



NEWSLETTER

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PUTTENHAM - A 'THANKFUL' VILLAGE

Puttenham is a very special place - it is the only village in Hertfordshire where all the men sent to the Great War returned home. One of only 53 'Thankful Villages'; a description coined by the writer Arthur Mee in the 1930s.



For every thankful village, however, thousands of others were not so fortunate. Hertfordshire has nearly 280 settlements, therefore one 'Thankful Village' represents about a third of one percent of the county!

In Puttenham's St. Mary's Church there is a marble plaque recording the names of the 15 men that served in WWI; in 1914 this represented almost twenty percent of the population. The plaque's inscription reads as follows:

'In the Great War of the years 1914 – 1918. This parish then numbering 71 souls, sent forth and welcomed home the men whose names are inscribed here. For their gallant service and their safe return. Thanks be to God.'

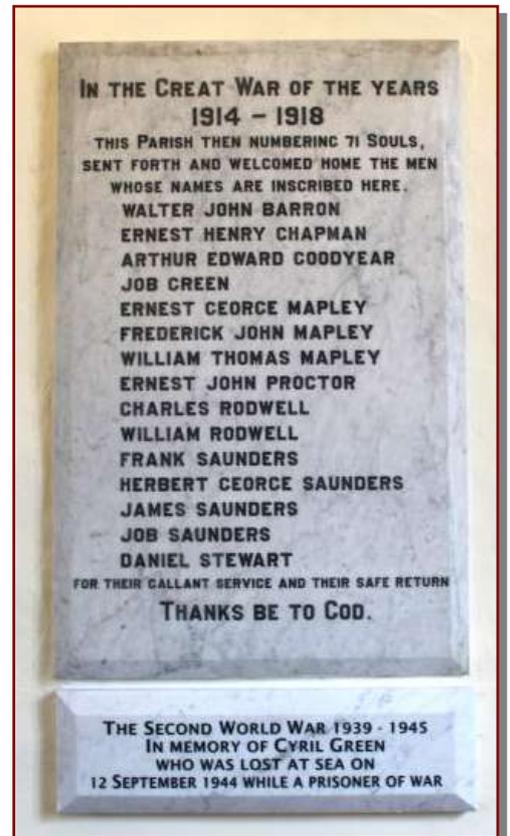
There are only 14 'Doubly Thankful' villages in England and Wales where all the residents served and survived both World Wars, amazingly Puttenham was almost among this elite few. Sadly the only WWII casualty from Puttenham parish was Cyril Green, he was killed when the enemy ship he was on was sunk by allied bombing. A few years ago a new plaque was unveiled in the Church in memory of his ultimate sacrifice.

Cyril Green. Born 13th June 1916 in Brook Street, Tring. Corporal 5th Bn. Beds & Herts Regiment, died 12th September 1944; son of Edith Bessie Green. Cyril was held as a Prisoner of War by the Japanese, whilst being transported the ship was sunk by allied bombing. He is commemorated at Singapore Memorial, Kranji War Cemetery.

In 2013 Medwyn Parry and Dougie Bancroft travelled 2,500 miles on a motorbike, visiting each 'Thankful Village' in the UK to fundraise for the Royal British Legion. All the destinations were presented with a slate plaque to commemorate the part each community played in the Great War.

As part of our 'Commemorating Peacetime in Dacorum' project last year, our volunteer Judith Young researched the WWI names. Until recently little was known about these brave men, this is what we have discovered:

Walter John Barron. Baptised in Puttenham on 11th July 1880, son of Joseph and Jane Selina (1854 – 1942), a labourer of Bishopstone. They then came to live in Astrope. In 1916, aged 36, Walter was an unmarried farm labourer, living with his widowed mother Selina, when he was called up. He served as a Private in France where he suffered burns in 1917 and was gassed in 1918. In March 1919 he was demobilized and transferred to the Army Reserve. He died at St. Paul's hospital, Hemel Hempstead in 1961.



Images: Top: St. Mary's Church, Puttenham. **Lower:** Commemorative plaques in the church, the WWI plaque has been nominated for inclusion in the National Heritage List for England; the WWII casualty plaque was added in 2014. Both images taken in 2018.

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Ernest Henry Chapman. Born at Grange Farm, Astrope Lane and baptised 10th June 1879, the son of Thomas and Emma, who farmed Grange Farm. Before the war he lived in Willesden and worked as a stockbrokers' clerk. Unmarried, he later lived at Grange Farm, and died in 1933 at the Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury.



Arthur Edward Goodyear. Both Arthur and his father were railway platelayers. He married Mabel Waters in 1911 and was a signaller when, in 1915 he enlisted in the London Regiment at Euston Station. Arthur and Mabel had a son Frederick in 1914. Arthur served in Salonika and in 1919 was demobbed to the Army Reserve.

Job Frederick Green. Born and then baptised in Puttenham on 31st August 1894, the son of Johnathan and Mary Green. Job worked as a cowman before enlisting as a Private in the Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire Regiment. In 1922 he married Ellen Jeffs in Berkhamsted, the couple had three children. He died on 2nd February 1966 at Long Marston.

Ernest George Mapley. Baptised in Puttenham Church in 1900, the younger brother of Frederick and William. At first he was a Private in the Hertfordshire Regiment, later he joined the Labour Corps. Ernest died in Oxford in 1968.

Frederick John Mapley. Frederick was known by his middle name John. Baptised 2nd October 1896, son of George Joseph (a labourer) and Clara of Astrope. In 1915 he enlisted in the Grenadier Guards whilst working on the railways in St. Helens, Lancashire. Serving in France where he was wounded twice; in 1917 he spent four months in Surrey recovering from scarlet fever before returning to the battlefield.

William Thomas Mapley. The eldest of the three Mapley brothers who served in WWI. He was baptised 10th July 1893, also son of George and Clara of Astrope. He married Florence Brazier in Aylesbury in the autumn of 1914 and they had two sons, Joseph in 1915 and Dennis in 1923. He died in 1985.

Ernest John Proctor. Baptised in October 1884, son of Joseph and Ann, and lived in Long Marston. He was a cowman on a farm before being called up in 1916; he joined the Royal Field Artillery. In 1917 he was posted to Salonika (promoted to Lance Corporal) remaining in Turkey until he returned home in 1919. Ernest died in September 1967 in Vancouver, Canada.

Charles Rodwell. The younger brother of William Rodwell. Baptised on 7th August 1895, son of Frederick (a labourer) and Jane of Astrope. Like his brother he became a shepherd; in 1914 he enlisted, aged 18, as a Private in the Hertfordshire Regiment. After posting to France he was promoted to Lance Corporal. Following demobilisation he stayed in farming at Alnwick Farm and married Bertha Newton, the couple had two children. Charles died in 1950.

William Rodwell. Born in 1887 in Wilstone, son of Frederick and Jane. Later he was a shepherd in Astrope. Enlisting in the Oxfordshire & Bucks Regiment, and later serving with the Notts & Derby Regiment. After marrying he lived in Wilstone.

Frank Saunders. Baptised 20th April 1890, son of James (a farm labourer) and Maria, of Astrope. He joined the Worcestershire Hussars in September 1914 and became a member of the Army Cyclist Corps. In April 1916 he was captured and became a Prisoner of War, he was released on 18th November 1918, a week after the armistice.

James Saunders. An older brother of Frank, James was born in 1881 and joined the 9th Regiment of Lancers of the Line, a cavalry division, in 1901 when he was 20. After 12 years of service in India and South Africa he transferred to the Army Reserve in 1913. He re-joined the Lancers in October 1914, serving as part of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade on the Western Front.

Herbert George Saunders. Baptised on 12th August 1883, the son of Thomas (a labourer) and Ruth. In 1910 he married Gertrude Baldwin and they had a daughter in 1911. He served as a rifleman with the London Regiment in France between 1915 and 1917. He was discharged after being wounded, and then issued with his silver badge. After the war he worked on the railways; and died in Tring in 1977.

Job Saunders. Baptised in Puttenham on 30th September 1883, the youngest child of William (a labourer) and Caroline. As a young man, Job was a farm labourer. He served as a gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery during WWI. In 1915 he married Margaret Proctor. After the war he was a road worker and died in April 1963 at Craythorn Cottage in Astrope.

Daniel Stewart. The mystery man! There is no obvious connection but in 1939 there was a Daniel Stewart born in 1889 who did not work as he was disabled. It looks as if he had married Annie Ing in Willesden in 1916. Annie was working in the area in 1911, and she came from Buckland. Daniel and Annie had a son Thomas (b. Amersham 1917). Daniel died in Amersham in 1954. Is this Puttenham's Daniel Stewart? If you have any information we would like to hear from you.

For Their Gallant Service and Their Safe Return – Thanks Be to God.

Image: Stone pillar by the tin tabernacle in Astrope Lane, commemorating Puttenham's 'Thankful Village' status, image taken 2018.

'DOODLEBUG SUMMER' – EXPLOSION NEAR ALDBURY

The V-1 flying bomb, also known as the 'buzz bomb' or 'doodlebug' because of its strange intermittent buzzing noise. The German scientists who developed it named it 'Vergeltungswaffe 1'. It was an early cruise missile, carrying a 1,870lb high explosive warhead, and the only production aircraft to use a pulse jet engine. The V-1 was the first of the so-called 'vengeance weapons' deployed for the 'rain of terror' bombing of London. The 21ft rocket contained a device that counted the revolutions of a tiny propeller in its nose, when it reached the set number for the target, the engine cut

out and the missile plummeted to earth, detonating on impact.

The first V-1 bombing took place on 13th June 1944, killing seven in Hackney (there is a blue plaque at the site), over the next four months more than 6,000 civilians were killed and 18,000 injured, consequently these months were called the 'Doodlebug Summer'.



British MI5 double agents sent false reports back to Germany regarding the V-1s drop zones. Exaggerating the number landing in north and west London and minimising direct hits. The missiles range were reduced by shortening flight times, which resulted in many falling short of the more densely populated areas, saving many lives.

It only took about 15 minutes for a V-1 launched in the Calais area to travel the 95 miles to central London. The missiles were made mainly from sheet steel, aluminium and plywood. The assembly work was carried out by concentration camp slave labour at the Gerhard Fieseler Werke in Kassel, taking about 350 hours to produce each rocket, with a cost of around 5,000 Reichsmarks or about £21,500 in today's money.

We think the V-1 shrapnel recovered from Aldbury Common had originally targeted London, but over-shot, as it was witnessed passing over Hemel Hempstead and finally exploding on higher ground to the north-west. Perhaps one of our readers may have a family anecdote or any additional information about the bombing on Tuesday 11th July 1944 that they would like to share - we would love to hear from you.

Image: V-1 shrapnel (also found, was a small fragment of aluminium). Text on a contemporary hand-written label reads 'Pieces of "Doodle Bug" (German Flying Bomb) which passed over Hemel Hempstead and exploded on Aldbury Common 11th July 1944'.

VISIT TO AMERSHAM MUSEUM

As part of national Volunteer Week (1st – 7th June), Janet Sparks, our Staff & Volunteer Liaison Director arranged a visit to Amersham Museum, as a 'thank you' for our dedicated volunteers. We enjoyed a very informative talk by the Curator, Emily Toettcher who told us the story of the development of their museum, education and outreach activities



and how they use their collection, and of course, we also enjoyed some tasty cake with refreshments. There was an opportunity a look at their wonderful new mobile museum vehicle, what a fantastic asset! It enables the museum to go to schools, groups and other events in this eye-catching 'historic' vehicle – we are very envious!

Image: Staff and volunteers admiring the mobile museum vehicle parked outside the Amersham Museum building in the High Street.

ARMED FORCES DAY 2019

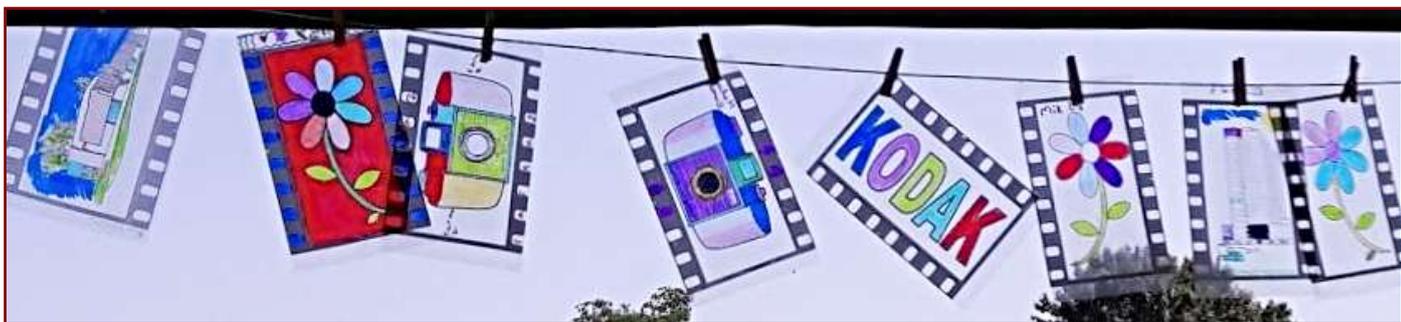


We again had a stall at Armed Forces Day in Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead on Saturday 29th June, which was a truly scorching day.

The event was opened by Mayor of Dacorum, Cllr. Terry Douris and Sir Mike Penning MP, who gave background information on the Armed Forces Day inspiration to support all armed forces personnel and their families. The arena entertainment included the Revelations Majorettes, Imps Motorcycle Team and Eastbourne Youth Field Gun Team who enthralled the crowds with amazing displays. We were even treated to a fly-past by a Lancaster bomber.

Our pop-up museum featuring our current project, 'Underexposed: A history of Photography in Dacorum'. Our volunteers gave out leaflets and encouraged members of the public who had worked at Kodak to let us interview them and to collect memories of their time working for Kodak in Hemel Hempstead. The DHT

bookstand was popular and the display of Kodak cameras were admired by many visitors. Our free children's activity was busy throughout the day; we engaged with more than 280 individuals during the event.



A huge 'thank you' to all those volunteers in our Events Team who worked so hard on such a hot day, we really could not have done it without you.

For more information about this project see our website [here](#).

Image: Top – Events Team (L-R: Brian, John, Quentin, Anne & John). **Lower** – Examples of 'film' coloured by families on the day.

CURATOR'S CORNER

Heritage Open Days – 'Behind the Scenes' Tour of The Museum Store – Saturday 21st September 10 – 11 am.

Come along and see some of the fascinating items from our collection of over 125,000 artefacts, each with its own unique story, we're confident that something will capture your imagination. Booking essential, places are limited, contact us (see front cover), booking closes 13th September. There is no on-site parking. May not be suitable for folks with limited mobility, first floor access via steep stairs. Latecomers will not be admitted, so please arrive in good time.

We Are Recruiting. We have two vacancies for a Fundraising Director and a Marketing & Communication Director, both voluntary roles, if you have the appropriate experience and would like to make a difference at in a small local charity, please contact Nina (info@dacorumheritage.org.uk or 01442 879 525) for a role description.

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