

HomeTown Heroes

The stories of the Casualties of War of
Neston & Burton, Wirral

1914 – 1921

About this work

Over four years ago, in mid-2014 as far as I recall, I decided to take a side-step from my research on the Neston collieries¹,

colliers and colliery-families and see what I could find about the local colliers who took an active role in the First World War². I think, at that stage, I envisaged spending a few months collating this information and that this could then be integrated into the colliers' database that I had been compiling³. This, of course, proved to be a naïve and unrealistic presumption.

Shortly after commencing this work, and finding some names of those who had died in WW1 on plaques in churches in Neston and Burton, I realised that not only was information on most of these men sparse or unavailable but that many men were not commemorated. So, still naïve and blithely unaware of the depth of research needed (and the time-scale which would be involved), I determined to investigate in depth the lives and deaths of as many men with a 'local connection' as I could - this work is the outcome of this endeavour.

But a note of caution. Whilst considerable care has been taken to identify those who died, and a variety of techniques has been employed to seek out and investigate all potential cases, it would be unwise to believe that this work is complete and that all our 'Fallen' have been found. I look forward to receiving information from those with far greater local knowledge than myself which can direct me towards those whom, unwittingly, I have omitted. Please feel free to contact me at : hometownheroesneston@gmail.com

To reflect the information since found, parts of the following text have been amended slightly from that first published in late 2018

[Ian L Norris January 2021]

¹ The history of the early years of coal mining in Ness and Little Neston was published as two chapters in *Neston : Stone Age to Steam Age* Ed. Susan Chambers Burton and Neston History Society 2014 [ISBN: 9781910352076] This book is still (2018) available to purchase from the Society, from local outlets (including Gordale Garden Centre), from Waterstones and through Amazon. Neston Library holds several copies of this book.

² During the early part of WW1 several skilled occupations in the coal industry were exempted from military service although many miners in Britain saw it as their duty to serve. This created shortages in some mines – and at a time when coal output was being increased as a vital part of the war effort. Whilst the Military Service Act of 27 January 1916, bringing conscription into effect for the first time, did not specify 'reserved occupations', exemption from military service could be granted to individuals or industrial sectors if it could be shown that '*...it is expedient in the national interests that he should be engaged in other work*'.

³ This ongoing work, started in about 2003, seeks to collate in spreadsheet-format known records of those associated with the collieries at Ness and Little Neston from the onset of mining in around 1759 until after the closure of the last mine in 1927. This work has also permitted the 'reconstruction' of some Neston families who had association with mining over multiple generations. It is hoped that this work will, in due course, be made available for public use.

What's actually in this work?

The main section of this work, and occupying the bulk of the content, is a series of accounts - one for each individual - expanding aspects of the life, military experience and death of that man. The level of detail in these accounts varies significantly; in a very few cases, where the individual cannot be identified with absolute certainty, the information presented is rudimentary but for others, where the amount of information has proved considerable, it has been necessary to condense the detail. The aim, however, has been to generate a coherent and comprehensive life-story for each man and to give some insight into the situation and conditions where, how and when he met his death.

In order to access the detailed accounts of the men considered in this work it's clearly important to know their names - these, together, with some brief details, are provided in the Database and Tables which are in Volume 2 (on pages **205 - 284**) of this work. Using this resource will allow you to locate the expanded accounts for each individual considered in this work.

To give a background to this work, and to provide explanatory and supporting information, a number of short articles are presented in this volume:

- Ⓐ Who's been included - and who's not
- Ⓑ The time-range of this work
- Ⓒ The terminology and main abbreviations used in this work
- Ⓓ Where are the local war memorials and memorial plaques?
- Ⓔ Why aren't all war fatalities recorded on memorial plaques?
- Ⓕ Why, sometimes, are there anomalies in the data?
- Ⓖ Attestation, enlistment, conscription, basic training and mobilisation – what do these mean?
- Ⓗ Service Records – what they are, and their limitations
- Ⓘ The significance of the Service Number
- Ⓝ The structure of the British Army in WW1
- Ⓚ What was a Corps?
- Ⓛ Military commendations and medals
- Ⓜ How much were soldiers paid?
- Ⓝ What pensions were paid to war widows?
- Ⓞ Discipline in the ranks
- Ⓟ Some key dates and significant events
- Ⓠ The progress of the war and the changing face of Europe
- Ⓡ An outline of trench warfare

- ⑤ The principal Theatres of War
- ① When did World War 1 actually begin and end - and what was the Armistice?
- ② How many served, and how many died - and other interesting statistics
- ③ The Commonwealth War Graves Commission - graves, memorials and cemeteries
- ④ What's it worth now?
- ⑤ A brief synthesis and analysis of the data
- ⑥ The resources and sources used for this work
- ⑦ A little about the author

Ⓐ Who's been included - and who's not

This work records only those men known, according to the criteria outlined below, to have died in, or as an immediate consequence of their military or related service in, WW1. The work does not consider those many local men who served in, and survived, the war. However, some mention is made in a few of the accounts in this work to those military survivors if they were siblings, or close relatives, of those who died.



The work concentrates on those recorded as being residents of Neston (including Parkgate, Leighton, Little Neston, Ness) and Burton (including Puddington), or otherwise known to have had a significant local connection. Whilst it is difficult to define precisely the term 'significant local connection' this has been taken to include

- all those men who are commemorated on the plaques in the
 - Parish Church of St Mary & St Helen, Neston.
 - Parkgate & Neston United Reformed Church, Parkgate Rd., Neston (formerly the Parkgate & Neston Presbyterian Church).
 - Parish Church of St Nicholas, Burton.
- those men recorded or known to have been born in the Neston or Burton areas (as defined above), but who may not have been living here at their date of attestation or enlistment.
- those men recorded or known to have been living in the Neston or Burton areas (although possibly born elsewhere) at the time of attestation or enlistment.
- men who, whilst not having been born or lived in the Neston or Burton areas, are recorded or known to have had a spouse, or one or both parents living here, at some time during the duration of the war or immediately thereafter.

To be included, the man must have died whilst serving with any of the Armed Forces of Britain or the Commonwealth or serving as a member of an organisation or service recognized by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). Additionally, to be considered a war casualty, the man must have died as a consequence of enemy action,

accident, wounds, disease or a cause attributable directly to his service and within the time-frame defined by the CWGC ⁴.

This work does not include those who were, primarily, residents of Willaston, Raby, Thornton Hough, Ledsham, Shotwick or other neighbouring towns and townships (even if they worked in Neston or Burton), unless they are commemorated on the plaques in the churches of Neston and Burton, or were recorded as having been born, or lived, in Neston or Burton.

Others excluded from this work are:

- ex-pupils of Mostyn House School, Parkgate, who had attended the school as boarders whilst otherwise having residency outside the district. ⁵
- those who enlisted in Neston or Parkgate for the military forces but who were otherwise resident outside the district; many who lived and worked in Heswall, for example, enlisted in Neston.
- those who are recorded as having enlisted in Neston or Parkgate for the military forces but where no other association with this area has been found. In particular, there is a strong indication that Parkgate, Cheshire, was sometimes confused by the recorder or military authorities with the mining village of Parkgate which lies to the north-east of Rotherham in Yorkshire ⁶.
- men who may, at some stage, have worked in Neston or Burton but who were not born here, were not working here at the time of enlistment or who did not have a spouse or one or both parents living here.
- men whose spouse was born in Neston or Burton but who, after marriage, did not live in the area and who, otherwise had no immediate connection to the area.
- those who may have had a weaker connection to Neston or Burton as a result of having a sibling or other relative (but not including a parent) living here.

⁴ The Commission commemorates, for WW1, only those who died during the period 4 August 1914 and 31 August 1921 whilst in Commonwealth military service or of causes attributable to service. For example, the Mercantile Marine was one of the Recognised Civilian Organisations which received CWGC commemoration – but men could be commemorated only if they were deemed to have died as a ‘combatant’. It is for this reason that, for example, Able Seaman Thomas Evans of Parkgate, who died when the SS Lusitania was torpedoed and sank off the Irish coast on 7 May 1915 is recognised as a war casualty. However, a man serving on the front line who was injured in action and died of the wounds he received, but after 31 August 1921, is not deemed to be a war casualty.

⁵ An exception has been made for Alan Appleby Drew who, initially, was a pupil at the school and later returned as a teacher.

⁶ Three examples will suffice. (A) Corporal William Jones, born in Port Talbot, was the son of Henry and Mary Jones of Jenkin’s Terrace. Recorded as having enlisted in Neston, William served with the Royal Garrison Artillery (Service Number 61636) and was killed in action in Flanders on 19 July 1917. Before his enlistment, William was a tinsmith in South Wales (1911 census, aged 16) so it is *possible* that he later moved to Neston to work at the Hawarden Bridge Steelworks (John Summers & Sons) at Shotton which had opened in 1896.

(B) Private Joseph Eaves served with the 1st, and 15th, Battalion Cheshire Regiment (Service Number 26162) and died of wounds on 1 May 1918 at the 3rd Canadian Stationary Hospital at Doullens in France. It is believed that he was born in Preston and it is recorded that he enlisted in Neston although no other connection has been found.

(C) Private Simeon Waterworth was born in Pendlebury, Lancashire and served with the York and Lancashire Regiment (Service Number 43700) and the 2/8th, then the 2/7th, Battalion Manchester Regiment. Killed in action on 21 March 1918 on the Somme, Simeon seems to have been the illegitimate son of Lancashire miner Simeon Chapman (and, possibly, Margaret Waterworth) and his birth was registered, as Simeon Waterworth Chapman, at Barton-upon-Irwell, in mid-1886. A labourer, 28, he married Edith Davies (21, a pit brow worker) at Christchurch Parish Church, Pendlebury, on 15 August 1914. Although it is recorded that he enlisted in Parkgate, Cheshire, he was a resident of Rotherham before his enlistment.

- o those who, in the database of the CWGC, military service records, *Soldiers Died in the Great War* database or other report or document is recorded as giving their place of birth, or residency, as Burton, Cheshire, but who, on further investigation, appear to have had this information recorded or transcribed inaccurately⁷. Additionally, records have been found confusing Burton with *Buerton* (near Nantwich), Burton near Tarporley and Puddington, a small village in Devon.

The work of 2018 contains a number of entries which, as little or no information has been found, or the identity of the individual cannot be confirmed with certainty, may be considered as inconclusive:

Entry No.	Name, as known	Commemorated at	Issues or concerns with this entry (with updates post-October 2018 in red)
24	John Devine	Neston Parish Church	It has not been possible to identify this individual with any certainty
49	William Jones	Neston Parish Church	Identity unknown in 2018. Although his family history is now recognised all details of his army service and date and place of death remain unknown
91	William Williams	Neston Parish Church	The identity of this casualty has not been determined conclusively
109	George Palin	Burton Parish Church	The identity of this casualty had not been determined conclusively in 2018. Correspondence with a descendant in 2020 has permitted George's story to be included in this version of the work.
146	Joseph Jones	Uncommemorated locally	It has not been possible to identify this individual with any certainty
171	Harry Wright	Uncommemorated locally	Harry Wright is included in this account although there is no certainty that he had any association with Neston other than that he is included in a group photograph published in the <i>Cheshire Observer</i> on 26 December 1914 under a headline that indicates that he was a local man and serving with a local battalion

Additionally, three men are included in this work who are not, currently, recognised by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as casualties of the war:

97: William George Ross Butcher Died 24 May 1921 (and commemorated at Neston URC)

159: Joseph Smith Died 11 June 1918

173: Frank Steele Died 25 June 1919 [Not considered in the work published in October 2018]

⁷ The misrecording, or later mistranscription, of information has been found to be more common than expected. Examples, using the *British Army Service Records, 1914 – 1920, Transcription* database, include (these are men who, it is believed, survived the war):

Arthur Edwards M2/032469 5th Coy. RASC

John Harold Russell 321878 North Staffs. Rgt.

Henry Short 4125 3rd/4th Btn. South Lancs. Rgt.

Residency: Burton, Cheshire [But believed to have been *Taunton*]

Born Burton, Cheshire [But believed to have been born in Burton-on-Trent]

Born Burton, Cheshire [Born at *Barnton*, near Nantwich]

The somewhat subjective definition of 'local' as used in this work has led to the inclusion of individuals who, by a more rigorous definition, would not have been accepted. However, using this more liberal interpretation has allowed the inclusion of a few notable individuals and, in particular, 'our' second Victoria Cross holder (Christopher Bushell VC would have been included as a 'local' as he is commemorated in Neston parish church), 'William ['Billy'] La Touche Congreve who was born at Burton Hall. As the son of a father who was already the holder of the Victoria Cross (Colenso, 2nd Boer War, December 1899) 'Billy' gained the three highest military awards (VC [posthumous], DSO, MC) for his actions in WW1. There are only three instances of the Victoria Cross having been bestowed upon father and son, the award to 'Billy' Congreve marking the last of these. It would be churlish not to claim him as a 'local'.

Ⓑ The time-range of this work

I have followed the time range defined by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. As the CWGC lists, within its definition of 'First World War Related Deaths', those who died from 4 August 1914 (the day when Britain declared war on Germany)⁸ up to 31 August 1921 (some 2¾ years after the cessation of hostilities in Europe in November 1918), these 'late casualties' have been included in this work.

Ⓒ The terminology and main abbreviations used in this work

Care has been taken to avoid the unnecessary use of terms and jargon although, as the work deals in part with military structures, events and tactics the introduction of related terminology is inevitable. One of the most difficult subjects to understand, for those who are not versed in the ways of the army, is the plethora of terms used to define the military units - what, for example, was a battalion and how were battalions related to regiments and brigades? I have tried to make some sense of this in other sections of this Introduction (see page **53 - 71**) where I have illustrated the hierarchical structure of these units. In many cases, where uncommon or unusual terms have been used, I have given some explanation.

This work deals essentially with those men who died and I have used, variously, the terms Casualties of War, casualty (in this specific sense), fatality or 'Fallen' to describe them. The term *casualty* does not, therefore, include any individual who was wounded in action but survived such injury (unless specified otherwise), even if that person died as a direct or indirect result of this injury after 31 August 1921.

⁸ Britain, under Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, had given Germany an ultimatum to get out of Belgium by midnight of 3 August. Winston Churchill, then the First Lord of the Admiralty, recorded: *It was eleven o'clock at night – twelve by German time – when the ultimatum expired. The windows of the Admiralty were thrown wide open in the warm night air. Under the roof from which Nelson had received his orders were gathered a small group of admirals and captains and a cluster of clerks, pencils in hand, waiting. Along the Mall from the direction of the Palace the sound of an immense concourse singing 'God save the King' flouted in. On this deep wave there broke the chimes of Big Ben; and, as the first stroke of the hour boomed out, a rustle of movement swept across the room. The war telegram, which meant, "Commence hostilities against Germany", was flashed to the ships and establishments under the White Ensign all over the world. I walked across the Horse Guards Parade to the Cabinet room and reported to the Prime Minister and the Ministers who were assembled there that the deed was done.*

Some of the more-commonly used abbreviations in this work are:

- ASC** Army Service Corps - the organisation of around 1200 Companies (which came to number 10,547 officers and 315,334 men) which supported and supplied the fighting units in the field.
- BEF** British Expeditionary Force - the general term applied to the army sent to the Western Front. The term is often used to refer only to the forces sent to France on, and immediately after, the declaration of war on 4 August 1914 and those who remained in France and Belgium until the end of The First Battle of Ypres on 22 November 1914. More broadly, the term is sometimes used to describe all the British Army units which served in France, Flanders and Italy during WW1.
- CO** Commanding Officer - the officer appointed to have ultimate authority over a large military unit, such as a regiment or battalion. This soldier was generally a Lieutenant-Colonel. On the outbreak of war the average age of a CO was over 50; between 1917 and 1918 the average age for a battalion commanding officer in the BEF fell to 28.
- CWGC** Commonwealth War Graves Commission - *the intergovernmental organisation of six independent member states (UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India) whose principal function is to mark, record and maintain the graves and places of commemoration of Commonwealth of Nations military service members who died in the two World Wars* [Wikipedia].
- MGC** Machine Gun Corps – although, in 1914, all British infantry battalions were equipped with a Maxim machine gun section of two guns (increased to four in February 1915) early clashes and The First Battle of Ypres indicated that the deployment of machine guns required special tactics and organisation. *On 2 September 1915 a definite proposal was made to the War Office for the formation of a single specialist Machine Gun Company per infantry brigade, by withdrawing the guns and gun teams from the battalions. They would be replaced at battalion level by the light Lewis machine guns and thus the firepower of each brigade would be substantially increased....The MGC would eventually consist of infantry Machine Gun Companies, cavalry Machine Gun Squadrons and Motor Machine Gun Batteries. The pace of reorganisation depended largely on the rate of supply of the Lewis guns but it was completed before the Battle of the Somme in 1916. A Base Depot for the Corps was established at Camiers.*
[The Long, Long Trail <http://www.1914-1918.net/mgc.htm>]
- NCO** Non-commissioned officer - often considered the backbone of the armed services these are the enlisted men who obtained their position of authority by promotion through the ranks. Typically, corporals and sergeants were NCOs.
- OR** Other ranks - a term used, commonly in Regimental War Diaries and other military correspondence, to refer to all those ranks below officers. It includes warrant officers, NCOs and ordinary soldiers with the rank of private or regimental equivalent.
- POW** Prisoner of War - it is believed that up to 195,000 Commonwealth officers and men were captured during the war, many being interned in neutral countries. Some severely wounded and ill men were repatriated through the Red Cross in neutral Switzerland but many did not return home until after the war ended.
- RAMC** Royal Army Medical Corps - the section of the army responsible for the health of the personnel and the treatment of wounded and sick men.
- RE** Royal Engineers [The Corps of Royal Engineers] - *the war of 1914-1918 relied on engineering. Without engineers there would have been no supply to the armies, because the REs maintained the railways, roads, water supply, bridges and transport. REs also operated the railways and inland waterways. There would have been no*

communications, because the REs maintained the telephones, wireless and other signaling equipment. There would have been little cover for the infantry and no positions for the artillery, because the REs designed and built the front-line fortifications. It fell to the technically skilled REs to develop responses to chemical and underground warfare. And finally, without the REs the infantry and artillery would have soon been powerless, as they maintained the guns and other weapons. By [August] 1917, it had grown to a total manpower of 295, 668

[Adapted from *The Long, Long Trail*, <http://www.1914-1918.net/cre.htm>]

The basic rank of the RE was Sapper, originally a soldier trained to dig tunnels (saps) towards or under enemy positions.

RFA Royal Field Artillery - *The Royal Field Artillery provided artillery support for the British Army. It came into being when the Royal Artillery was divided on 1 July 1899... it was reamalgamated back into the Royal Artillery in 1924. The Royal Field Artillery was the largest arm of the artillery. It was responsible for the medium calibre guns and howitzers deployed close to the front line and was reasonably mobile. It was organised into brigades, attached to divisions or higher formations. During the war a whole new form of artillery was developed to meet the unusual conditions of war on the Western Front: the trench mortar. The lighter weapons being manned by the infantry, the Royal Field Artillery provided the manpower for the heavier mortars.*

[<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/5000/royal-field-artillery/>]

RGA Royal Garrison Artillery - *The RGA developed from fortress-based artillery located on British coasts. From 1914 when the army possessed very little heavy artillery it grew into a very large component of the British forces. It was armed with heavy, large calibre guns and howitzers that were positioned some way behind the front line and had immense destructive power.*

[<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/4698/royal-garrison-artillery/>]

TA [and TF] Territorial Army [Territorial Force] - *Up to 1908, Britain had a tradition of organising local part-time military units known as the Militia and the Volunteers. These had often been created during times of national crisis but with the exception of service during the Boer War in South Africa (1899-1902) had generally remained at home as part-time, local defence, units. The 1908 army reforms carried out by Minister of War Richard Burdon Haldane essentially did away with these old units and replaced them with the Territorial Force. It remained a part-time form of soldiering (hence the nickname "Saturday Night Soldiers"), whose stated role was home defence. Men were not obliged to serve overseas, although they could agree to do so.*

With the exception of the Guards, all Irish regiments, the King's Royal Rifle Corps and Rifle Brigade, the infantry regiments formed units of the TF, as did the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and the other Corps. Some regiments were exclusively TF and had no regular units at all: chief among these was the London Regiment. These units were structured into fourteen Divisions. The mounted forces of the TF were the 54 regiments of the Yeomanry. These were organised into brigades.

The TF also included all necessary support and ancillary units, including a number of hospitals that would be established at home in an emergency. The recruitment of men into TF units was very localised and remained so well into 1916.

The TF was mobilised for full-time war service immediately war was declared. [The Long, Long Trail <http://www.1914-1918.net/tf.htm>]

WW1 World War 1, otherwise known as the Great War, the War to End All War and The Great War for Civilisation ⁹.

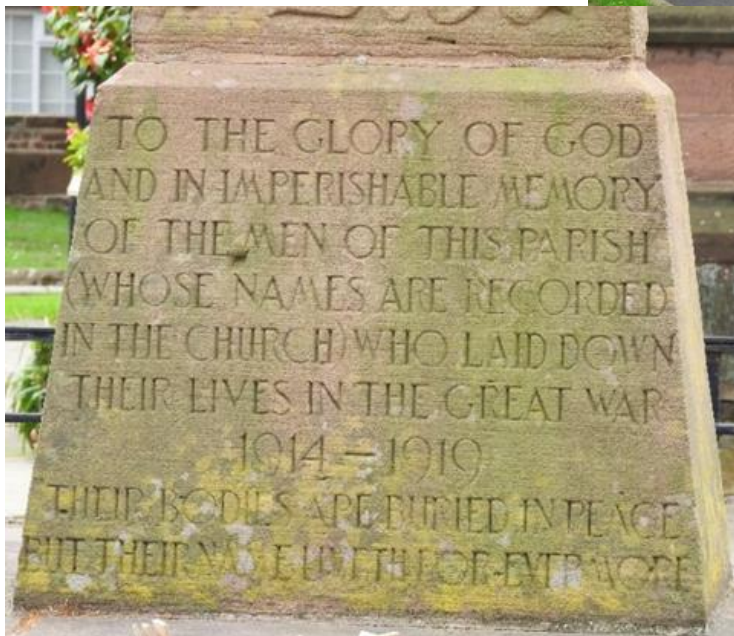
⁹ The UK Victory Medal carries the inscription *The Great War For Civilisation, 1914 – 1919*, on the reverse. The inscription is surrounded by a laurel wreath.

④ Where are the local war memorials, windows and memorial plaques?

Note: this section contains information only on those memorials, windows and memorial plaques, containing the name of one or more individuals considered in this account, located in Wirral, west Cheshire and Chester. Other memorials (such as some in Flintshire, Greater Manchester and Lancashire) are also known to commemorate our war dead and these are commented on, where appropriate, in the main body of the text.

A: Neston & Parkgate

Neston War Memorial Cross, a sandstone cross of Celtic form with carved intertwined oak leaves on the front face, stands by the Parish Church and alongside High Street. It is raised on three platforms. The cross, with two inscriptions, commemorates the men who fell in both wars and is inscribed on one face:



This War Memorial does not record any names.

It was constructed, by public subscription, in 1920, and dedicated by Frank Selwyn Macaulay Bennett, the Dean of Chester, on Sunday 29 August 1920. The vicar, Leslie Wycliffe Troughton, had taken up his post in Neston just two months previously.



The reverse face of the base of the cross is inscribed:
Also of the men of this parish who laid down their lives in the Great war 1939 - 1945

THE MEMORIALS.

THE WINDOW.

The two-light window takes as its subject the support derived by our Soldiers fighting at the Front from the Heavenly Hosts. These are shown appearing in the clouds holding weapons of defence, while the two figures symbolical of our armies rest in the foreground, one dedicating the Colours of his Country, and the other his rifle, to the service of humanity, and to the glory of God.

The Angel in the 1914 panel has the sword unsheathed thus typifying the actual commencement of hostilities; 1919 shows the Heavenly sword sheathed and therefore illustrates the end of the War.

The names and rank of those men from this Parish, who gave their lives in the great War are inscribed in Stone on each side of the Memorial Window.

THE CROSS.

The symbolism in the carving of the outside cross is that—as the stems give out pleasant leaves in the beginning of their lives and afterwards form themselves into a Crown of Thorns and beyond blossom into flowers in the arms of the Cross—so in the lives of those we commemorate. Their lives here were pleasant, and through the glory of the Crown of Thorns they have come to the greater glory from the Hands of Him who wore the Crown of Thorns.

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Neston Parish Church.

Dedication of the
Neston Church War Memorials
 by
 The Very Reverend the Dean of Chester,
 Sunday, August 29th, 1920,
 at 3 p.m.

The Service Sheet for the Dedication of the Neston Church War Memorials, 29 August 1920.

The Service suggests that both the external War Memorial Cross and the inscribed slate tablets flanking the Memorial Window inside the church were dedicated at this time, both 'objects' being considered as War Memorials.

A copy of the Service Sheet for the Dedication of the Memorials is in the David Scott Collection in Neston Library.

ORDER OF SERVICE.

HYMN 165.

SPECIAL PSALMS xxiii, cxxi.

LESSON—1 Thess. iv.-end.

HYMN 428.

Offertory for the Dedication Fund.

ADDRESS

BY THE VERY REVEREND THE DEAN.

SPECIAL HYMN.

<p>1. Jerusalem, my happy home When shall I come to thee? When shall my sorrows have an end? Thy joys when shall I see?</p> <p>2. O happy harbour of the saints! O sweet and pleasant soil! In thee no sorrow may be found, No grief, no care, no toil.</p> <p>3. In thee no sickness may be seen, No hurt, no ache, no sore, In thee there is no dread of death, But life for evermore.</p> <p>4. No dampish mist is seen in thee, No cold nor darkness night, There every soul shines as the sun; There God himself gives light.</p> <p>5. There lust and lucre cannot dwell; There envy bears no sway; There is no hunger, heat, nor cold, But pleasure every way.</p> <p>6. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, God grant I once may see Thy endless joys, and of the same Partaker eye may be.</p> <p>7. Thy walls are made of precious stones, Thy bulwarks diamonds square; Thy gates are of right orient pearl; Exceeding rich and rare;</p> <p>8. Thy turrets and thy pinnacles With carbuncles do shine; Thy very streets are paved with gold, Surpassing clear and fine;</p> <p>9. Thy houses are of ivory, Thy windows crystal clear; Thy tiles are made of beaten gold— O God that I were there!</p> <p>19. Ah, my sweet home, Jerusalem, Would God I were in thee! Would God my woes were at an end, Thy joys that I might see.</p>	<p>10. Thy saints are crowned with glory great They see God face to face; They triumph still, they still rejoice: Most happy is their case.</p> <p>11. We that are here in banishment, Continually do mourn; We sigh and sob, we weep and wail, Perpetually we groan.</p> <p>12. Our sweet is mixed with bitter gall, Our pleasure is but pain, Our joys scarce last the looking on, Our sorrows still remain.</p> <p>13. But those they live in such delight, Such pleasure and such play, As that to them a thousand years Doth seem as yesterday.</p> <p>14. Thy vineyards and thy orchards are Most beautiful and fair, Full furnished with trees and fruits, Most beautiful and rare.</p> <p>15. Thy gardens and thy gallant walks Continually are green; There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers As nowhere else are seen.</p> <p>16. There's nectar and ambrosia made, There's musk and civet sweet; There's many a fair and dainty drug Is trodden under feet.</p> <p>17. There cinnamon, there sugar grows, There nard and balm abound; What tongue can tell, or heart conceive, The joys that there are found.</p> <p>18. Within thy gates no thing doth come That is not passing clean, No spider web, no dirt, no dust, No filth may there be seen.</p>
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During this Hymn the Clergy and Choir will proceed to the objects to be dedicated where prayers will be said by the Dean.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS.
BLESSING.

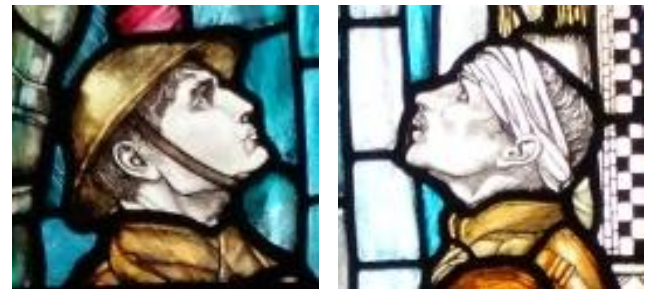
Inside the Parish Church of St Mary & St Helen, Neston

The Parish Church has, on the North Aisle, a double-lancet window flanked by rectangular slate tablets engraved with the gilt-inlaid names of 92 parishioners who were casualties of WW1.

Also in the church is a marble wall plaque commemorating Temporary Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Bushell VC, DSO.

The windows

The windows were designed by Bernard Rice¹⁰, constructed by Williams, Gamon & Co.¹¹ and erected in 1919. The windows are of sub-lancet form, the tops being rather more rounded than a true lancet form. These replaced earlier windows although the form and style of these is not known.



In an Arts & Crafts style, the 1914 window to the left depicts St George and the 1919 window to the right St Michael, each holding a downward-pointing sword (unsheathed in 1914 and sheathed in 1919) and standing guard over a kneeling soldier, each in uniform. On the left window the soldier is helmeted and holds a flagstaff with the Union Flag in front of his feet. On the right the soldier has a bandaged head and is holding an upward-pointing rifle. The Union Flag creates a link between the two windows.

¹⁰ Bernard Rice (1900 – 1998) was born in Innsbruck, Austria. He studied wood engraving, drawing and painting whilst at art school in Austria. Aged 19 he came to London to study at Westminster School of Art alongside the artists David Jones and Clifford Webb; and later at the Royal Academy Schools, London. He did not settle in England for long, moving to Yugoslavia in 1922, and spent much of his time travelling, and for ten years lived in Cairo teaching engraving and etching techniques. The artist frequently experimented with different woods, engraving on the cross section of soft wood blocks and often looked to the blocks themselves for inspiration. His best-known works are the large and vigorous woodcuts based on the landscapes and villages of Bosnia. [Source: <http://visualarts.britishcouncil.org/collection/artists/rice-bernard-1900>]

¹¹ The name on the information board below the window in the church is incorrectly spelled as *Gamon*.

The company which made the window was part-owned by Gilbert Percival Gamon, an uncle of Sydney Percival Gamon of 78 Squadron Royal Flying Corps who was killed on 23 March 1918 whilst conducting aerobatics in Essex.

Sydney, who was born in Chester, was the son of John Percival and Margaret Alice Gamon of Leighton Banastre, Parkgate. Sydney is commemorated on the left-hand plaque in the church and his account, **32: Sydney Percival Gamon** in this work, incorporates an abbreviated family tree.



Gilbert Percival Gamon, the window-maker, was a son of solicitor John and Emily Gamon of Parkgate and he was baptised at Neston Parish Church on 22 September 1871¹². The 1891 census records Gilbert, 19, as an *artist in stained glass*; he was then a visitor at a house in Chelsea.

Gilbert Gamon trained with Shrigley & Hunt, working in their London office. Shrigley & Hunt *'...ranked among the leading designers and manufacturers of stained glass in Britain, rivalling the better-known contemporaries such William Morris and Company.....The company deserves much more recognition. Its neglect is largely due to the fact that, unlike their better-known competitors, their designers did not double up as fine artists and the firm did not remain nationally active beyond the early twentieth century. Shrigley and Hunt's story is rather one of an emergence from provincial obscurity into a position of national high regard, followed by a period of slow decline and a return to a local level of operation, albeit of some merit.'*

[Abridged extract from *Stained Glass from Shrigley and Hunt of Lancaster and London* William Waters Published by the Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Lancaster University, 2003]

¹² The information board below the window in the church records that Gilbert *was born and traded in Hoylake*. Census returns record his birthplace as Neston.

In mid-1909, then 37, Gilbert married Caroline Mary Darlington at Whitchurch, Shropshire, and at the time of the 1911 census they were living at 20 Hollingbourne Gardens in West Ealing; Gilbert was, once again, recorded as an *artist in stained glass*. It is probable that Gilbert was, at that time, in partnership with Godfrey Wood Humphry; Humphry had qualified as a solicitor but never practised but, instead, became a glass painter. Little appears be known of the firm of Messrs. Gamon and Humphry although it is known that they operated from 52 Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square, London.

In WW1 Gilbert served as a Lieutenant with the Royal Army Service Corps. and he remained with the army until 1921, then joined his family in London until at least 1922. In 1924/25 Gilbert's address was in Buxton, Derbyshire and the first reference to his being in the Chester area is 1926. He was then working under the name of Williams, Gamon & Co. in Chester, frequently using the designer Bernard Rice. Geoffrey Percival Gamon, Gilbert's half-brother, was a co-director of the company. With the demand for war memorials and windows following the war, the company was much in demand and the business expanded; the Chester Directory of 1930/31 recorded them as

Williams, Gamon & Co., (Kaleyards) Ltd., Casement makers, electrical engineers, leaded light manufacturers - Kaleyard works. Showrooms - 26 Upper Northgate St.

The company certainly continued up to the time of WW2 but little is known of its later history although it is possible that it may have ceased trading in 1947 when Geoffrey Gamon died, aged 70.

Below the window is an elongated inscription reading:

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN IMPERISHABLE MEMORY OF THE MEN FROM
THIS PARISH WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR OF 1914 – 1919
“DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY”



The slate tablets

The polished grey slate tablets on either side of the window record the names of 92 parishioners who died in service during, or immediately following, WW1.

Each slate tablet is composed of two rectangular slates, horizontally joined centrally, the tablets being held between mottled and gilded marble mounts at the top and base.

Each tablet is surmounted by a relief crest of a gilded and coloured crown capped with an heraldic lion *statant* (standing, all four feet on the ground, forepaws together).

Although it has not been verified it is understood that the tablets are the work of George Herbert Tyson Smith, an English sculptor born in Liverpool in 1883.



The inscribed gilt names, with 92 inscriptions (23 on each slate), are in approximate alphabetical order and, in the order inscribed, are:



Left tablet : Upper slate

Sergt. Pilot J. ANDERSON
Pte. W. ANDERSON
Pte. G. ANYON
Sergt. G. ASHWORTH
Pte. C. J. BAKER
Sergt. A. BARTLEY
Pte. T. BELL
Sapper R. BLAKE
Lt. Col. C. BUSHELL V.C. D.S.O
Pte. T. CAMPION
Gunner J. CAVANAGH
Pte. H. COTTRELL
L. Cpl. A. COVENTRY
Pte. J. COYLE
Pte. A. CRAWFORD
Pte. J. CRAWLEY
Sergt. D. CULBARD
Corpl. F. W. DANIEL
Pte. G. DAVIDSON
Pte. J. R. DAVIES
Pte. J. DAVIES
Pte. T. DAVIES
Pte. H. E. DAYAS

Left tablet : Lower slate

Pte. J. DEVINE
Pte. J. DOWNEY
Pte. T. DOWNEY
L.Cpl. J. DOWNES
CSM. S. DUDDRIDGE M.M
Pte. T. ELLIS
Sergt. Maj. E. EVANS D.C.M
Lieut. N. FOSTER
Capt. S. P. GAMON
Bombr. B. GRIFFITHS
Sergt. M. HAMPSON
Pte. E. HANCOCK
Pte. F. HARRIS
Lieut. G. HARRISON M.C
Pte. W. HEALEY
Gunner T. HOLMES
L.Cpl. B. HUGHES
Lieut. N HUGHES M.C. & Bar
Pte. A. JELICOE
Pte. C. JONES
Pte. E. JONES
Pte. G. JONES
Pte. H. JONES

Tyson Smith was first apprenticed to a stonemason, then studied at Liverpool University and later attended the Liverpool College of Art where he studied plaster and stone carving and clay modeling. He was taught drawing by Augustus John, the leading society portrait artist of the inter-war years, who had come to Liverpool aged 23 to work at the art school (often called the 'Art Sheds') affiliated to the University College. John was only in Liverpool for eighteen months, from January 1901-July 1902.

Tyson Smith established his own practice in 1912 but this was interrupted by his WW1 service; he served in the Royal Flying Corps. and set up his first studio in 1919 when he returned. He moved into a larger studio at Bluecoat Studios in 1925, a building he helped restore after bomb damage in 1941.

Tyson Smith created many works, particular war memorials (including the Birkenhead War Memorial and the Liverpool Cenotaph at St George's, Lime Street), around Merseyside.



Right tablet : Upper slate

Pte. J. JONES
 Gunner W. JONES
 Sapper W. JONES
 Pte. E. JOHNSON
 Pte. T. JOHNSON
 Pte. W. JOHNSON
 Q. M. Sgt. W. T. KERNS M.M
 Gunner W. KITSON
 Pte. A. LAWTON
 Pte. R. LAWTON M.M
 Pte. T. LEWIS
 Pte. T. LEWIS
 Pte. W. LEWIS
 Pte. E. LLOYD
 Corpl. S. MEALOR
 Pte. J. MELLOR
 Pte. R. METCALFE
 Pte. W. MINSHULL
 Pte. C. NEWCOMBE
 Sapper H. NORMAN
 Pte. W. OXTON
 Corpl. J. PETERS
 Pte. R. PRITCHARD
 Pte. W. PRITCHARD
 Pte. J. PYKE
 Pte. W. PROSSER
 Pte. R. HANDLEY
 Pte. J. RICHARDSON
 Pte. A. C. ROBERTS
 Lieut. W. ROBERTS
 Pte. J. ROBINSON
 Pte. J. ROSCOE
 Pte. R. ROSCOE
 Sergt. G. ROWLANDS
 L. Cpl. W. SMITH
 L. Cpl. T. P. SWIFT
 Pte. W. THACKERY
 2nd. Lt. B. A. B. THOMAS
 Pte. W. S. TOWERT
 Pte. W. H. TOZER
 Corpl. H. WILDE
 Sergt. Maj. J. WILLIAMS M.M
 Pte. R. WILLIAMS
 Pte. W. WILLIAMS
 Pte. WM. WILLIAMS
 Pte. J. WOODWARD

Right tablet : Lower slate

Pte. W. PRITCHARD
 Pte. J. PYKE
 Pte. W. PROSSER
 Pte. R. HANDLEY
 Pte. J. RICHARDSON
 Pte. A. C. ROBERTS
 Lieut. W. ROBERTS
 Pte. J. ROBINSON
 Pte. J. ROSCOE
 Pte. R. ROSCOE
 Sergt. G. ROWLANDS
 L. Cpl. W. SMITH
 L. Cpl. T. P. SWIFT
 Pte. W. THACKERY
 2nd. Lt. B. A. B. THOMAS
 Pte. W. S. TOWERT
 Pte. W. H. TOZER
 Corpl. H. WILDE
 Sergt. Maj. J. WILLIAMS M.M
 Pte. R. WILLIAMS
 Pte. W. WILLIAMS
 Pte. WM. WILLIAMS
 Pte. J. WOODWARD

Slate replacement of the sections in italics:

Q.M. SGT. W.T. Kerns M.M

(the sub-vertical darker grey band is probably a natural variation within the slate).

PTE. R. HANDLEY

This insertion, with imperfect joining, is easier to distinguish. The imposition of the name, out of alphabetical sequence, is also obvious.



Two of the men commemorated on the slate tablets, W.S. Towert and M. Hampson, are commemorated also on the Parkgate & Neston URC memorial plaque and a further two (G. Ashworth and T. Holmes) are commemorated on the plaque in the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Burton.

On the inscription, the names of L. Cpl. J. Downes (left tablet) and Pte. J. Pyke (right tablet) are not in strict alphabetical sequence.

Additionally, the name of Pte. R. Handley (right tablet) has been inscribed out of

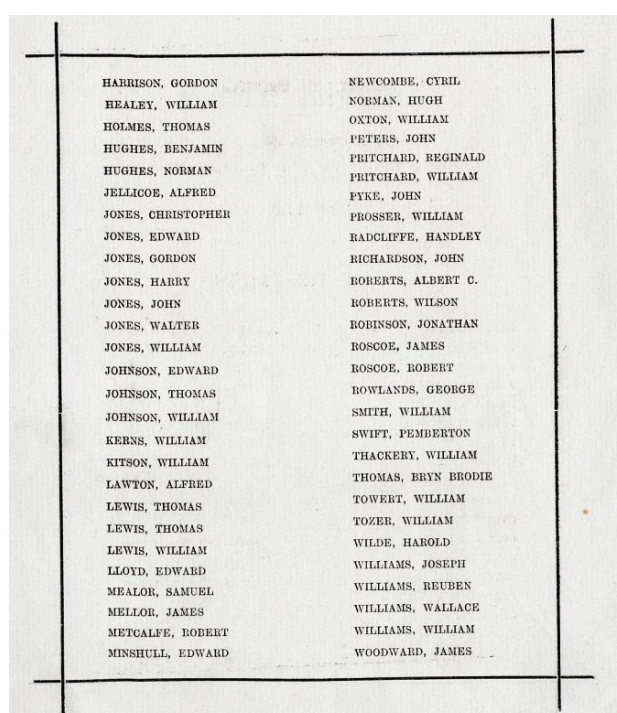
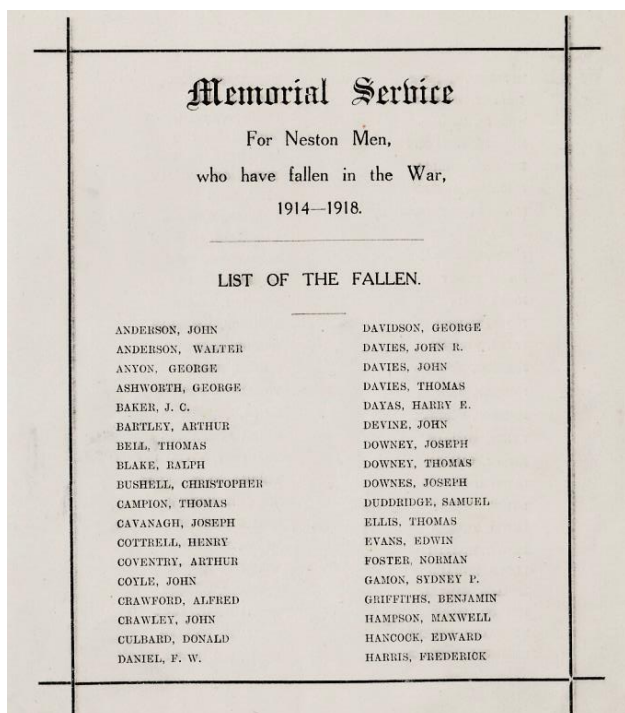


alphabetical sequence (see photograph on following page) and the name of Pte. W. Thackwray is misspelled.

There is strong evidence that errors were made during the inscribing of the slate, horizontal rectangles of slate having been cut from each of the two slates forming the right tablet and replaced with insets of a slightly darker slate. It is quite probable that that these insertions were less visible when the tablets were first made and hung in the church.

The Memorial Service

On some unknown date a *Memorial service For Neston Men, who have fallen in the War, 1914 – 1918* was held. The Order of Service is undated but the Service was probably held at the Parish Church very shortly after the Dedication of the War Memorials Service on 29 August 1920 - it may even have preceded or followed the Dedication Service). The Order of Service provided as the front cover and inside page a *List of the Fallen* which, unlike the inscribed slate tablets in the church, gives forenames for the men. Although the slate tablets record the names of 92 men, the name of **56: Raymond Frederick Lawton** has been omitted from the Order of service (possibly in error) and so 91 men are named here. Additionally, the spelling of the surnames is that shown on the inscribed slate tablets and the name of Ratcliffe Handley has been corrupted to *Handley Radcliffe*. The Order of Service gives no further information about the men, and nothing further is known of the Service itself.



Order of Service.

HYMN No. 165.

"Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another."—Ps. 46-1.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwell'd secure;
Sufficiency is Thine Arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stand,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the Same.

PSALM XLVI.

GOD is our hope and strength: a very present help in trouble.

2.—Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea.

3.—Though the waters thereof rage and swell: and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.

4.—The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the City of God: the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High God.

5.—God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed: God shall help her, and that right early.

6.—The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved: but God hath showed his voice, and the earth shall melt away.

7.—The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8.—O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord: what destruction he hath brought upon the earth.

9.—He maketh wars to cease in all the world: he breaketh the bow, and breaketh the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariot in the fire.

10.—Be still then, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth.

11.—The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge.

THE LESSON.—Rev. vii. 9-17.

After this, I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipp'd God,

Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence come they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

NUNC DIMITTIS.

LOED, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people:

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

*Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.*

Our Father deliver us from evil. AMEN.

O God of the spirits of all flesh, we praise and magnify Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants who, having fought a good fight, have finished their course in Thy faith and fear; and we beseech Thee that, encouraged by their example and strengthened by their fellowship, we with them may be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light; through the merits of Thy son, Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

COMFORT, O Lord, we pray Thee, all who are mourning the loss of those who are near and dear to them. Be with them in their sorrow. Support them in Thy Love. Teach them to rest and lean on Thee. Give them faith to look beyond the troubles of this present time, and to know that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, now and for ever.—AMEN.

O Almighty God, the Sovereign Commander of all the world, in whose hand is power and might which none is able to withstand: we bless and magnify Thy great and glorious Name for this happy Victory, the whole glory whereof we do ascribe to Thee. Give us grace to improve this great mercy to Thy glory, the advancement of Thy Gospel, the honour of our Sovereign and,—as much as in us lieth—to the good of all mankind, and, we beseech Thee, give us such a sense of this great mercy, as may engage us to a true thankfulness, such as may appear in our lives by an humble, holy, and obedient walking before Thee all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit, as for all Thy mercies, so in particular for this Victory and Deliverance, be all glory and honour, world without end.—AMEN.

HYMN No. 222.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."
Rev. xxi. 4.

Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the mansion'd Saints
Throng up the steps of light:

Triumphant! all in finish'd,
Their fight with death and sin;
Flung open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.

What raiment of Alleluia
Fills all the earth and sky!
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeak the triumph night!

O day for which creation
And all its tribes were made!
O joy, for all its former woes
A thousand-fold repaid!

ADDRESS.

HYMN No. 437.

"Compass'd about with a cloud of witnesses."
Heb. xii. 1.

For all the Saints who from their labours rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confess'd,
Thy Name, O Jesu, be for ever blest,
Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;
Thou LOV'D their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou in the darkness dress'd their one true Light,
Alleluia!

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the Saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold,
Alleluia!

O blest communion! fellowship Divine!
We nobly struggle, sleep in glory shine!
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine,
Alleluia!

Oh, then what raptur'd greetings
On Heaven's happy shore,
What knitting sever'd friendships up,
Where partings are no more!

Thine eyes with joy shall sparkle
That beam'd with tears of late;
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate.

Bring near Thy great Salvation,
Thou LAMB for sinners slain,
Fill up the roll of Thine elect,
Then take Thy power and reign!

Appear, Desire of nations,
Thine exiles long for home;
Show in the heavens Thy promised sign:
Thou Prince and Saviour come.—AMEN.

THE BLESSING.

THE LAST POST.

REVELLÉ.

HYMN No. 140.

"I am He that liveth, and was dead: and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18.

Jesus lives! no longer now
Can thy terrors, death and hell,
Jesus lives! by this we know
Thou, O grave, canst not exhal us.

Jesus lives! beneath the death,
But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm our trembling breath,
When we pass thy gloomy portal.

Jesus lives! to Him the Throne
Over all the world is given;
May we go where He is gone,
Rest and reign with Him in Heaven.

AMEN.

"GOD SAVE THE KING."

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
God save the King,
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King!

A copy of the Service Sheet for the Memorial service For Neston Men, who have fallen in the War, 1914 – 1918 is in the David Scott Collection in Neston Library.

The Christopher Bushell memorial plaque

This plaque, between the John Churton and Reginald Bushell windows on the North Aisle of the church, was reinstalled in 2016 having previously suffered damage (it had fallen from the wall and shattered) and was with a restorer for some considerable time.

Made of light-coloured onyx (probably), the origin and history of the plaque is unknown to the author although it was most likely donated by the Bushell family. It is probable that the veined white marble mount is not original and was created by the restorer as a base for reassembly of the plaque.

The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) was sometimes known as the *Mutton Lancers*, after their "Lamb and Flag" cap badge; this is the small black emblem above the inscription on the plaque.





The plaque measures approximately 76cm by 46cm and the inscription reads:
 To the Glorious Memory of / Christopher Bushell, V.C. D.S.O, / T/L^t. Colonel Commanding 7th. Battⁿ. 'The
 Queens' R.W.S. Regt. / Younger Son of Reginald and Caroline Bushell. / Killed in Action in France /
 August 8th 1918. *E'en as he trod that day to God / So walked he from his birth, / To gentleness
 and simpleness / And honour and clean mirth.*

Inside the Parkgate and Neston United Reformed Church, Neston

From its opening in 1884 this was the Parkgate & Neston Presbyterian Church, becoming the URC only after the national merging of the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations in 1972.

Inside the church, a grey marble plaque is located on the north wall of the nave, close to the steps leading to the chancel.

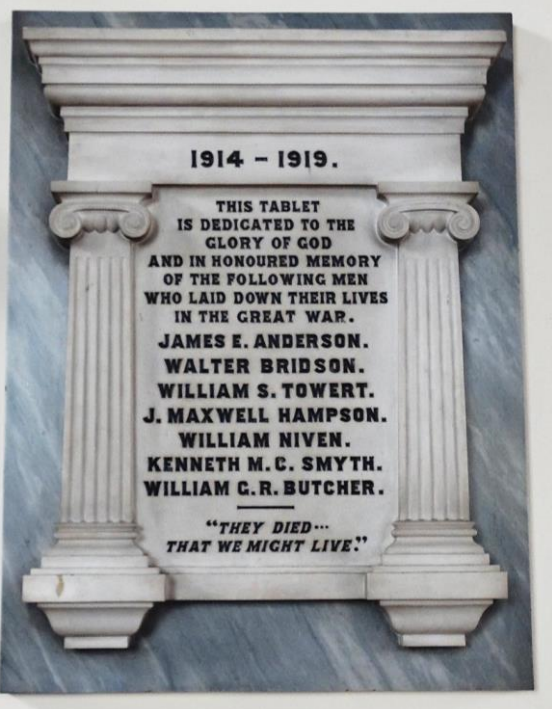
To the left of the memorial, on the corner of the nave and transept, is a wooden cross dedicated to an unknown soldier; a thin metal strip, impressed



*UNKNOWN
 BRITISH SOLDIER,*
 is fixed across the crossbar. This may

be an original taken from a WW1 battlefield burial - a metal Grave Registration tag embossed 2-G-4 is above the crossarm - although nothing further is known of its history and it has not proved possible to relate it to any of the men named on the plaque.

The white plaque, of marble or fine limestone, is incised with letters highlighted in black and is flanked by two fluted and scrolled pillars, of ionic style, in relief. The names are not alphabetical.



The whole plaque is mounted on a rectangular mount of grey-veined marble. Of the seven names commemorated, two (William S. Towert and J. Maxwell Hampson) are commemorated also at Neston Parish Church.

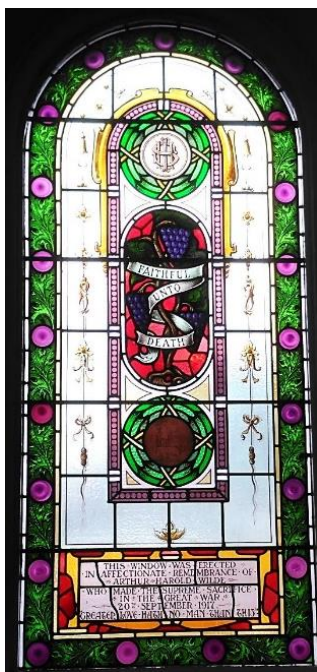
The plaque was unveiled on 25 June 1922 to commemorate those members of the Bible Class and Sunday School who had died in WW1. A personal donation to commemorate Kenneth Smyth was an important part of the funding needed for its construction and a prize for the Sunday School, as a memorial to Kenneth, was also established.



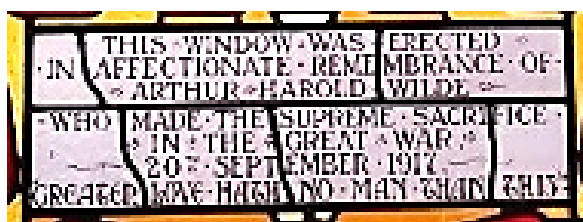
The URC, Parkgate Road, Neston.
The adjacent Manse (built 1900) is now a private residence.

Inside Little Neston Methodist Church

Although there is no War Memorial or commemorative plaque at the church, a window on the south wall of the nave was presented to the church by the Wilde family to commemorate Corporal Arthur Harold Wilde (196th Coy. Machine Gun Corps) who was killed on 20 September 1917 [See 87: Arthur Harold Wilde]



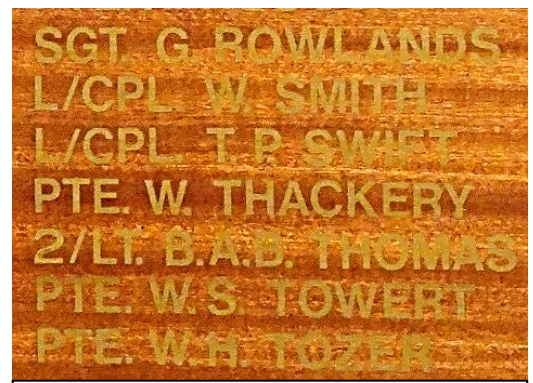
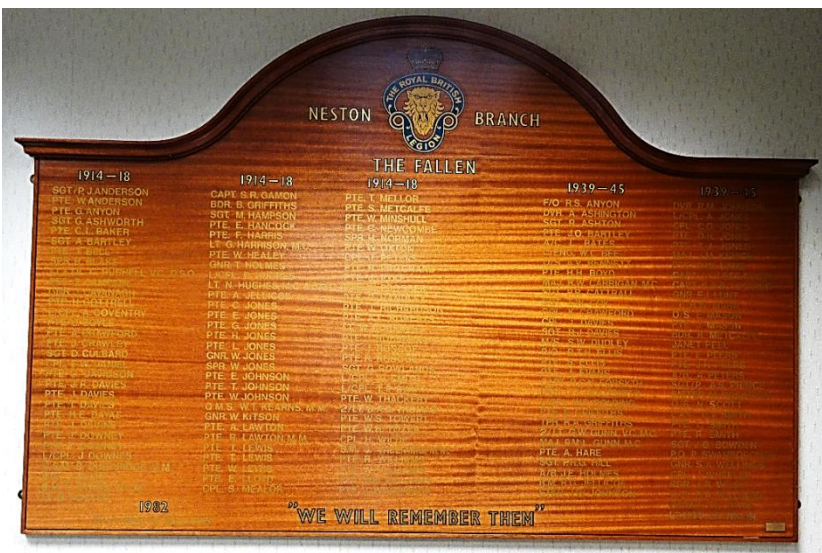
to commemorate Corporal Arthur Harold Wilde (196th Coy. Machine Gun Corps) who was killed on 20 September 1917 [See 87: Arthur Harold Wilde]



Inside the Neston Royal British Legion

Inside the entrance to the Neston Royal British legion on Chester Road is a wall-mounted, mid-brown, varnished, wooden board inscribed in gold lettering with the names of the casualties of Neston for 1914 – 1918 (three columns), 1939 – 1945 (two columns) and 1982 (1 name).

It is believed that the building was constructed in the mid-1960s and the board may have been made and installed then. The board has the RBL emblem and a small metal insert, lower right, is inscribed *Donated by Miss M. H. Rannard, Irby, Wirral.*



Close-up of part of the third column of the board showing the name Pte. W. Thackery.

Unfortunately, as the board has been copied from the slate tablets in Neston Parish Church the same errors have been included – for example, the name of John William *Thackway* has, again, been misspelt.

Perhaps more significantly this board, compared to the slate tablets in the Parish Church, has omitted one name - Private W. Pritchard - who is commemorated on the Parish Church memorial ¹³.

The Chapel of the former Mostyn House School, Parkgate

As noted previously, this work has not considered the ‘old boys’ of Parkgate’s Mostyn House School who, in later life, died as a consequence of WW1 although an exception has been made for Alan Appleby Drew.

It is appropriate to comment briefly on the school’s tributes to its former pupils.

After WW1 a carillon of 31 bells was erected as a memorial to the ‘old boys’ who died in the war and a panel in the entrance to the chapel listed the names of the 78 known to have fallen.

On Ascension Day, 25 May 1922 the Lord Bishop of Chester dedicated the carillon of 31 bells to the memory of *Alan Appleby Drew and the other four-score old boys who fell fighting for England in the Great War.*

A transcription of the panel is given on page 22 and it is interesting to note the final paragraph:

The bells are no part of our freehold. If ever Mostyn House ceases to be a school they are to be offered to a public school, preferably to Charterhouse, that they may go on speaking to English boys as long as England lasts.



¹³ The names of 92 men are inscribed on the tablets in Neston Parish Church; the RBL board commemorates just 91 of these.



The school chapel (1895) and the carillon at the western end above the entrance. When these photographs were taken (2010) the buildings still operated as a school.

Indeed, Mostyn House ceased to be a school in 2010¹⁴ and the carillon (now 37 bells) was accepted by Charterhouse School and rededicated there on Saturday 10 May:

Because AA Drew and four other casualties - BO Tatham, HC Kenion,

JS Adams and HD Vernon - commemorated on the carillon memorial inscription were also Old

Carthusians, the Governors of Charterhouse felt that Charterhouse should honour the wishes of the benefactors. They were able to accept the offer thanks to the generous financial support of the Trustees of the Mostyn House Griffin Project, the Carthusian Trust and John Taylor and Co Ltd of Loughborough. The installation of the carillon in the tower of the original Charterhouse



Chapel was, rather poignantly, completed during the centenary year of the start [of] the First World War.

Relatives of the casualties of war, people associated with the bells at Mostyn House School, the refurbishment at Taylors Foundry and members of staff attended a Service and lunch.

¹⁴ The closure was announced to parents in late May 2010 and it closed at the end of the Summer term when there were then around 110 pupils on the roll.

It is understood that the panel has also been relocated alongside the carillon at Charterhouse.

Also in the chapel of Mostyn House School were a series of brass plaques on wooden paneling inscribed:

(Plaque 1):

CAPT. FRANCIS OCTAVIUS
GRENFELL/V.C., THE 9TH
LANCERS./ KILLED AT YPRES, MAY
24TH 1915/ SAVED THE GUNS IN
RETREAT/FROM MONS. AGED 34./
(TWIN BROTHER)

(Plaque 2):

LIEUT. RIVERSDALE NONUS
GRENFELL/ ATTACHED TO 9TH
LANCERS./ KILLED AT BATTLE OF
THE AISNE/ SEPT. 14TH 1914/AGED
34/ (TWIN BROTHER)

(Plaque 3):

CAPT. THE HON. JULIAN
H.F.GRENFELL/D.S.O.: THE ROYAL
DRAGOONS./WOUNDED AT
YPRES. MAY 13, &/DIED AT
BOULOGNE. MAY 26TH.1915/AGED
27./AUTHOR OF "INTO BATTLE."

(Plaque 4):

2ND LIEUT. THE HON. G.W.
GRENFELL/8TH BATT. THE RIFLE
BRIGADE./KILLED AT HOOGE/ JULY
29TH 1915/AGED 25./SCHOLAR OF ETON
& OF BALLIOL COLL./NEWCASTLE SCHOLAR OF
ETON/ CRAVEN SCHOLAR OF OXFORD.

(Plaque 5):

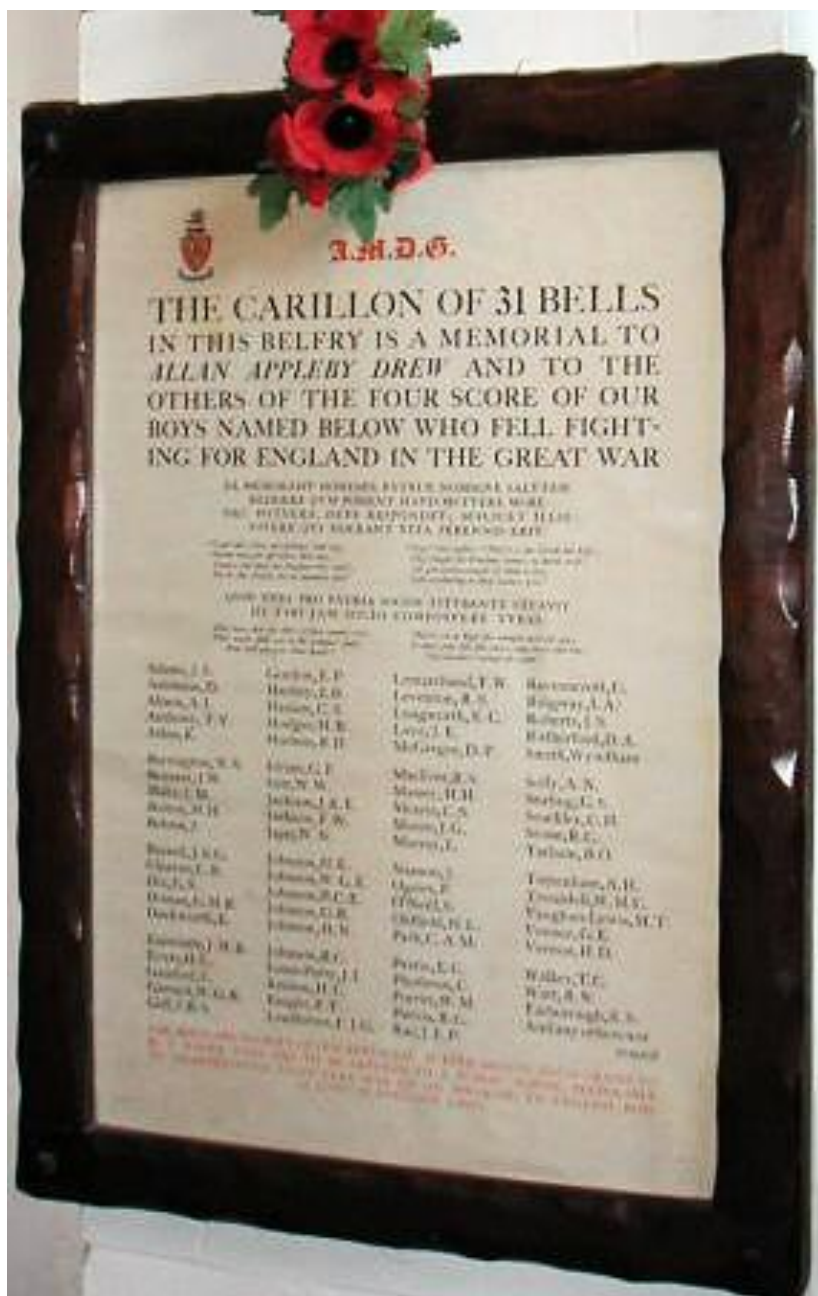
IN MEMORY OF/LIEUTENANT ROBERT GRENFELL/12TH ROYAL LANCERS, KILLED/IN THE CHARGE OF
THE 21ST LANCERS/AT THE BATTLE OF KHARTOUM./SEPT.2ND. 1898.

(Plaque 6):

TO ALAN APPLEBY DREW/LIEUTENANT IN THE CAMERONIANS,/FORMERLY BOY AND
MASTER/HERE, WHO FELL FIGHTING/AT NEUVE CHAPPELLE/MARCH 12TH 1915. AGED 30.
[Note: The inscribed date is incorrect – Alan Appleby Drew was killed on 10 March 1915]

(Plaque7):

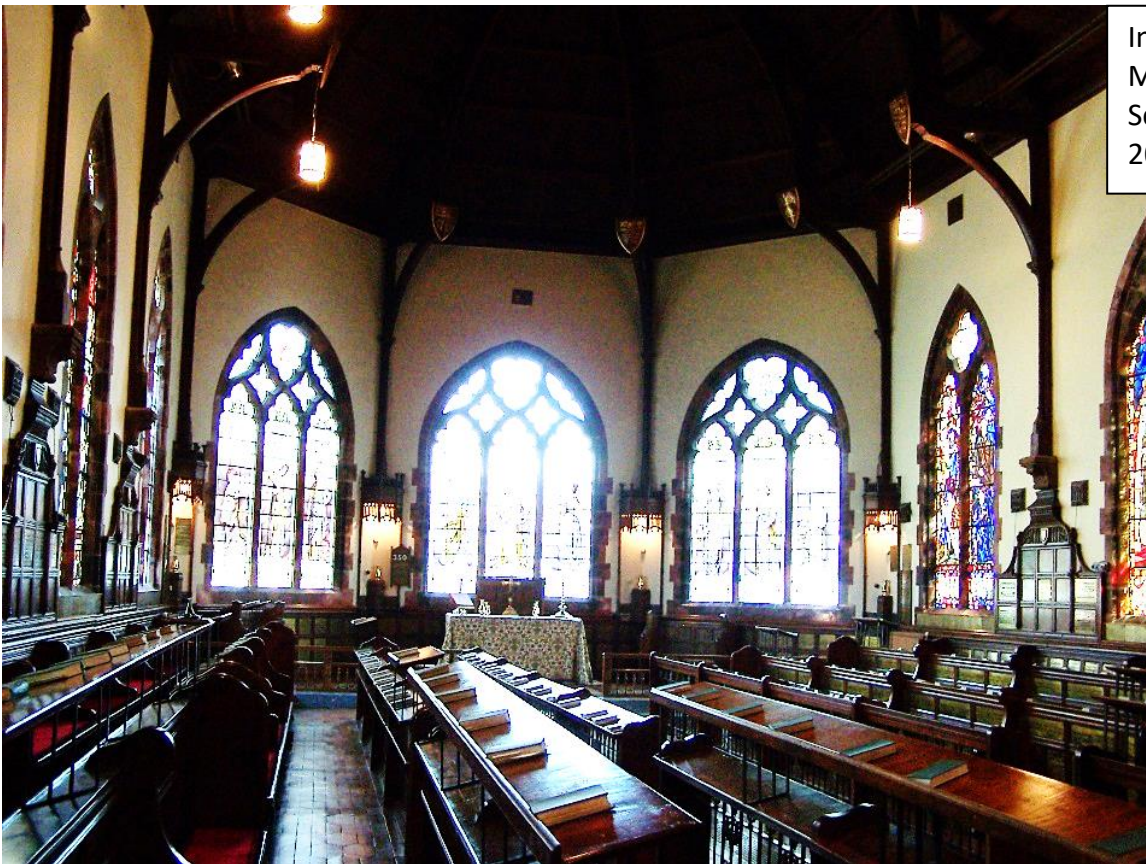
THE BOYS OF THIS SCHOOL/WHO KNEW AND LOVED HIM,/HAVE PUT UP THIS PLATE IN/THE PLACE
WHERE, NOT ONLY/WITH HIS LIPS BUT IN HIS LIFE/HE TAUGHT HIS MASTER'S LOVE.




<http://www.carlscam.com/warmem/mostyn.htm>

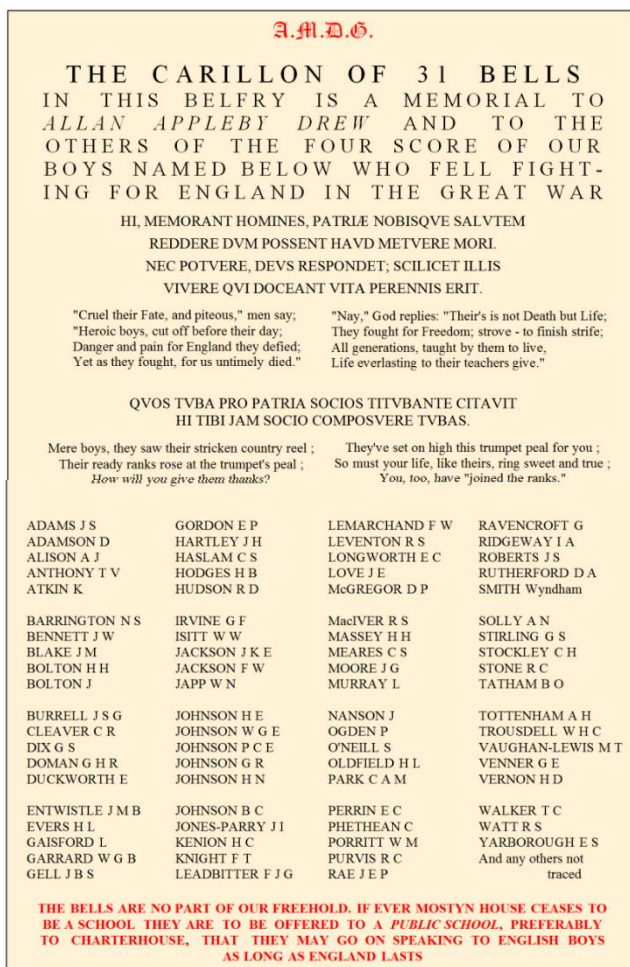


View over the Mostyn House School complex and Parkgate marshes to the Welsh shoreline. This photograph was taken from the water tower at the school in 2010.



Inside the chapel at Mostyn House School in September 2006.

[Sources: For details of the sources used for the account of the rededication of the carillon at Charterhouse, and the photograph of the lines of refurbished bells, see page 202 of  The resources and sources used for this work later in this volume].



A clearer image of the plaque which hung in Mostyn House School. It is not known why Alan Appleby Drew's first name has been spelled as *Allan* on this panel.

St Winefride's Roman Catholic Church, Burton Road, Neston

It is worth noting that St Winefride's does not have any form of memorial to WW1 since *In any town and village of Great Britain you will find war memorials that testify to the terrible toll of human life. It was, therefore, unexpected to find that none of our parishioners died in that war. Perhaps there were few young men of military age; perhaps some were in reserved occupations – but what a merciful relief to the Parish community.*

[*St Winefride's, Neston : 150 Years : 1843 – 1993* (a booklet produced to illustrate the history of the RC Parish in Neston)]

Nevertheless, two men recognised by the CWGC as casualties of WW1 are buried in the churchyard:

- 25: Joseph Laurence Downey** Private, Machine Gun Corps
Died 30 November 1918 aged 19
- 147: William Kemp** Second Steward, Mercantile Marine Reserve
Died 1 October 1918 aged 29

Additionally, **26: Thomas Edward Downey** (the brother of Joseph Downey who died 9 September 1917, aged 24 and is buried in France) is commemorated on the family gravestone.

Thomas and Joseph Downey are both commemorated as war casualties at Neston Parish Church.

B: Burton

Inside the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Burton

The Parish Church, dedicated to St Nicholas, stands in the centre of the village on the land rising from the road (The Village) towards the eastern extremity of Burton Wood. Commemorative plaques, for both World Wars, flank the interior entrance to the church from the porch at the western (rear) end of the building. From the nave, facing the entrance door, the WW1 plaque is to the right (north), directly beneath the second of the two wooden boards listing the Ten Commandments. The rectangular plaque, with a central white marble tablet containing inscriptions and the names of 14 parishioners, has a surround of brown-veined marble and a convex upper edge (the form is known as *nowy-headed*). The cross and inscriptions on the plaque are inlaid in gold, the names of the war-dead are in black and are shown alphabetically. Two men recorded here, George Ashworth and Thomas Holmes, are shown also on the commemorative tablets in Neston Parish Church.



Outside the Gladstone Village Hall, Burton

Billy Congreve was killed on Thursday 20 July 1916 and on the afternoon of Wednesday 20 July 2016, to observe the centenary of his death, a short ceremony took place outside the Gladstone Village Hall during which a commemorative stone was unveiled. Representing the Congreve family was Ben Stephenson, a grandson of Billy Congreve. The engraved stone has been set directly below the foundation stone which was laid on 28 July 1906 as a memorial to Henry Neville Gladstone who donated the Hall - then the Village Institute - to Burton village.

The ceremony in 2016 was opened by Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Trelawny who outlined the history of the Rifle Brigade, the regiment in which Billy Congreve served.

The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) was an infantry rifle regiment formed in January 1800 (as the "Experimental Corps of Riflemen") which had an illustrious service in both World Wars before its amalgamation with the 1st Green Jackets and the King's Royal Rifle Corps, to form The Royal Green Jackets, on 1 January 1966.

Councillor Razia Daniels, Deputy Lord Mayor of Chester, gave a summary of Billy Congreve's life before Billy's VC Citation was read by Lieutenant Colonel Nick Jenkins OBE, onetime an officer with The Royal Green Jackets and from 1989 to 1992 the Commanding Officer of the 5th (Shropshire and Herefordshire) Battalion The Light Infantry.

The commemorative stone was unveiled by Councillor Razia Daniels and Bugle Major Mark Douglas played the *Last Post*, *Reveille* and *No More Parades*.

Billy Congreve was the first officer in the Great War to earn all three medals, the VC, DSO and MC and was mentioned in despatches on 5 occasions. Had he been awarded the VC when he was first recommended for this, in March 1916 (when, instead, he was awarded the DSO), he would have had the honour of gaining the VC and bar.

[See [124: William La Touche Congreve VC DSO MC](#) in this account]



Burton's Holy Cross

Standing at the junction of Vicarage Lane and The Village, at the eastern end of Burton, the sandstone cross is commonly mistaken for a war memorial; indeed, it has been recorded as such on some maps, including those of the Ordnance Survey.

This cross, in fact, commemorates Holy Cross Day (14 September), a Christian feast day also known variously as *The Exaltation of the Holy Cross*, *The Triumph of the Cross* and *Holy Rood Day* ¹⁵.

The plinth of the cross is inscribed

*Walk where you will, you will never find a higher road above
nor surer road below than the way of the Holy Cross
Holy Cross Day Sept. 14th AD 1917
Give Peace in Our Time, O Lord*



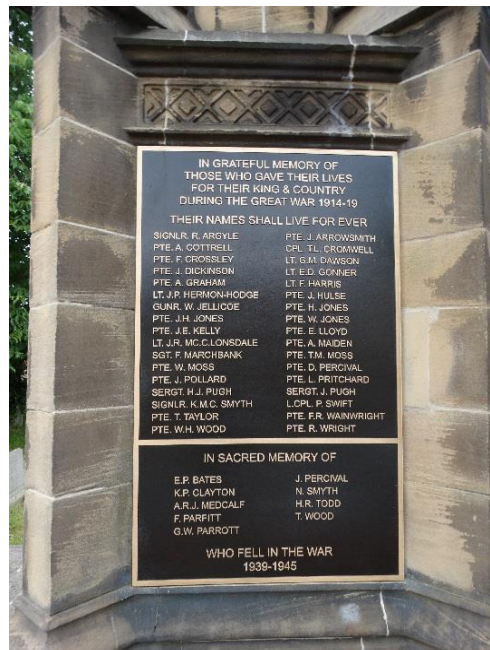
Although not a war memorial, the cross was erected and dedicated in 1917. *Give Peace in Our Time, O Lord* is from the Evening Prayer from The Book of Common Prayer.

C: Willaston

The war memorial stands at the front of Christ Church (built in 1854) and flanking Neston Road (B5133) on the north side of the thoroughfare. Thirty-four names of WW1 fallen are shown on the memorial ¹⁶, together with nine of WW2.

The memorial, designed by Ronald C. Ashworth, believed to be a Willaston resident, was built of sandstone from the Storeton quarries and

was unveiled and dedicated on 27 March 1921. The cost was met by public subscription.



¹⁵ The date of the feast marks the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in AD 335. This was a two-day festival: although the actual consecration of the church was on September 13, the cross itself was brought outside the church on September 14 so that the clergy and faithful could pray before the True Cross, and all could come forward to venerate it. [Wikipedia]

¹⁶ One of the casualties of WW1, commemorated on the plaque, is Private David Percival of Willaston who died of wounds on 7 June 1917 (aged 34) whilst serving with the 9th Battalion Cheshire Regiment. Uniquely for the village, his son, Joseph Percival, was killed in WW2. It is believed that Joseph served as an Able Seaman with the Royal Navy aboard the J-Class destroyer H.M.S. Javelin and that he died on 2 July 1944. Joseph is commemorated on the WW2 plaque below his father's name.

The Imperial War Museum describes the memorial as a *buttressed cross on four-sided domed structure on a three-stepped base. Diamond pattern at upper portion of each of four sides. Two plaques mounted on 6 and 3 o'clock faces bear inscriptions and names.*

The Willaston memorial commemorates several men who, through their connection to Neston or Burton, are considered in this work:

- 60: Edward Lloyd** (Neston Parish Church)
- 82: Thomas Pemberton Swift** (Neston Parish Church)
- 96: Kenneth Montgomery Crook Smyth** (URC)
- 112: James Cliffe Arrowsmith**
- 141: Joseph Hulse**
- 150: John William Moss**

Additionally, **148: Evelyn James McKiernan**, who is buried at Christ Church (but not commemorated on the Willaston War Memorial), had a Neston connection and is considered in this work.

Conversely, some who were born or lived in Willaston but worked in Neston (for example, Frank Crossley worked at Swift's, the butchers) are not considered.

The plaques on the memorial are not the bronze (or, perhaps, copper) originals, these having been ripped from the stonework (which was damaged) and stolen in late July 2011.

In December 2011 a man from Little Neston was jailed for nine weeks after trying to sell the plaques to a firm of scrap metal traders in Ellesmere Port. It was not proved that this man had committed the theft and the plaques were never recovered.

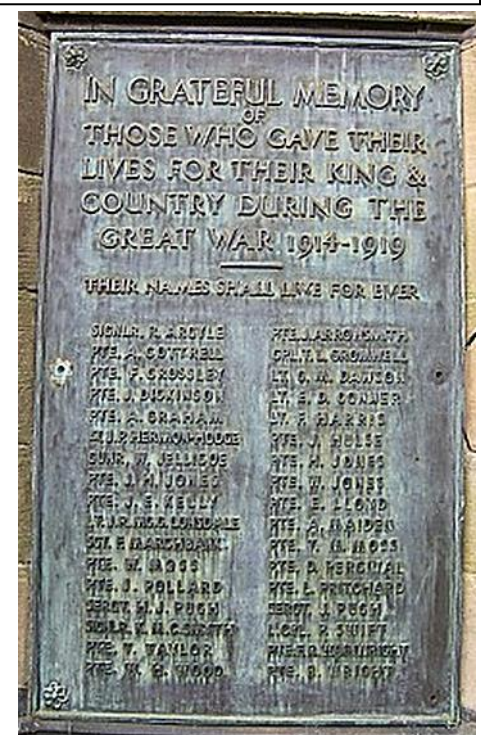
Following a public appeal, £16 000 was raised to replace the plaques and a new bronze plaque was cast and engraved in Australia because a local company could not be found to do this work.

It is believed that the new plaque was installed on the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, 11 November 2012.

Note: For information on men of Willaston who died in WW1, see *Lest We Forget : Willaston Remembers Its First World War Fallen*, a publication researched and produced through the Willaston Village Festival Society in 2015. Copies of this are available in Neston Library.



Source:
<http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/thieves-steal-metal-plates-wirral-3366713>



The stolen WW1 plaque taken off the Willaston War memorial in 2011
 Source:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/britain-at-war/10437816/Please-help-save-our-crumbling-war-memorials.html>