

Welford-on-Avon in the First World War

A fruit-growing village goes to war

Nineteen men from the parish of Welford-on-Avon died in the First World War. Their names are carved on the oak screen in St Peter's Church, and a stone on the front of the Memorial Hall in the High Street remembers them with the men of Weston-on-Avon. This essay tells what those men, and the people they left at home, did between 1914 and 1918, mainly from the papers kept by the Welford and Weston Local History Society.

In 1914 Welford was a small farming and market-gardening village on the south bank of the Avon, about four miles from Stratford. It was not yet in Warwickshire. Until 1931 the parish lay in Gloucestershire, which is why so many of its soldiers joined the Gloucestershire Regiment rather than the Royal Warwicks ([Wikipedia](#)). The 1901 census, studied in a Society talk, counted 469 people in 149 households. A labourer earned about £46 a year, a teacher £147 and the Rector £238. There was no doctor and no policeman, but there were two grocers, three inns and four bakers (archive 46/37-95).

The land was the village's living. Families grew gooseberries, plums, cherries and vegetables for the Stratford and Birmingham markets. The rhythm of the fruit year runs all through the letters that Welford soldiers wrote home: were the gooseberries selling, were there enough pickers, had the egg plums come in. The Rector was the Rev. Arthur James Davis, who chaired most public meetings. Captain Walter Haynes lived at The Ashes, and Miss Olive Hancox taught at the village school. A sharp-tongued churchwarden kept a private "Book of Gossip" from 1915 that describes many of these households, and the Rector unkindly (archive 21/01-21).

The village did not simply wave its young men off. Women organised sewing parties within days of the declaration of war. Men who stayed behind enrolled for training at home. Families sent parcels, paid rents and picked fruit with fewer hands. When it was over, Welford spent five quarrelsome years deciding how to remember its dead. Each of those stories is told below, with the places where the sources disagree.

Answering the call, 1914-1916

Welford's first volunteers went within days of the declaration of war on 4 August 1914. Frederick James Farley, a 24-year-old gardener whose parents Thomas and Eliza lived at Laburnum Cottage, enlisted at Warwick in the 9th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. A local paper called him "one of the first—if not the first—to volunteer from the village" (archive 23/97). He was one of the many young men from the Stratford district who joined the new "Kitchener" battalions that autumn.

The village then held its own recruiting meeting. A cutting kept in the Society's scrapbook describes "a very enthusiastic meeting for enrolling recruits" on the village green one Thursday evening, with the Rector in the chair. Major Bairnsfather and Mr F. R. Benson made

"very forceful and inspiring appeals". (Benson was presumably the Stratford actor-manager Frank Benson, but the cutting gives only his initials.) About 100 men who had already enrolled for training at home came to listen. Thirteen offered themselves for Lord Kitchener's Army and about thirty for home training. Ten of the thirteen were accepted and given a formal send-off the following Tuesday, with presents of tobacco and "a few words of counsel and cheer" from Capt. Haynes and Mr A. Lawrence. Five more had volunteered before the meeting. One of them, a veteran of the South African war "with not a few reminders of the fact about his body", had already gone to the front (archive 23/97). The cutting is undated, but it sits beside reports from August and September 1914 and was probably printed that autumn.

Some Welford men were already soldiers. Pte. C. Marshall of the 2nd Gloucesters, who laid the Memorial Hall stone in 1923, had served in both the South African war and the Great War. By August 1915 he and H. Marshall had both been wounded (archives 23/93 and 23/97).



The Derby men and the conscripts

Volunteering slowed in 1915. In the autumn the government launched the Derby Scheme, under which men attested that they would serve when called, and in 1916 conscription followed. Jim Matthews, the Welford man whose papers survive most fully, was one of the Derby men. He attested on 11 December 1915, received an Army Reserve card, and went back to his market garden until he was called up in January 1917 (archive 43/69, 43/72).

Jim's story shows how far the war reached. Born in 1889 at Upper Quinton, where his father was the blacksmith, he grew up at Virginia Cottage in Welford. He and his brother Wilson inherited land from their grandfather John Wilson and worked it as market gardeners. After his father died in 1908 money was short, and Jim went to Canada, where he was "making a very successful life" when war broke out. He decided to come home to his work and his country. When he joined up he was engaged to Miss Olive Hancox, the village schoolteacher (archive 43/03). A studio portrait taken in London, Ontario, survives in the family papers (43/65).



Training in England

Jim's letters to his mother let us follow a Welford conscript step by step. On 16 January 1917 he reported to Horfield Barracks in Bristol, the Gloucestershire Regiment's depot. Within

days he was in billets at 40 Florence Road, Maidstone. "They are giving it us very stiff," he wrote on 26 January: up at six, drill all morning, physical training and bayonet fighting all afternoon, then cleaning kit in the evening. His first week's pay was "the magnificent sum of 3/-". He sent home a silk card embroidered with the regimental badge (43/05, 43/06).



In March he was on a firing course at Lower Murston Camp near Sittingbourne, writing on YMCA paper. His landlady made the men cocoa every night because her own son in the army "doesn't get enough to eat". Even here he was running his affairs at home by post, advising his mother about a tenant in his cottage and a possible move into W. Broad's house (43/07). Another Welford man, Tommy Garner, trained alongside him at Maidstone (43/59). In mid-April 1917 Jim crossed to France after a 13-hour rough crossing (43/08).

The Welford boys in France

By the summer of 1917 Welford men were scattered along the Western Front, and they looked out for each other. Jim, now in 8 Platoon, B Company, 1/6th Gloucesters, wrote on 29 July that he had "met a few of the Welford boys at last": Lance-Corporal George Parriss, Corporal Ernest Parriss, Corporal Reg Rushton and Spencer Bennett. Ernest Parriss had been camping in the same field without either man knowing. He also met Jack Hunt, "who used to come round with Goodall's butchers cart", and heard that Arthur Johnson and Harold

Hawkins were nearby (43/12). On 7 August Jim Hawkins walked over to see him, and he met Roland Basson on his way to visit his brother Frank (43/13).

These letters are an unofficial muster roll of the village. The Society's 2011 index of them names more than twenty Welford men in uniform, among them Fred Marshall, Billy Blundell, Frank Saunders, Fred Gladwin and Bert Croft of nearby Dorsington (43/101–103). The Book of Gossip adds Victor Laurence, who "served his country as a soldier in Salonika" (21/01–21). No complete list of every Welford man who served has been found in the archive, so the true number who went is not known. The 19 who died are the best-recorded.

The nineteen who did not come home

The oak screen in St Peter's lists nineteen names: W. Basson, W. Blundell, C. Dingley, F. J. Farley, F. Freeman, E. Hancox, B. A. Harris, H. Hawkins, H. Hornby, E. Hunt, F. Liddell, W. H. Liddell, J. A. Matthews, G. V. Parriss, A. Richards, W. Sandford, H. Smith, W. Smith and W. Wilson ([War Memorials Online](#); [IWM War Memorials Register](#)). For a parish of under 500 people that is a heavy loss. Spread across families who were often related by marriage, it touched almost every household.

The Society's archive tells some of these stories in depth and others not at all. Five can be followed closely.

Fred Farley: Gallipoli, 1915

Fred Farley was the first to volunteer and the first to fall. Born in 1890 at Walton, near Wellesbourne, he moved to Welford as a child and went to the village school. In 1911 he was a farm labourer, and by 1914 he was second gardener at Clifford Hall ([SWFHS](#)).

His battalion, the 9th Royal Warwicks, sailed for the Mediterranean in June 1915. The local paper noted that he "took his departure in the ill-fated Royal Edward", a troopship later sunk in the Aegean (archive 23/97). The battalion landed at Anzac Cove on 4 August 1915 and was thrown into the August offensive against the Sari Bair ridge. On 9 August one of its companies held its ground until it was surrounded, and by the time the battalion was withdrawn only 248 men were left ([SWFHS](#)). Lance-Corporal Farley was wounded and died on 17 August, aged 25. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Helles Memorial ([IWM Lives of the First World War](#)).

His parents heard on a Sunday morning. The paper described Fred as "a young man of exemplary character" who "always took great interest in the work of the church". His family and friends later gave a litany desk to St Peter's, dedicated by the Rector of Clifford Chambers. Its brass plate reads: "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Lce-Cpl. Fredk. J. Farley, 9th Batt. War. Regt., the dearly beloved son of Thomas and Eliza Farley, of

Welford-on-Avon, who died from wounds received in action at Chanuk Bair, Gallipoli Peninsular, Aug. 17th, 1915, aged 25 years" (archive 23/97).

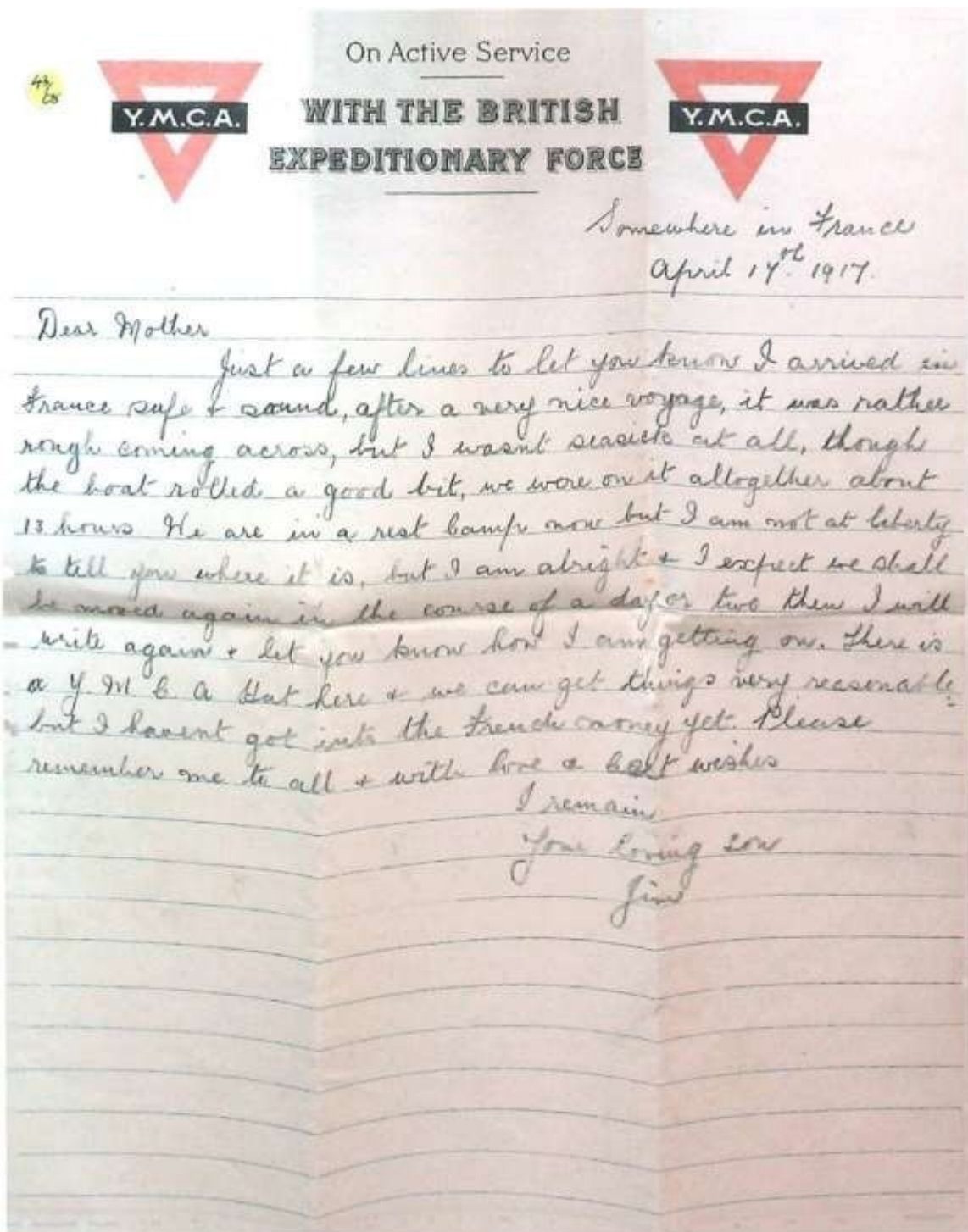


Horace Hawkins: the Somme, 1916

Horace Edgar Hawkins came from one of Welford's best-known families. His grandfather Thomas Hawkins ran Welford Mill, and his father Herbert was a carpenter and builder who married Rosetta Blundell in 1893 (archive 46/37-95). Horace was baptised at Welford in August 1893 and was a gardener in 1911. He enlisted at Stratford and served as Private 26274 in C Company, 10th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. He reached France in 1916 and died of wounds on 21 September 1916, aged 22, during the battle of Flers-Courcelette on the Somme. He is buried at Heilly Station Cemetery ([SWFHS](#)).

Jim Matthews: Passchendaele, 1917

Jim Matthews' last weeks are recorded more fully than any other Welford soldier's, because his mother kept almost fifty of his letters and cards in their envelopes. They were given to the Society by his niece, Mrs Susan Buggins, and read aloud at a Society meeting in September 2011 (archive 43/101-103).



The letters from France are cheerful and practical, written to spare his mother. On 15 June he thanked her for a parcel: the pork pie "was grand although the heat had melted the jelly", and the biscuits "were all smashed up". He had not had "a decent wash for eight days". Then, as in nearly every letter, he turned to home: "are the gooseberries turning out well & is there plenty of pickers about, I wish I was there to attend to it, but I cant be in two places at once" (43/10). On 14 July he wrote that he had heard nothing from home for five or six weeks, and "I shall be glad when it is all over, so we can all come home again" (43/58).



When there was no time to write, soldiers used the printed Field Service Post Card, crossing out the lines that did not apply. Jim sent one on 26 July, saying only that he was quite well and had received her letter (43/11).



His last letter, dated 7 August 1917, describes four days and nights of rain, "mud up to the tops of our shoes", and meetings with Welford and Stratford men. He hoped the egg plums would sell well and that "the weather will be at its best so they can get them all in" (43/13). Two days later, on 9 August, he died of wounds at No. 47 Casualty Clearing Station. The Third

Battle of Ypres had begun on 31 July. He was 28, and he is buried at Dozinghem Military Cemetery in Belgium (43/14, 43/17, 43/19).

The telegram reached Welford post office on 15 August: "Regret to inform you 31395 Private J A Matthews 1/6 Gloster Regt died of wounds 9 August in 47 Casualty Clearing Station France letter follows" (43/14). The formal notice and the King and Queen's printed message of sympathy followed. So did the War Office's settlement of his accounts, which found £3 4s. 6d. due to his estate (43/84, 43/63, 43/85–103). In 1921 his mother received the British War and Victory Medals that "would have been conferred" had he lived (43/62). Olive Hancox, his fiancée, never married (43/03).

George Parriss and William Blundell

Two of the men Jim met in July 1917 also died. The Society's index of his letters marks Lance-Corporal George Parriss and Will Blundell "died" (43/101–103). George V. Parriss was probably the son of Ernest Parriss, the grocer and Prudential agent next to the post office in 1901 (archive 22/08). This essay has not confirmed the date or place of his death.

William Blundell was the son of William and Minnie Blanche Blundell of The Yews. His father, a successful market gardener, died in 1917 aged only 42 (archive 46/37–95). Jim's letter of 29 July mentions "Will Blundell's death", which seems to mean the father, since Jim adds that "it would be a shock to poor Will when he heard about it". The son, Lance-Corporal 26061 of the 2nd Gloucesters, died on 1 September 1918 aged 20 ([CWGC](#)). The Society talk says he was killed in action near Salonika in Greece. Within about a year Minnie Blundell had lost both her husband and her only son.

The last weeks of the war

The killing went on almost to the end. Driver William Basson, 32616, of the 75th Field Company, Royal Engineers, died on 4 November 1918, a week before the Armistice, aged 25. His parents Henry and Rosanna lived at the Church House, Welford ([CWGC](#)). His family also ran the Shakespeare Inn and sat on the Flower Show committee (archive 22/08).

The others

For the remaining names the archive holds only scattered family traces. Bernard A. Harris was probably the five-year-old son of Thomas Harris, the sub-postmaster, in the 1901 census (archive 22/08), and the SWFHS lists him as a gunner. Herbert Hornby is marked "died" in the Society's index of Jim Matthews' letters. The Sandford family had lived in Welford since at least the 1690s (archive 11/23). The service records of C. Dingley, F. Freeman, E. Hancox, E. Hunt, F. and W. H. Liddell, A. Richards, W. Sandford, H. and W. Smith and W. Wilson were not checked for this essay. The CWGC's free [Find War Dead](#) search and IWM's [Lives of the First World War](#) are the places to start.

Name on screen	Service	Died	Where commemorated	Source
F. J. Farley	L/Cpl 2822, 9th Royal Warwickshire	17 Aug 1915, aged 25, of wounds, Gallipoli	Helles Memorial	IWM Lives
H. Hawkins	Pte 26274, 10th Gloucestershire	21 Sep 1916, aged 22, of wounds, Somme	Heilly Station Cemetery	SWFHS
J. A. Matthews	Pte 31395, 1/6th Gloucestershire	9 Aug 1917, aged 28, of wounds, Ypres	Dozinghem Military Cemetery	archive 43/19 (CWGC printout)
W. Blundell	L/Cpl 26061, 2nd Gloucestershire	1 Sep 1918, aged 20	Salonika front (Society talk)	CWGC
W. Basson	Dvr 32616, 75th Field Coy, Royal Engineers	4 Nov 1918, aged 25	not checked	CWGC

The home front

Welford's war at home was fought with needles, parcels, ledgers and ladders. The village's women organised first, its families kept the market gardens going with fewer hands, and its neighbours carried each other through the bad news.

Needles for the Red Cross

On 13 August 1914, nine days after war was declared, the women of Welford and Weston met in the Men's Club and formed a Needlework Guild. Its purpose was to equip the local Red Cross hospital at Norton Hall, near Chipping Campden. Miss Bruce of Norton Hall had promised the War Office to have beds ready for 50 men within a fortnight, "if required", so "the call for help was therefore urgent". Miss Davis, presumably of the Rector's family, arranged with Miss Bruce that Welford and Weston would supply one complete outfit for each of the 50 men. Senior and junior working parties and women sewing at home produced 50 shirts, 50 jackets, 50 pairs of socks "and various small things". The work was put on show in the Gymnasium on Thursday 3 September, after which the Guild met to choose its next task. Mrs Davis thanked everyone "for the splendid way in which they have come forward to help" (archive 23/97).

A second report says the sewing meetings began "at the commencement of hostilities", that the "sets" for Norton Hall were made "in accordance with regulation instructions", and that other villagers sent work "to other centres" (archive 23/97). The same names keep appearing in Welford's wartime and post-war committees: Mrs Davis, Mrs Mainwaring, Mrs Knowles, Mrs Basson, Miss White and Miss Olive Hancox.

Parcels, pay and the separation allowance

For families with a man away, the war brought new paperwork. When Jim Matthews was called up, his widowed mother claimed a separation allowance as his dependant. The Army assessed it at 3s. 6d. a week, of which Jim paid 1s. 2d. from his own pay, plus an extra allotment of 2s. 4d. Jim was "surprised to hear they are only allowing you 2/4 a week, still I suppose it is no good making a fuss about it, that is better than nothing at all" (43/25, 43/82). His own pay was a few shillings a week, and more than once he asked his brother to send him ten shillings.

The flow of parcels went the other way. Mrs Matthews sent brushes, clothes, pork pies, cake, a pipe and chewing gum. Her neighbour Mrs Homer sent one that arrived "in capital condition", and Jim's sister Rose sent cigarettes, one parcel of which was stolen on the way (43/12, 43/36). Food was short in training camp too. At Maidstone the men bought cake in town to fill up, and at Lower Murston Camp in March 1917 Jim wrote that "we are short of food again this last two days" (43/05, 43/31).

Keeping the land going

The greatest strain on a market-gardening village was labour. With Jim away, his brother Wilson ran their land alone. In April 1917, as his training company waited for a draft to France, Jim saw his chum Cotton sent home "to go on the land". He urged his mother to have Wilson write to the commanding officer "by return" asking for a month's release "to help him do the planting". It did not happen, and his later letters keep asking how Wilson was getting on (43/36, 43/42).

The fruit harvest still had to be got in. Jim followed it from the trenches through his mother's letters and the Stratford Herald: "I see in the Herald that they are selling very well" (43/58). "How did they manage to get the cherries picked?" he asked in July 1917 (43/12). The Book of Gossip preserves a poem, "Cherry Picking, 1918", written in the village during the last summer of the war. It describes cherry-minders scaring blackbirds "with tom-tom and with tin can, and muzzle loading gun", ladders in the trees, and "Old Grandad", Joseph Hancox, telling stories in the shade. Its last verse turns to the men away:

And shall we not be thankful that we are left to tread These peaceful paths, and lead the
lives our quiet fathers led. And shall we not be grateful to those strong men and brave Who
guard our pleasant Home-land on Continent and wave.

(archive 21/16)

Life at home also went on in small ways that the letters record: a Chapel Treat, the family pigs and hens, a neighbour buying a house and shop when Jim thought he would have done better to put the money into War Loan (43/25).

News, grief and influenza

News of death came by telegram to the village post office, then by letter. Neighbours closed ranks. On 15 August 1917, the day the telegram about Jim arrived, H. Garner, whose own sons were away at the war, wrote to Jim's sister Rose: "he was here so often like our own I missed him dreadfully after he went because he seemed like having one left after our own boys went away" (43/59).

Illness killed at home as well as abroad. In 1918 the influenza pandemic reached Welford. The Book of Gossip notes that Will Richings, a young farmer, "died of influenza & pneumonia in 1918. His elder brother John died within a few hours after him. They were buried together" (archive 21/17). It also records the deaths of older villagers during the war years, among them Charles Horne, the ex-navvy market gardener, on 30 May 1917, and Bessie Haynes on 6 January 1918 (21/01-21).

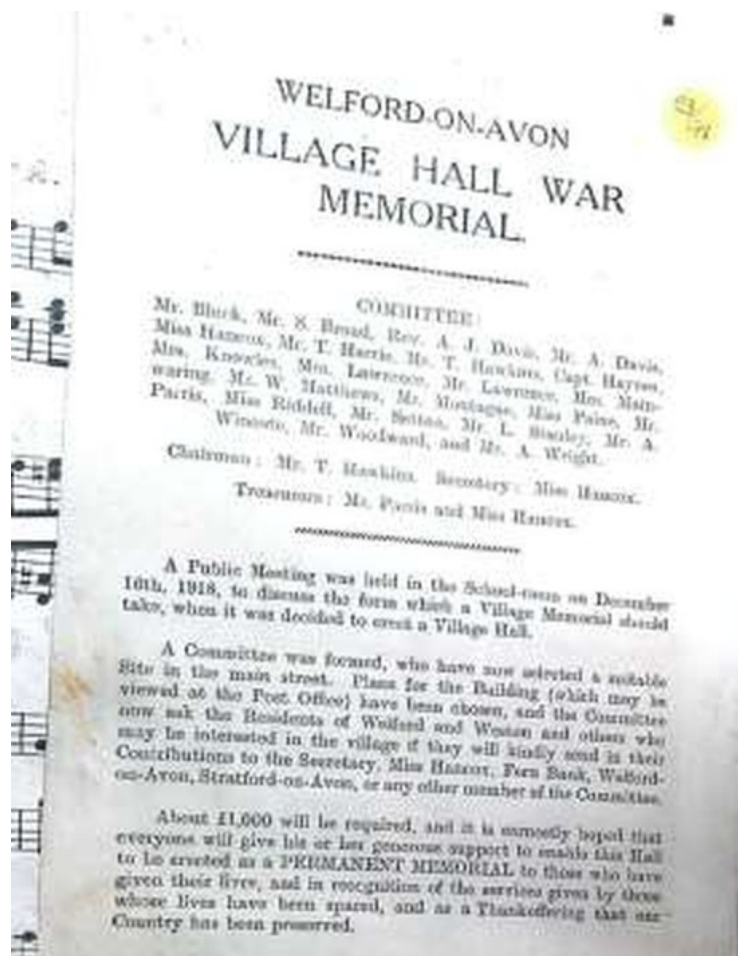
At the 1923 stone-laying, the Rev. V. D. Siddons asked the village to remember "the women who had sacrificed at home, not a few of whom had died of broken hearts" (archive 23/93). Mrs Matthews lived until 1932 (archive 43/102).

Peace, and a quarrel over remembering

The Armistice came on 11 November 1918, a week after William Basson died. Within five weeks Welford had begun arguing about how to remember its dead, and the argument lasted five years.

The 1918 appeal

On 16 December 1918 the chairman of the Parish Council, Mr T. Hawkins, called a public meeting in the schoolroom "to discuss the form which a Village Memorial should take". It decided to build a village hall. A committee of 22 was formed, with Mr Hawkins as chairman and Miss Olive Hancox, Jim Matthews' fiancée, as secretary. Its printed appeal asked for about £1,000 "to enable this Hall to be erected as a PERMANENT MEMORIAL to those who have given their lives, and in recognition of the services given by those whose lives have been spared, and as a Thankoffering that our Country has been preserved". Plans could be seen at the post office (archive 23/92).



The committee raised about £540 by circulars, canvassing and entertainments. But building costs soared after the war, and the estimate of £1,100 grew to between £2,000 and £3,000. The scheme stalled (archive 23/91-100, page 6).

Mr Marks and Coyney's Leys

A Mr Marks then offered a cheaper hall of timber, cement and asbestos, together with a playing field. At a public meeting on 3 February the village dropped the original scheme and adopted his. When the nine-acre glebe field called Coyney's Leys came up for auction on 26 March, Mr Marks bought all of it for £500. The committee had expected the village to get only four acres, with Mr L. Stanley taking the rest. "Disparaging remarks" reached Mr Marks, and he withdrew from everything.

The crowded meeting that followed was bitter. Mr H. Hawkins offered to buy the whole field at the auction price and give four acres to the village. Mr T. Hawkins, chairman of the Parish Council, "emphatically denied" knowing of the arrangement. Mr W. Matthews said he had told a meeting at the Bell inn about it the night before the sale. A deputation of the Rector, Miss Hancox and Mr J. R. Phillips went to Mr Marks, but the deal fell through. The old committee resigned, leaving about £394 in the bank for a village hall (archive 23/91-100, pages 6-7). The Society's playing-field papers date the Coyney's Leys sale to about 1920. A local editor wrote that "it certainly seems very strange that residents of a village can so far

disagree over unessential details as to prevent the carrying out of what would have been a most appropriate and desirable war memorial" (page 7).

"Welford's counterfeit memorial"

A new committee was formed in 1920, and as building costs fell it pressed on. In the autumn of 1923 Alfred Dingley of Avondale, Welford, attacked the whole idea in the Stratford Herald. A recreation hall paid for with "galas, fêtes, fireworks, cockshies, comic entertainments, whist drives, dances" was, he wrote, a "counterfeit memorial" and a "heartless imposture". He claimed the first scheme had collapsed because "a Welford ex-soldier" called it "an invitation to dance on the graves of his dead comrades" (page 5).

The ex-servicemen disagreed. On 2 October 1923 the Welford-on-Avon Ex-Service Men's Association resolved unanimously to "dissociate themselves entirely" from his letter. S. Bryan, for the committee, quoted the 1918 appeal and pointed out that the hall had always been meant for the living as well as the dead. Dingley replied once more: "They died for England, not for memorials, good or bad" (page 5).

The stone and the hall, 1923

On Thursday 11 October 1923 the memorial stone was laid by Pte. C. Marshall of the 2nd Gloucesters, the oldest ex-serviceman in the village, who had served in South Africa and in the Great War. Its inscription reads: "To the memory of the men of Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon who fell in the Great War, 1914-1918." Marshall said he hoped the hall would "promote unity in the village, act as a remembrance of our fallen, and also a permanent monument to those who were fortunate to survive" (archive 23/93).

The hall, designed by J. H. Knight of Stratford and built by Smith and Unitt, cost about £800 instead of the £2,000 once feared. It was opened in December 1923 by Mrs Davis, the Rector's wife, who gave £20 in memory of her own son Basil, killed in a motorcycle accident at Cambridge that March. A bazaar after its first winter left the fund only 17s. 2d. short (archive 23/97-107, pages 4 and 13; 23/91-100, page 6). The two plaques are still on the front of the Memorial Hall in the High Street ([TracesOfWar](#)).

The screen in St Peter's

Inside the church the parish raised a quieter memorial: an eight-panelled oak screen with a central doorway, carved with fleurs-de-lys and a frieze of vine leaves and grapes, and a stone tablet on the chancel arch. The inscription reads: "This screen is erected in loving and grateful memory of the men from this parish who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-1918, also as a thankoffering for deliverance from our enemies." Below the nineteen names it ends with the words of King George V's message to the bereaved: "Let those who come

after see to it that their names are not forgotten" ([War Memorials Online](#)). The date of its dedication was not found for this essay.

The village also kept its own small memorials. Fred Farley's family gave the litany desk. Jim Matthews' mother kept his letters, a photograph of his first wooden grave cross, and the photograph of his headstone sent by the British Association at Ypres (43/66-67). Nearly a century later his niece gave them to the Society so that, in her uncle's case, the screen's last line would come true.

What Welford did

Taken together, the papers show a village that gave a great deal for its size. Its young men volunteered early, from the gardener at Clifford Hall who enlisted in the first fortnight to the emigrant who came back from Canada. Others waited for the Derby Scheme or the call-up and went when they were sent. They served at Gallipoli, on the Somme, at Ypres and in Macedonia, mostly with the Gloucestershire Regiment of the county Welford then belonged to. In France they sought each other out in camps and fields, and wrote home about the fruit.

At home the work was less visible but constant. Women sewed fifty outfits for a Red Cross hospital in the first month of the war. Mothers managed allowances, rents and parcels. Brothers worked the land single-handed and pickers got the gooseberries, cherries and plums in. Neighbours wrote to each other when the telegrams came, and the village mourned its influenza dead as well as its war dead.

Afterwards Welford argued, loudly and in print, about how to remember. That quarrel is itself a measure of how much the war mattered there. In the end the parish raised two memorials, as many places did: a carved screen in the church for the nineteen dead, and a hall in the High Street for everyone who came home and for the village they came home to. Both are still in use.

Much remains to be found. The archive has no complete list of the men who served and returned, and eleven of the nineteen names have not yet been traced in the official records for this essay. Each of them was once as fully a person as Jim Matthews is in his letters.

Where the sources disagree

The archive and the online records mostly agree, but not everywhere. These are the differences found while writing this essay.

Subject	One source says	Another says	Comment
Fred Farley's name	Typed list of the war dead in the archive: "Fred Foley" (22/08)	Church screen: "F. J. Farley" (War Memorials Online)	The screen, the litany desk and the CWGC all say Farley, so "Foley" is a typing error.
When Farley enlisted	Local paper: 16 August 1914 (23/97)	SWFHS: 5 August 1914, at Warwick (SWFHS)	Not resolved. His service record would settle it.
How Farley died	Litany desk: "died from wounds received in action at Chanuk Bair" (23/97)	SWFHS: died at sea on a hospital ship, probably wounded on 9 August at Sari Bair	Compatible: Chunuk Bair is a summit of the Sari Bair ridge, and he could have been wounded there and died on the ship.
Where Jim Matthews died	Telegram and Army notice: "France" (43/14, 43/84)	CWGC: Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium (43/17, 43/19)	The Army used "France" loosely for the whole Western Front. The clearing station was in Belgium.
Jim Matthews' birthplace	<i>Soldiers Died in the Great War</i> : Welford-on-Avon (43/18)	Birth certificate: Upper Quinton (43/04)	The certificate is the primary source; the family moved to Welford in 1894.
Parriss	Typed list: "George Paris" (22/08); 1918 committee: "Mr. Parris"	Church screen: "G. V. Parriss"	The surname is spelled three ways in the archive.
The Liddells	Typed list: "Frank Liddell" and "Walter Liddell" (22/08)	Church screen: "F. Liddell" and "W. H. Liddell"	Probably the same men; the typed list may give a middle or familiar name. Not checked.
Hornby	Church screen and	SWFHS index page: "H.	Probably a transcription

	typed list: "Hornby" Hornsby" (SWFHS)	slip on the SWFHS page.	
Horace Hawkins' home	Society talk: his father lived at Daffodil Cottage (46/37-95)	SWFHS: Tavern Street in 1901, Avon Cottage in 1911 and 1916, parents later at Manor House	Families moved; the talk describes 1901 and may name the house differently.
William Blundell's death	Society talk: "killed in action near Salonika in Greece in 1918" (46/37-95)	CWGC page read for this essay gives 1 September 1918 and 2nd Gloucestershire, but the place was not shown	The 2nd Gloucesters served in Macedonia, which fits the talk, but his grave or memorial was not checked.
The field	Newspaper report: "Coyney's Leys" (23/91-100)	Society notes: "Quiney's Leys" (archive notes on 23/91-96)	Two spellings of the same glebe field.
Was the hall a war memorial?	Alfred Dingley, 1923: a "counterfeit memorial"	Committee and Ex-Service Men's Association: always meant for the dead and the living	A matter of opinion, not fact. The 1918 appeal supports the committee's account of its purpose.

One more caution: the typed list of the dead in the archive (22/08) has no date or source, and the "For King and Country" page does not say which portrait belongs to which name. Captions in this essay that identify a face say "probably".

Sources and pictures

Welford and Weston Local History Society archive, scanned in the "Claude 1000" folder. Archive numbers are given in brackets in the text.

- Folder 43: the letters and papers of Pte. James Arthur Matthews, 1913-1921, with the Society's 2011 index (43/02-105).

- Folder 23: scrapbook cuttings, mainly from the Stratford-upon-Avon Herald and Evesham Journal, c.1914–1924, including Fred Farley's death, the Needlework Guild, the recruiting meeting, the Memorial Hall dispute and opening, and the "For King and Country" page (23/91–107).
- Folder 21: the anonymous "Welford Book of Gossip", 1915–1950 (21/01–21).
- Folder 22: typed list of Welford's war dead (22/08).
- Folder 46: Society talk "Welford in the Early Years of the New (20th) Century" (46/37–95).

Online records (opened October 2026)

- [War Memorials Online, St Peter's screen, ref. 85925](#): inscription and the nineteen names.
- [IWM War Memorials Register 38544](#) and [38543](#): the WW1 screen and the WW2 tablet.
- [IWM Lives of the First World War: Frederick James Farley](#).
- [CWGC: L/Cpl William Blundell](#) and [CWGC: Dvr W. Basson](#).
- South Warwickshire Family History Society war memorial project: [Welford-on-Avon memorial](#), [F. J. Farley](#), [H. E. Hawkins](#). The SWFHS also has pages on G. V. Parriss, W. P. Basson, W. Blundell and B. A. Harris, but its site refused further requests while this essay was written.
- [TracesOfWar: Memorial Hall, Welford-on-Avon](#).
- [Wikipedia: Welford-on-Avon](#).

Pictures. All eight pictures are scans from the Welford and Weston Local History Society archive, reproduced here for the Society's own use. Freely licensed photographs of the church screen and Memorial Hall could not be downloaded from this workspace; Wikimedia Commons and Geograph are the places to look for them.