



Details to date

If you have any information to add about the men or about the memorial itself, please contact Mary Hulbert on 01491 680494 [maryhulbert@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:maryhulbert@tiscali.co.uk) or Hazel Lobo on 01491 682850 [hazel@goringheath.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:hazel@goringheath.fsnet.co.uk)

(Last updated December 2006)

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## Charles Allen

**Born:** Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Reading, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment

**Rank:** Private

**Number:** 15552

**Killed in action:** 13 October 1915

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Memorial:** Loos Memorial, France

**Grave/Memorial reference:** Panel 93 to 95

### Family details

Charles and his brother George are believed to have lived at Weston Villas in Woodcote. They had two brothers Frederick Stanley and Ralph, and a sister Elsie.

The 8<sup>th</sup> (service) Battalion was formed at Reading in September 1914 as part of K3. Later that month, they were attached as Army troops to the 26<sup>th</sup> Division. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1915, they were transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division. The War Diary entry for the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915 records:

“Lost 493 men, First wave of 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, near Hulluch”. ([www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net))

# George Allen



**Born:** Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Reading, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, London Regiment (Post Office Rifles)

**Rank:** Rifleman

**Number:** 374407

**Died from wounds:** 14 June 1917

**Aged:** 22

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** HAZEBROUCK COMMUNAL CEMETERY, France

**Grave:** I. G. 18

## Family details

Son of George and Ellen Allen of Weston Villas. Brother of Charles.

George was baptised at St Leonards Church in the village on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 1895.

George is also mentioned as a cousin of Elmer Somerville.

World War 1

## William G Atkinson

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Stoker 1<sup>st</sup> class, Royal Navy

**Number:** K/19402

**Died:** 31 May 1916

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Remembered on:** Portsmouth Naval Memorial

**Memorial:** 17



## Alfred William Bowell



**Born:** c1885 in Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Oxford

**Rank:** Sergeant, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 16658

**Killed in action:** 17 March 1917

**Aged:** 32

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** A.I.F Burial Ground, Flers, France

**Grave:** V.A.2

### **Family details**

Son of Henry and Harriet Bowell, Alfred was the oldest of 6 children (at the 1901 census). His family lived at 6 Ward Farm Cottages (again 1901 census). next door to John Ward, who also gave his life in defence of his country. His younger brother Henry may also have served.

Records held at St Leonards Church show that Alfred was baptised there in October of 1885. In 1906 he married Alice Rebecca Goff, aged 27, also of Woodcote and the baptism of a son, Sidney George, born October 16<sup>th</sup> 1910 is recorded for December 4<sup>th</sup> 1910.

## John Reginald Brown

**Born:** c1898 in Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Caversham

**Rank:** Private, 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

**Number:** 34740

**Killed in action:** 28 October 1917

**Aged:** 19

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Remembered on:** Tyne Cot Memorial

**Panel** 23-28 and 163A

### Family details

John was born in Woodcote, the youngest son of John, a farm bailiff, and Agnes Brown and baptised at St Leonards church on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1898. He had four sisters, one brother and one half brother, who was the village blacksmith.

The family lived at Holly Cottage, South Stoke Road and John attended Woodcote School.

His father died in 1906 and his mother outlived both father and son, dying at the age of 79 in December 1947. His parents grave in the churchyard of St Leonards Church in the village, has a plaque to his memory.

World War 1

## William Carter

**Born:** Goring, c1884

**Enlisted:** Caversham

**Rank:** Private, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 9417

**Died:** 02 August 1916

**Aged:** 23

**Theatre of war:** Mesopotamia

**Buried in:** Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery

**Grave:** XIV.E.9

### Family details

Son of Mrs J Hayden, Water Works, Woodcote. Will is believed to have lived in Exlade Street.



World War 1

# John Collins

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 16659

**Died:** 05 September 1916

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** La Neuville British Cemetery, Corbie, France

**Grave:** II.B.66

## Family details

Son of Mrs E Collins, Mustard Lane, Sonning, Berks

## Percival (Percy) Claude Duncan

**Born:** Cosham, Hants, c1889

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Grenadier Guards

**Number:** 13378

**Died:** 07 November 1914

**Aged:** 26

**Theatre of war:**

**Remembered on:** Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

**Panels** 9 and 11

### Family details

Son of William and Kate Duncan, living at the Club House, Woodcote at the time of his death. The family had lived at Blenheim Cottage, Behoes Lane, at the time of the 1901 census, having moved from Newcastle upon Tyne, where they were living at the date of the 1891 census. Percy was two then.

His older brother, William Edwin Duncan had married a Scottish girl and was living in Dundee. He joined the Black Watch and died, possibly of wounds, as the cemetery was used for burials from the 9<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Stations, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1916. William is buried at Contay British Cemetery, Contay, France.

World War 1

# Harry Goddard

**Born:**

**Enlisted:** Caversham

**Rank:** Private, Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars, Household Cavalry

**Number:** 40272

**Killed in action:** 21 June 1917

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** Unicorn Cemetery, Vend'Huile, Aisne, France

**Grave:** I.G.13

# Edwin Ernest Hall



**Born:** c1890, Checkendon

**Enlisted:** Peppard

**Rank:** Sergeant, Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars, Household Cavalry

**Number:** 285037

**Killed in action:** 23 March 1918

**Aged:** 28

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** Chauny Communal Cemetery, British Extension, Aisne, France

**Grave:** 2. K. 9

## Family details

Son of Samuel and Bessie Hall of Checkendon. His younger brother, Reginald, also served, but survived and was for a time landlord of the Greyhound Pub.

World War 1

# William Hutton

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:**

**Number:**

**Died from wounds/in action:**

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Son of:**

**Husband of:**

**Remembered on/Buried in:**

**Grave/memorial :**

World War 1

## George Jacob

**Born:** Baughurst

**Enlisted:** Caversham

**Rank:** Lance Corporal, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Grenadier Guards

**Number:** 16947

**Died from wounds:** 15 November 1915 at home

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Baughurst (St. Stephen's) Churchyard

**Grave:** East of the Church

World War 1

## Gerald Lesmond

**Born:** c1892

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Sub-Lieutenant, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve,  
serving on H.M.P.M.S “Duchess of Montrose”.

**Number:**

**Lost at sea:** 18 March 1917

**Aged:** 25

**Theatre of war:**

**Remembered on:** Portsmouth Naval Memorial  
Panel 28

### Family details

Gerald was the son of W A Lesmond and Mary Lesmond. He was killed when the Duchess of Montrose hit a mine off Dunkirk.



# Thomas Edwin Lewis

**Born:** c 1896

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, 2nd Bn.

**Number:** 22125

**Died from wounds/in action:** 30 June 1916

**Aged:** 20

**Theatre of war:**

**Son of:** Moses and Mary Lewis

**Husband of:**

**Remembered on/Buried in:** [THIEPVAL MEMORIAL](#)

**Grave/memorial:** Pier and Face 10 A and 10 D.

## Family Details

At the time of the 1901 census, Thomas' family lived at Shirvells Hill.



World War 1

## Ernest George Osman

**Born:** c1899, Crowmarsh Gifford

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private

**Number:** 18655

**Killed in action:** 18 February 1918

**Aged:** 19

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Oxford Road Cemetery, Belgium

**Grave:** V.H.5

### Family details

Son of James and Phyllis Osman, living at South View Cottages, Beech Lane Woodcote at the time of his death. The 1901 census shows the family living at Whitehouse Cottages, North Stoke.

Ernest served under the name Osbourne, possibly because he was underage when he signed up

## Charles Thomas Painter



**Born:** c1888, Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Pangbourne

**Rank:** Private, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 33604

**Killed in action:** 11 September 1917

**Aged:** 29

**Theatre of war:** Flanders, Belgium

**Buried in:** New Irish Farm Cemetery

**Grave:** XXIII.D.5

### Family details

Charles was the eldest son of Thomas and Elizabeth Painter of Broad Street Cottages, Woodcote. His younger brother, John, also died on active service, within 2 months of Charles' death.

Charles attended Alnuts School in Goring Heath and became a carpenter after leaving school. He married Annie Rose Ashfield and the couple had three children, Harry, born 1909, George, born 1910 and Elsie, born 1914. He spent most of his life living and working in Woodcote and at the time he enlisted, he and his young family were living in Crays Pond.

His wife died in 1953 and is buried in St Leonards Churchyard Woodcote, as are his sons Harry, died 1989 and George, died 1978. Elsie moved to Pangbourne and died in 2005.

## John Painter



**Born:** c1893, Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Reading

**Rank:** Private, 8<sup>th</sup> Company, Imperial Camel Corps

**Number:** 50120

**Died:** 19 November 1917

**Aged:** 24

**Theatre of war:** Egypt

**Buried in:** Port Said War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

**Grave:** F.43

### Family details

John was the second son of Thomas and Elizabeth Painter and brother of Charles.

He lived and worked in Woodcote for all of his short life, attending Alnuts School with his brother. He never married.

John contracted dysentery whilst serving in Egypt and died in Port Said military hospital just 2 months after his brother was killed.

## Ernest William Pearson

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Gunner, 2<sup>nd</sup> Depot, Royal Garrison Artillery

**Number:** 29815

**Died:** 10 March 1919

**Aged:**

**Buried in:** St Leonard Churchyard, Woodcote

**Grave:**

### Family details

Ernest survived the fighting and returned to England, disembarking at Southampton. Unfortunately, he was taken ill and died 6 days later in the Alexander Hospital, Cosham, Hampshire. He was buried in St Leonards churchyard on March 14<sup>th</sup> 1919.

His brother, Henry (known as Harry) was killed in France and lies there.

The family lived/worked at Payables Fruit Farm in the village.

World War 1

# Henry Joseph Pearson

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:**

**Number:**

**Died from wounds/in action:**

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Remembered on/Buried in:**

**Grave/memorial :**

**Family details**

World War 1

## James (Jim) Richardson

**Born:** Didcot

**Enlisted:** Reading

**Rank:** Driver, 16<sup>th</sup> Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

**Number:** 67425

**Died from wounds:** 28 October 1917

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** Dozinghem Military Cemetery

**Grave:** XII.C.17

### Family details

Jim is also remembered on the Checkendon War memorial and is believed to have lived at Bottom Farm.

World War 1

## George Thomas Smith

**Born:** c1894, Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Oxford

**Rank:** Private, C Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment

**Number:** 15810

**Killed in action:** 09 May 1915

**Aged:** 21

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Remembered on:** Ploegsteert Memorial

**Panel** 7 & 8

### Family details

Son of Thomas and Charlotte (nee Beeson) of the Post Office, Woodcote. George had a brother, Cyril. He was baptised at St Leonards church on 27 May 1894.

## Elmer Theodore Somerville



**Born:** c1889, Reading

**Enlisted:** Glamorgan

**Rank:** Company Sergeant Major, D Company, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment

**Number:** 14495

**Killed in action:** 24 April 1917

**Aged:** 29

**Theatre of war:** Salonika, Greece

**Remembered on** Doiran Memorial, Greece

### Family details

Elmer was born in the parish of St Giles, Reading, son of Luke and Rosa Nathalia Somerville. In 1912, in Pontypridd, Glamorgan, he married Laura Ellen Havell, born in Woodcote in 1891. It is believed that Elmer had gone to Wales as a miner.

At the time of his death, his parents were living in Filey Road, Reading and Laura had returned to Woodcote, living at The Bungalow, Whitehouse Road. She died in the 1960's. Laura and Elmer had two children.



# John Ward

**Born:** c1887, Woodcote

**Enlisted:** Reading

**Rank:** Lance Corporal, 9<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers

**Number:** 23203

**Killed in action:** 06 November 1917

**Aged:** 29

**Theatre of war:** Flanders

**Buried in:** Windmill British Cemetery, Monchy-Le-Preux

**Grave:** I.F.8

## Family details

John was the youngest child and, at the 1901 census, only son, of Philip and Fanny Ward and the family lived next door to the Bowells, whose son Alfred also gave his life.

John was baptised at St Leonards church on 20 May 1888.

John is believed to have been a shoe/boot maker, like his father.

World War 2

# Phillip Griffiths

**Born:** c1910

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Trooper, Warwickshire Yeomanry, Royal Armoured Corps

**Number:** 327704

**Died:** 16 September 1941

**Aged:** 31

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery

**Grave:** 23.E.8

## Family details

Son of William and Daisy Griffiths, Husband of M F Griffiths

## Reginald Hodges

**Born:** 21 May, 1919, Woodcote

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Corporal, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 5384662

**Died:** 27 September 1943

**Aged:** 23

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Salerno War Cemetery

**Grave:** III.F.14

### Family details

Son of James and Lucy Hodges, Reginald was the 5<sup>th</sup> of 8 children. The family lived in Beech Lane, Woodcote and Reginald was baptised at St Leonards church on 18 July 1920. His father was at that time a thatcher.

Reginald attended Goring Heath School and was a member of the Goring Heath Scout Group. He was already serving in the Army when war was declared and was stationed at Cowley Barracks.

## Reginald Clarence Kearn

**Born:** c1924, Maiden Erleigh, Reading

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry

**Number:** 14398644

**Died:** 08 August 1944

**Aged:** 20

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Florence War Cemetery

**Grave:** I.G.5

### Family details

Son of Clarence Stanley Kearn and Minnie Kearn, Reginald and his brother were fostered by Mrs Wicks of Copyhold Farm. Checkendon after the death of their parents.

Reginald was on his way home from the front when he was killed.

## Leslie Bruce Marcham

**Born:** 27 January 1920

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 5384160

**Died:** 30 May 1944

**Aged:** 24

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Krakow Rakowicki Cemetery

**Grave:** 2A.D.13

### Family details

Leslie was baptised at St Leonards church on March 7<sup>th</sup> 1920 with his four year old brother, Harold Francis (born 18 November 1915). At that time the family lived in Beech Lane and their father was a gardener.

Leslie worked for Mr Hignett at Hook End Farm, Checkendon before joining up. He was already a member of the Territorial Army and is believed to have been one of the first local boys to be called up for active service. His family lived in Exlade Street, Checkendon opposite the Greyhound (now the Highwayman).

At some point in 1940, Leslie was taken prisoner and was held at Stalag VIII B, Germany for a time. He was able to send postcards to family and friends from there.

Leslie drowned in a quarry whilst swimming, presumably as exercise, whilst a prisoner of war. He was buried with full military honours on 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

# Geoffrey Pitt

**Born:** c1920

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, ¼ Battalion, Hampshire Regiment

**Number:** 5504578

**Died:** 16 May 1944

**Aged:** 24

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** St John's Churchyard, Stoke Row, Oxon

## Family details

Geoffrey was the son of Sidney and Gertrude Pitt of Stoke Row. He was married to Violet Esme Elizabeth Pitt, also of Stoke Row. It is believed that he died of Tuberculosis. His gravestone also records the death of his son Michael, aged 14 months, just weeks after Geoffrey's death.

## Reginald Philip Sherwood

**Born:** 14 May 1921

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:** Private, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry

**Number:** 5384661

**Died:** 04 December 1943

**Aged:** 22

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:** Minturno War Cemetery, Italy

**Grave:** IV.J.1

### Family details

Son of William and Emily Sherwood, Reginald was baptised at St Leonards church on 11 September 1921 with his four year old brother Edwin John. At that time, the family lived in Greenmore Hill Cottages and William was a farm labourer.

# Victor Taylor

**Born:**

**Enlisted:**

**Rank:**

**Number:**

**Died:**

**Aged:**

**Theatre of war:**

**Buried in:**

**Grave:**

## Family details

Vic Taylor and his family (widowed mother, brother Godfrey and Dorothy Taylor, a girl who was not related to the family) moved from Wokingham to Woodcote and lived in Southview Cottages, Beech Lane.

It is believed that Vic lodged at some point with Granny Heath in Beech Lane. He worked as a baker for Mr Lee in Whitehouse Road in the shop which is now the village Post Office.

His brother Godfrey worked as a gardener at Woodcote House for the Borthwick Family.

At some time, the Taylor family were offered a cottage in Exlade Street and moved there. Whilst living there, Vic's mother died and Dorothy Taylor subsequently moved away.

Vic and his brother both joined up, enlisting with the Oxon & Bucks Light Infantry. Godfrey was wounded and invalided home. Vic was taken prisoner by the Germans and put into a concentration camp where, it is believed, the Germans were conducting experiments on the soldiers. After the war, Vic was repatriated, initially to the Royal Berks Hospital in Reading. He discharged himself from there and lived with the Bishop family in Greenmore, Woodcote for a while, before marrying a girl from Checkendon.

Vic is believed to have suffered the effects of the experiments until his death and is also believed to be buried in Checkendon.