ernest Neale's grave in Fletching graveyard (plot 474)

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

JOHN WILLIAM NEWNHAM



PRIVATE, 11 CHESHIRE REGIMENT

John Newnham was typical of many on the War Memorial; a farm labourer, son of a farm labourer, born and lived in the Fletching and Piltdown area all his life.

He was born in 1889; in 1891 his address was Moses Farm, Grisling Common. In 1901 although his parents were at Lorna Cottage, Piltdown he was staying – at least on Census night – with his Grandmother Harriet Goldsmith, described as being on Parish Relief. However by 1911 the family were at Alexandra Cottages, Piltdown; his father was still described as a farm labourer, John aged 22 was similarly described, while his two sisters aged 20 and 18 were employed as domestic servants.

John enlisted at Chichester and fought with the 11 Cheshires, although he had originally joined the East Kent Regiment. The Cheshires were a New Army Battalion and fought with 75 Brigade in the 25 Division.

In February 1918 they moved to Bapaume as a reserve division, then moved to the front at Fremicourt and Biefvillers. Between the 21 and 22 March 1918 the 11 Cheshires were involved in the Battle of St Quentin. 11 Cheshires helped to reinforce the line; the Division was engaged in a “piecemeal fashion”.

Newnham is buried at Dernancourt Communal Cemetery Extension, near Amiens. This Cemetery was used by Field Ambulances and adjoining Casualty Clearing Stations.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

GEORGE PAGE



PRIVATE, 2 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

The Sussex Agricultural Express mentions a George Page serving in the Army on 24 September 1915; and on 3 December 1915 he is mentioned as being from Newick and serving with 1 Royal Sussex.

However there are fourteen George Pages listed by the CWGC; of these six could be the George Page on the Memorial –

George Page, killed 1 July 1916 (10 Lincolns)

George Page, killed 1 July 1916 (East Lancashires)

George Page, killed 9 March 1916 (Royal West Kents)

George Page, killed 29 January 1915 (2 Royal Sussex)

George Page, killed 15 July 1919 (Royal Engineers)

George Page, killed 25 May 1918 (Royal Defence Corps)

The Census does not help – there was no family by the name of page living in the Fletching area in 1901 or 1911.

If we assume our George Page was the one serving with the Royal Sussex, then as he was killed on 29 January 1915 he is not the one listed as still alive on the Newick Roll of Honour in December 1915.

The Royal Sussex George Page was born in Brighton, and enlisted in Brighton; he was at school in Brighton in 1911, his parents were James Amos Page, Fisherman, and Emily Page. Emily Page was still in Brighton after the end of the war, so George's Fletching connections remain a mystery.

He was killed on 29 January 1915, and is remembered on the Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

RAYMOND EDWARD POLLARD



PRIVATE, 8 DUKE OF CORNWALL'S LIGHT INFANTRY

Raymond Pollard, known as Roy, was one of the six teenage casualties of war from Fletching; he died on 28 July 1917, aged 19, and is buried in Greece.

Roy's father was a Grocer and Baker, born in West Hoathly. Roy was born in Billingshurst, at which time his father was described as a "Grocer's Assistant", but by 1901 the family had moved to East Grinstead and consisted of his parents, Edward and Mary, and three young children, as well as two servants, who probably worked in the shop. By 1911 they had moved to Commerce House, Fletching, and while Roy and his younger brother Harold were at school, father was described as a "Grocer Manager".

Roy enlisted at Maresfield, and was originally serving with the Royal Wilshire Yeomanry, but was serving with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry at the time of his death. Before enlisting, or perhaps while on home leave, he appears to have fallen in love with a young lady called "Tot".

His unit was formed at Bodmin in September 1914 and served with 79 Brigade in 26 Division. They sailed from Marseilles to Salonika in November 1915 and served for most of the war in that hot, unhealthy, and now largely forgotten campaign. Although involved in battles such as Horseshoe Hill in August 1916, and Doiran in April and May 1917, it was dysentery and tropical disease that killed most of the men in that campaign.

Pollard is buried at Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria, near Thessaloniki (which in 1917 was called Salonika). His gravestone bears the inscription "Bear the Cross to gain the Crown".

Back in Sussex, the following death notice was sent to the Sussex Agricultural Express – "Pollard – In loving memory of (Roy) Raymond E Pollard, who died of dysentery in Salonika July 28 1917. Deeply missed and mourned by his affectionate sweetheart – Tot".

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

WILLIAM REED



PRIVATE, 12 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

William Reed had the Army number SD/4938. "SD" stood for South Downs, and Reed was one of four men on the War Memorial who served with pride in the South Downs battalions of the Royal Sussex Regiment.

The Reed family were well known gardeners in Fletching; his father, James William Reed, was born in Buxted but moved to his wife's home village of Fletching when he married Julia. They lived at Brewer's Row, Fletching; in 1901 14 year old William was a "house boy (domestic)" but by 1911 both he and his father were employed as gardeners. The Reeds had ten children in all, of whom eight survived to adulthood, it must have been a tight squeeze in their cottage which only had four rooms. In 1911 the children staying at Brewer's Row were William (Gardener), Wallis (Gardener), Mabel (Domestic Servant), Alice (helping at home), Frederick (School) and Albert (School).

William enlisted on 20 September 1915 at Hove. He gave his address as Claremont, Upper Beardring, Sussex, and by this stage was married to Alice Annie Reed. His trade was still "Gardener".

A diversionary attack was planned for 30 June, the day before the Battle of the Somme. Known as the attack on the Boar's Head, it was to prove costly for the South Downs Battalions. The 11 Royal Sussex were in the lead, 12 Royal Sussex on their right, and 13 Royal Sussex in reserve. Two thousand men went over the top, and 1100 became casualties – 30 June 1916 became known as "the day Sussex died" but as it was hugely overshadowed by the Battle of the Somme it has largely been forgotten. It is not known how many Fletching men fought in this attack, but two were killed that fateful day – Reed and Sydney Brooks.

A special message was given to the troops early on the morning of the 30 June – "The word "retire" will not be given and should this word be heard it must be understood that it emanates from no-one in authority". At 0305 hours, in the vicinity of Ferme Du Bois, according to the Regimental War Diary " the Battalion attacked the enemy front and support lines and succeeded in entering same. The support line was occupied for about half an hour and front line for four hours. The withdrawal was necessitated by the supply of bombs and ammunition giving out, and the heavy enemy barrage on our front line and communication trenches, preventing reinforcements being sent forwards." The

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

battalion was relieved by the 14 Hampshires at 1000. 21 other ranks killed, 35 other ranks missing reported killed, 236 wounded, 120 missing.

William Reed was one of those 236 wounded, and he died of his wounds the next day. He was buried at Merville Communal Cemetery. The CWGC mentions his parents, but also his wife Annie Reed, of Bank Passage, Steyning, Sussex.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

CHARLES STAPLEHURST



PRIVATE, 1/4th ESSEX REGIMENT

There are three Staplehursts on the Fletching War Memorial; none of them are siblings although all are related in some way. Charles Staplehurst, aged 40 when he was killed, was the oldest casualty listed on the memorial.

In 1891 this particular branch of the Staplehurst family were resident at Barkham Farm Cottage, Piltdown, but by 1901 the census just describes their house as being “on Piltdown Common”. The household consisted of Charles’ parents Frank (General Labourer, born Fletching) and Katheline (born Rotherfield), Charles (Labourer, Urban District Council), and Albert (General Labourer). Two other children had left the family household by this time, although 34 year old bachelor Charles seemed content to stay with his parents. By 1911 they are listed at Cohan’s Farm, Piltdown.

Before the war, Charles appeared in the local papers from time to time, largely due to straying livestock. In March 1901 he was fined a Shilling for allowing two cows to stray on the highway at Fletching; and in 1905 he was fined the same amount for allowing a mare to stray on the road from Splaynes Green to Piltdown Common. Although described as a labourer – and sometimes as a bricklayer – he clearly kept livestock or at least looked after them in some way.

Charles travelled to London to enlist at Paddington. His regiment, 4 Essex Regiment, were a territorial unit based in Brentwood. They served with 161 Brigade, and 54 Division.

By November 1917 the battalion were advancing through Gaza, having fought hard in Gallipoli. There were three battles for Gaza, and Charles Staplehurst fell in the Third Battle of Gaza. On 2 November 1917, 1st Battalion 4th Essex Regiment were in reserve, but ordered to attack at dawn the next day to gain control of a trench line at Balah. Although they succeeded in gaining the trench, they were unable to hold it. They then attacked a defensive position at Gun Hill. The battalion suffered heavy casualties over those two days, no less than 11 officers and 280 other ranks killed or wounded. However by 7 November the Turks had abandoned their positions and the way to Jerusalem was opened.

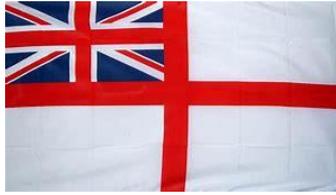
Staplehurst was buried in Gaza war Cemetery, in what was then called Palestine but is now better known as the “Gaza Strip”. Not far away lies Jesse Mitchell, who was killed in the same battle.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

The CWGC records his parents as Frank and Katheline Staplehurst, of Cohan's Farm, Piltdown.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

FREDERICK THOMAS STAPLEHURST



LEADING SEAMAN, H.M.S. Donegal

Frederick Staplehurst is the only Naval casualty on the War Memorial; perhaps not surprising given the fact that Fletching is firmly landlocked. What is surprising is that Frederick was a career sailor, spending eight years at sea.

In 1881 and 1891 he was to be found at Clapwater Cottages, Searles Gardens, Fletching. He was staying with his Grandparents, John and Eliza, although in 1901 they are described as his parents. Frederick was born in Fletching, as were his parents. By 1901 17 year old Frederick was described as a "Gardener Improver" but the following year he had joined the Royal Navy.

Thanks to meticulous Naval record keeping we know that Staplehurst had tattoos, we even know that one of them was of sailors leaning on a tombstone. He was 5 foot 8 inches on joining, but 5 foot ten by the end of his service. He served on various ships, including HMS Northampton, HMS Cleopatra, HMS Victory and HMS Duncan. His character was always described as "very good" and he was invalided from the Navy on 8 November 1906.

The nature of his injury or illness is not known, but in 1911 he was resident at Poyle Park House Stables, Tongham, Surrey, where his occupation was listed as "Chauffeur, Gardener, Domestic". He was aged 26, and still single, occupying the three rooms in the stable block by himself. His employer and owner of Poyle Park House was Dr. Henry Morris Chester.

On 4 September 1914 Staplehurst re-enlisted in the Navy; his ships during the war were HMS Victory again, and HMS Donegal. This latter ship spent time in Sierra Leone, guarding convoys to Archangelsk (Murmansk), in the Atlantic and West Indies. He was promoted Leading Seaman. Again his conduct was "very good" and he was discharged on 31 December 1918.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

His name is not listed by the CWGC; he died in 1921 aged 36 of pulmonary tuberculosis. His mother was listed as Anne Staplehurst; she must have been thirteen when he was born, and this explains the rather confusing listing of his Grandparents as his Parents in 1901.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

GEORGE STAPLEHURST



PRIVATE, 7 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

George Staplehurst, always known as Joe, was born in 1893 in Fletching. His parents Ross (born Fletching) and Louisa (born Horsted Keynes) lived in 1891 in Piltdown, but by 1901 were living at a farm house just off the Main Road at Fletching; by 1911 the family were at Shortbridge Cottage, Piltdown.

His father was a labourer, but George was a milkman. He had four siblings, one of whom died in infancy. He worked for Mr Soames of Sheffield Park, and was a keen footballer, captaining the Buckham Hill football team. His brother Charlie joined the Army in about 1907 and had the good fortune of staying in India for much of the war.

George enlisted early in the war, at Uckfield in September 1914. 7 Royal Sussex were a new army unit, and served with 36 Brigade in 12 Division. They landed at Boulogne on 1 June 1915, but George was not with them as a local paper claimed he had only been at the front for two months before he was killed.

On 3 August 1916 12 Division were involved in the Battle of Pozieres. The attack was deemed a success, and German counter attacks with flame throwers were beaten off over the next few days. On 4 August the battalion captured Ration Trench, but during the battle 11 officers were killed or wounded, 18 other ranks killed, 25 missing and 109 wounded. One of those 109 was George Staplehurst.

Unusually, the Sussex Agricultural Express published a full account of his death. His brother Harry (known as Jack) was also in a Royal Sussex battalion and wrote home as follows :-

"I am very sorry to write and tell you the sad news if you have not already heard it. George has gone under, but you will take the news bravely, the same as I did, but I know it is hard for you. His machine gun Sergeant told me that he met his death bravely, for he laid in a shell hole close to a German trench for 16 hours, not daring to move, and I am glad to say his death was instantaneous so that he never suffered at all. If you have his photo please put it in the paper, and send it out to me. Several of his chums and myself would like to see it. I am told they lost very heavily going over the top. We are back from our rest now and had a job to sleep the first night, but can sleep all right

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

now. Hope you are alright; tell Father not to worry too much over Joe and make himself bad again. We must expect this sort of thing in this big advance, but am sorry to lose him. Please tell Jenner his son is all right, for he went over with Joe."

IN SHELL HOLE FOR 16 HOURS.

PILTDOWN SOLDIER KILLED.



PRIVATE J. STAPLEHURST.

Much regret has been occasioned in the district by the sad news, which was received at the end of last week, of the death in action of Private George Staplehurst, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Staplehurst, of Shortbridge Piltdown. The young soldier—he was only 22 years of age—joined the Sussex Regiment in September, 1914, and had only been in France about two months when on the 6th inst. he met his death whilst gallantly doing his duty to home and country. He was formerly in the employ of Mr. Soames, of Saeffield Park and will be remembered by many as the captain of the Buckham Hill

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From the Sussex Agricultural Express 25/8/1916

George Staplehurst is buried at Varennes Military Cemetery, Somme. On his gravestone is the inscription "Faithful unto Death". His parents according to the CWGC were living at Rose Cottage, Piltdown.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

PERCY DAVID WELCH



PRIVATE, 23 ROYAL FUSILIERS

Percy Welch was born in Nutley, but his mother was from Fletching and by 1911 his family were staying in the village.

Welch's father was James Welch, a farm labourer from Newick who also sometimes worked in a timber yard. The Welch family consisted of James and Harriet, and twelve children, although three of those children had died by 1911. Although 70 and 65 respectively, two of their children still lived at home, James junior aged 30, and Percy, aged 27. Percy's occupation was in 1901 as a Carter on a Farm, and in 1911 a General Domestic Gardener. The family lived at Goldbridge Cottage, Fletching.

In 1912 Percy married Emily Blackman, who lived at Hobbs Cottage, Piltdown.

Originally Percy joined the Middlesex Regiment, but by 1917 was serving with 23 Royal Fusiliers. This was known as the "Sportsmen's Battalion" as originally it consisted of older men over 45, but who could prove their fitness to fight. It was formed at the Hotel Cecil in London, but doubtless by 1917 they were happy with any new recruits.

The Battalion fought with the 99 Brigade in 2 Division. In early May 1917 the Division were engaged in the Third Battle of the Scarpe, specifically an attempt to capture an enemy position known as the "Wotanstellung". However the attack was called off due to heavy casualties.

Percy's body was never identified after his death on 3 May 1917; his name is commemorated on the Arras Memorial. He was 33.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

HENRY WELFARE



PRIVATE, 15 ESSEX REGIMENT

Henry ("Harry") Welfare was one of the very few men commemorated on the War Memorial who were both born and who died at Fletching.

Harry Welfare was born in 1880, at which time his parents John and Susannah were living at the Steward's House, Sheffield Park. His father was a Head Carter in the employ of Lord Sheffield and his mother was a Dairy Woman. Susannah Welfare died in 1887; although she was 51 years old, her son Harry was only 7. By 1891 Harry and his father had moved to Park Farm Cottage, Fletching; and by 1901 they lived at Sawyard Cottages, Fletching. The 70 year old John was still working as a labourer on the coach road, along with his 79 year old brother George. It must have been an unusual household for the 21 year old Harry, who was working as a Farm Labourer.

Harry's father died aged 78 in 1908, and by 1911 Harry had married Winifred Eliza Welfare and moved into 2 Robin's Cross, Fletching. They had been married for two years, and Harry was working as a Domestic Gardener. He worked for Mr A G Soames, of Sheffield Park.

The Sussex Agricultural Express mentions an accident that occurred in May 1912; Henry Welfare of Robin's Cross, Fletching was cycling down Grant's Hill in the direction of the Rocks, in company with his wife, when Frederick Lucas Welfare, who was riding behind, fell from his machine and was concussed.

As well as cycling, Harry was a keen cricketer, remembered on his death as a fine wicketkeeper. He was also a member of the Ancient Order of Foresters, a type of rural trade union or social and welfare club.

Welfare joined the 15 Essex Regiment in June 1916; he was discharged for medical reasons around the end of May 1917. At this time his unit were involved in coastal defence at Great Yarmouth; 15 Essex was largely formed by men unsuited to combat, although in 1918 they did cross over to France.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Seven weeks after his discharge, Harry died at home, aged 37, on 9 July 1917. At his funeral at Fletching his pall bearers were members of the AOF; the mourners included his widow, Aunt and Cousin.

Welfare is one of only three men from Fletching who died in the Great War and are buried at Fletching.

*The headstone on Henry Welfare's grave in Fletching
(plot 475/Commonwealth War Grave)*



FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

ROBERT WINCHESTER



PRIVATE, 5 ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

Little is known or can be gleaned about Robert Winchester; he does not appear in any of the Census returns, is never mentioned in the local papers and does not appear to have any known connection to Fletching.

What little we know is that he was born in Havant, Hampshire (or perhaps Eastbourne) in 1893, enlisted at Uckfield (this is the only local connection), and died of wounds on 9 April 1915.

A snippet of information is that he worked for Robert Kenward of Barkham Manor, Piltdown.

He joined 5 Royal Sussex, known as the "Cinque Ports" Battalion, which fought with 2 Brigade in 1 Division. The Unit was a Territorial Battalion, and was inspected by General Monck at the Tower of London on 16 February 1915 before departing from Waterloo Station for Southampton and Le Havre. By 7 April, they were fighting the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. The War Diary mentions (on 8 April) a Captain Hornblower being wounded while assisting a severely wounded man under fire. Was that wounded man Winchester? It is certainly possible; between 8 and 10 April 1915 only three Royal Sussex men died – one was in England, and the body of the other one was never identified, so it is highly likely to be Winchester.

The CWGC mention that he was the brother of Mrs F Richardson of 68 Longstone Road, Eastbourne, perhaps implying that he was not married, nor had any parents living after the War.

He is buried at Bethune Town Cemetery. There were many military hospitals in Bethune.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

FREDERICK WILLIAM FIELDWICK



Frederick William Fieldwick in his Canadian Army uniform

CORPORAL, 15 CANADIAN INFANTRY



Frederick Fieldwick is one of the two individuals in this pamphlet not listed on the War Memorial, but who is named on a gravestone in the churchyard. The gravestone is slightly unusual, as it commemorates Mrs Fieldwick's two husbands, in reverse chronological order; Frederick Fieldwick is described as being "of this Parish."

Fieldwick was the illegitimate son of Mary Maria Fieldwick; she was born in 1855 in Fletching, but managed to avoid the Census for every year except 1901. She remained single for most of her life, but who fathered her only child in 1885 remains unknown. In 1901 she was a cook for Sarah Attenborough in White Lodge, Fletching, but left to marry Joseph Muddle at the ripe old age – in those days – of 46.

Mary Fieldwick left her son Frederick in the care of her parents who lived in Splaynes Green in 1891, and the Old Workhouse, Fletching, in 1901. After school in Fletching, Fieldwick worked as an agricultural labourer, like his grandfather. He played Cricket for Miss Attenborough's Fletching juniors, and reportedly "bowled well". He also enjoyed whist, playing for the Sheffield Arms against his home village of Fletching. He also played for the Haywards Heath Brotherhood Brass and Reed Band; the Brotherhood was a self-help organization like the Free Foresters and later helped Fieldwick when he decided to emigrate.



FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

In 1906 he married Emma Louise Turner in Uckfield, she was however always known as Olive. Their daughter Emma was born in 1909, and by 1911 the young couple were established at The Lodge, Sunny Mount, Haywards Heath; he was described as "Groom and Gardener", she as "Domestic".



Frederick William Fieldwick with his wife Olive (on the right), his daughter Emma & Olive's sister Nellie in 1913

In 1911 their house was burgled and a half Sovereign was stolen; perhaps this was part of their emigration fund, as in August 1913 Frederick left Liverpool for Quebec on the "Empress of Britain". He travelled by himself in Third Class, no doubt the intention was that Olive and Emma would join him once he was established in the New World. He described himself as a "Labourer" but later in Canada was described as a "Carpenter". He was clearly bettering himself, but then the Great War started and his world was turned upside down.

He enlisted very early in the War, 18 September 1914, and came back over to England in October. He went to the Front with his Canadian Regiment in February 1915. He spent some months with the "hut building section" no doubt making use of his carpentry skills. He was back in England on leave in October 1915, but was killed on 28 September 1916. His Regiment was strongly linked to the Gordon Highlanders and wore Glengarries in the early phases of the War.

Olive placed a notice in the local paper mourning both her husband, and her brother who had been killed some months before. According to a nurse in a Casualty Clearing Station, Fieldwick had been brought in very seriously wounded on the evening of 27 September, but had died during the night and was buried the next morning, in Warloy-Baillon Communal Cemetery Extension, on the Somme battlefield. Olive added the epithet "Till We Meet Again" on his gravestone.

If Olive had not erected a gravestone to her husband and parents, Frederick Fieldwick's sacrifice would have been known in Canada, but not in the Village where he was born and spent his childhood. Emma later added the death of her "dearly loved" mother in 1941 to the gravestone.

Frederick Fieldwick memorial in the Fletching graveyard (plot 515)



FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

ALBERT EDWARD JOHN PAYNE



PRIVATE, 15 WELSH REGIMENT

There are two Great War casualties mentioned on gravestones at St Andrew and St Mary the Virgin Church who are not listed on the War Memorial, and Albert Payne is one of them. Why he is not listed is a mystery, as he lived in Fletching before the war, and his sisters were still in Fletching during the war.

The CWGC have him listed as “Albert John Payne” and the family gravestone has “Albert Edward John Payne” but he was christened in Lindfield in 1892 as Albert Edwin John.

Albert’s father, also called Albert, was born in Worthing but by 1891 was a Miller in Horsted Keynes with his wife Jane. Her maiden name was Paine, which must have caused much amusement when it changed to Payne when she married in Brighton in 1878. The Paynes had four daughters, and one son. Apart from Albert, all the daughters were born in Lewes. Their mother died in 1895; Albert Senior had a family of five children aged between ten and a few weeks to look after.

By 1901 the family had moved to Fletching, and lived at Mill Cottage. Albert Payne senior was a Miller, described in the Census as both a Corn Miller and as a Miller (Grinder). The family established itself in the village, and as Millers the family would have had some status in the village.

The 1911 Census was taken on 2 April. Albert senior was on his death bed, and was attended by a nurse, Emily Turk. His daughters Edith (aged 26, housekeeper), Alice (24, Companion), Annie (22, housemaid), Isabel (16, kitchenmaid) were all at home. Young Albert (18, Assistant Miller) filled in the form; but the very next morning his father passed away. It is assumed that Albert Junior then assumed the role of Miller.

The Mill at Fletching was in working order until 1939, but was demolished in 1951. Mill Lane is a reminder of its location to the west of the village.

Albert Payne enlisted in the Queens (Royal West Surrey Regiment) at Guildford, but at the time of his death was serving with the 15 Welsh Regiment, known after the War as the Welch Regiment. Raised in Swansea in 1914, and known as the Carmarthen Battalion, the regiment had been heavily involved in the Battle of Langemarck between 16 and 18 August 1917. Payne was killed on 8 September, some time after the battle.

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

A brief postscript to his death was a report in the Sussex Agricultural Express in August 1919 of the marriage of his sister Annie in New Zealand, to a returning soldier. One of the bridesmaids was her sister Isabel. No doubt in New Zealand to this day are ancestors of Albert Payne, the Miller of Fletching. Perhaps with both parents dead, and the sisters scattered across the globe, Albert Payne's sacrifice was just forgotten in the village – until now.



Albert Edward John Payne memorial in the Fletching graveyard (plot 347)

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Frederick Padgham

Frederick Padgham's memorial was only identified recently. All that is known about him is the inscription on Edith Padgham's grave which reads:-

FRED PADGHAM KILLED IN ACTION AT LE BASSE 18TH APRIL 1918



Frederick Padgham's memorial in the Fletching graveyard (plot 395)

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Chronology of the Fletching Men who died in the Great War

1914

- 14th September; Gabriel Fitzpatrick (29), Ainse
- 31st October; Edward Galdman (25), Zandvoorte, Ypres

1915

- 29th January; George Page (19), Cuinchy
- 9th April; Robert Winchester (22), Bethune
- 1st November; Henry Harding (29), Cambrin

1916

- 11th May; Thomas Morling (21), Fletching
- 15th May; William Day (19), Ypres
- 30th June; Sydney Brooks (18), Ferme Du Bois
- 30th June ; William Reed (29), Ferme du Bois
- 3rd July; Lancelot Curteis (23), Thiepval, Somme
- 7th July; Robert Kenward (21), Ovillers, Somme
- 6th August; George Staplehurst (23): Poziers, Somme
- 3rd September; Oswald Hood (30); Mailley Wood, Somme
- 28th September; Frederick Fieldwick (31); Somme

1917

- 19th April; Dennis Elphick (19), Arras
- 3rd May; Percy Welch (33), Scarpe, Arras
- 6th May; Harry Grover (20), Scarpe, Arras
- 7th June; George Moore (35), St Eloi, Ypres
- 11th June; Percy Bisch (23), Messines Ridge
- 9th July; Henry Welfair (38), Fletching
- 28th July; Raymond Pollard (19), Salonika
- 10th August; John Ellis (34), Ypres
- 8th September; Albert Payne (25), Langemarck
- 3rd November; Charles Staplehurst (40), Palestine
- 6th November; Jesse Mitchell (28), Gaza, Palestine
- 5th December; Frederick Gladman (22), Cambrai

1918

- 21st March; John Newham (29), St Quentin
- 1st July; Mathew King (19), Rouen
- 27th November; Richard Grover (28), Fletching

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

1920

- 22nd May; Ernest Neale (35), Fletching

1921

- 5th March; Frederick Staplehurst (36), Fletching

Last military records of those who died listed on the Fletching War Memorial

Royal Navy:

H.M.S Donegal: Staplehurst, Frederick

Army:

Royal Sussex Regiment: 1st/4th Mitchell, Jesse; 2nd Page, George; 5th Winchester, Robert; 7th Kenward, Robert and Staplehurst, George; 9th Bisch, Percy and Day, William; 11th Oswald, Hood and Morling, Thomas; 12th Brooks, Sydney; Reed, William

Border Regiment: 7th Elphick, Dennis; 8th Curteis, Lancelot

Cheshire Regiment: 11th Newman, John

Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry: 8th Pollard, Raymond

East Surrey Regiment: 1st Grover, Richard

Essex Regiment: 1st/4th Staplehurst, Charles; Welfair Henry

Labour Corp: 145th Company: King, Mathew

Northumberland Fusiliers: 1st Grover, Harry

Royal Field Artillery: 104 Battery Gladman, Edward

Royal Fusiliers: 11th Ellis, John; 23rd Welch, Percy; 26th Moore, George

Royal Warwickshire Regiment: 2nd/5th Gladman, Frederick

Royal West Surrey Regiment: 1st Harding, Henry

Welsh Regiment: 3rd Fitzpatrick, Gabriel; 15th Payne, Albert

Royal Flying Corp: Neale, Ernest

Canadian Army:

15th Infantry: Fieldwick, Frederick

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Last known Fletching Parish addresses of the Fletching Men who died in the Great War

Fletching Village:

Brewers Row: Mathew King; William Reed

Church Gate House: Harry and Richard Grover

Clinton Lodge: Gabriel Fitzpatrick

Commerce House: Raymond Pollard

Culloden Cottage: George Moore

Glebe House: Oswald Hood

Mill Cottage: Albert Payne

2 Robins' Cross: Henry (Harry) Welfare

Snatts Cottage: Henry (Harry) Harding

Whites Cottage: Ernest Neale

Splaynes Green:

Fern Cottage: Jesse Mitchell

Moyse's Farm: Thomas Gladman

The Old Workhouse: Frederick Fieldwick (lived here)

Piltdown:

Alexander Cottages: John Newham

Barkham Manor: Robert Kenward; Robert Winchester (worked here)

Coghans Farm: Charles Staplehurst

Goldbridge Cottage: Percy Welch

Lamb Cottage: Fred Harding (worked here)

Manor Cottage: Lancelot Curteis

Rose Cottage: George Staplehurst

2 Stonecroft Cottages: John Ellis

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL

Other areas of the Parish:

Vine Cottage, Black Ven, Down Street: Thomas Morling

Cherry Tree Cottages, Fletching Common: Sydney Brooks; Dennis Elphick

Clapwater Cottages, Searles Gardens: Frederick Staplehurst

Moyses Cottage (now Archers Cottage), Fletching: Edward Gladman

Location of Graves and Memorials in the Graveyard

Harry and Richard Grover	Plot 411 https://maps.app.goo.gl/UDddA3DWnrTMsYgs8
Frederick Fieldwick	Plot 515 https://maps.app.goo.gl/uPhaNDgX1V2xXhgc6
Oswald Hood	Plot 506 https://maps.app.goo.gl/CFH5GBkNLjn6WDHKA
Robert Kenward	Plot 421 https://maps.app.goo.gl/z8awNkd2msvwXVtB6
Thomas Morling	Plot 339 https://maps.app.goo.gl/CnSCZ6U5TD36KzCE6
Ernest Neale	Plot 474 https://maps.app.goo.gl/gVk1bD3gCqmTPiqD9
Frederick Padgham	Plot 395 https://maps.app.goo.gl/b7vMn65aVMiroqRt5
Albert E Payne	Plot 347 https://maps.app.goo.gl/2iCZR9uSGAKsrjBY8
Harry Welfare	Plot 475 https://maps.app.goo.gl/WXwtX9BAGpghCEuc8

FLETCHING WAR MEMORIAL