

Lest we forget.

Compton men who died in the two world wars.

It is nearly a century since the outbreak of the Great War and all but one or two of those who fought and lived to tell the tale have now gone. Compton men who died in the conflict are listed on the village war memorial and their names will be familiar to many local residents.

In 1914, these ordinary chaps were snatched from their families, friends and familiar surroundings to be plunged into a world of mud and death that was more horrific and shocking than most of us can possibly imagine. Twenty-five years later a different war was to break out that produced yet more names to add to the village memorial.

But they were not just names, they were people and this research is an attempt to discover more about these Compton men who fought and died. Where did they live and what did they do before going off to war? And, indeed, where did they fight and die to preserve our freedom? As personal memories of them fade, it is important that we record who they were and to ensure they do not become just names on a memorial.

This research is continuing and the site will be amended as more information is found. Any information about the men will be gratefully received. I would like to thank Andy Bailey of Rudgwick who has helped me greatly with this work. He has a fine website that deals with his research into the Ewhurst men who fought: www.ewhurstfallen.co.uk.

1914—1918

CAPT. MICHAEL CHAPMAN MC

Michael Chapman was the son of Sir Arthur and Agnes Wakefield. His precise connection with Compton is not clear but he was married to Lilian Mackintosh who, in 1901, was a ward of George Frederick Watts and living at Limnerslease in Compton. He was a captain in the 4th battalion Grenadier Guards who was awarded the Military Cross on 1st February 1918 “*for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He carried out several difficult reconnaissances with great contempt of danger under heavy shell fire. Though twice wounded, he remained at duty until the battalion was relieved*”. He was 36 years old when killed in action on 12th April 1918 at Gars Bruggha Farm near Merris, France. There is no known grave but he is remembered on the **Pleogsteert Memorial** in Belgium. He is also listed on the memorial at Seale.

CAPT. GEORGE MAURICE GERALD GILLETT

George Gillett was born in Compton. He was the son of Rev. Hugh Gillett, rector of Compton from 1877 to 1912, and of the Hon. Mrs Gillett of Thornbury House, Thornbury, Gloucestershire. When in Compton, the family lived at The Grange in the Avenue, which was then the rectory house. George joined the 6th battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment in September 1914 and was

a captain at the time of his death on 26th September 1916 aged 33 years. He died in the Battle of the Somme and his body was never recovered. **He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial that commemorates the missing of the Somme. The memorial the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.**

On 1st July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure.

In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1st July.

Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18th November with the onset of winter.

In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918.

PTE. GEORGE HORLOCK

George was the seventh of eight children of Albert and Mary Jane Horlock who, in 1891, were living in Compton Street. Ten years later, the family had moved to Withies Lane and George was employed as a gardener's boy. He joined the 7th battalion of the Middlesex Regiment as a private in March 1915 when he was 28 years old. He died of his wounds on 15th October 1918 and is buried in the **Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun.**

SGT. WILLIAM HOUNSOME

William Hounsome was born in 1896, son of James and Louisa Hounsome. James was an agricultural labourer and, in 1901, the family were living on the common in one of the cottages next to the school, probably in one of the pair that was demolished in the 1960s. William joined the 1st battalion, the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment in September 1914. By the time he was killed in action on 21st September 1918, he had become a sergeant. He was buried at **Villers Hill British Cemetery** at Villers-Guislain. This village was occupied by Commonwealth forces from April 1917 until the German counter attacks (in the Battle of Cambrai) at the end of November 1917. It was lost on 30th November and retained by the Germans on 1st December, in spite of the fierce attacks of the Guards Division and tanks. The Germans finally abandoned the village on 30th September 1918, after heavy fighting.

2ND LT. ARTHUR CYRIL LAWSON

Arthur Lawson joined up in August 1914 shortly after the declaration of war. He was the son of Arthur E Lawson and Mrs Lawson of Barcroft, Cranleigh and his connection with Compton is as yet unknown. He was a second lieutenant in the 7th battalion Rifle Brigade. He was 20 years old when died of his wounds on 6th July 1917 and was buried in **Brompton Cemetery.**

SGT. ANDREW BOYER MARCHANT

Andrew Marchant was born about 1888/89. In 1901 he was living with his parents, William and Jane, and brother Harvey at Norney, near Shackleford where his father, was an estate nurseryman. He joined the Queens Regiment in September 1914 but was posted to 7th battalion Royal Fusiliers where he was a sergeant when he was killed in action on 30th December 1917. Where he died is not noted but his body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the **Thiepval Memorial**. He is also listed on the Shackleford memorial.

PTE. THOMAS MARSHALL

Thomas was the son of Thomas and Mary Anne Marshall who lived at the brickyard between Compton and Binscombe. Before the war he probably worked in the brickyard with his father. Thomas was born in 30th April 1899 and joined the 6th battalion the Queen's (West Surrey) Regiment at Stoughton Barracks in Guildford when he was 17 years old. He arrived in France on 1st June 1916 and was killed in action on 5th August that same year whilst attacking a German garrison in the Thiepval area. He has no known grave but is remembered on the **Thiepval Memorial**, Somme, France. He was the half brother of Sidney, Henry and Walter Pink who all perished in the war.

SAPPER ALBERT HARRY MAY

Albert was born in Guildford in 1896, the son of Henry and Emma May. He enlisted in the Royal West Kent Regiment at Guildford and later transferred to the Electrical and Mechanical Company, Royal Engineers. He died in Mesopotamia on 16th May 1918 and is buried in the **Basra War Cemetery**, Iraq. His connection with Compton is not yet known.

GUNNER HENRY PINK

Henry was born in 1888, the son of George and Mary Anne Pink. His mother was widowed in 1895 and she married Thomas Marshall who lived at the brickyard (see above). He was the husband of Bertha Pink who was living in Rowledge, Farnham, Surrey during the war. Henry is buried in **Belgrade Cemetery**, Belgium.

PTE. SYDNEY PINK

Sydney was born in 1890, the son of George and Mary Anne Pink. His mother was widowed in 1895 and she married Thomas Marshall who lived at the brickyard (see above). He was a private in 116th battalion Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment). He died just one week before the Armistice on 29th October 1918. He was killed capturing Raillencourt during the battle of the Canal du Nord and is buried at the **St Olle British Cemetery**, Raillencourt. His adopted regiment indicates that, like so many people in the early part of the century, Sidney had emigrated to Canada.

WALTER PINK

Walter was born in 1889, the son of George and Mary Anne Pink. His mother was widowed in 1895 and she married Thomas Marshall who lived at the brickyard (see above). No other information has yet been found.

WILLIAM ROGERS

Joined the Royal Sussex Regiment in September 1914. No further information found.

EDGAR MARTIN RUNDLE

Joined the Royal Navy in February 1896. He was the master at arms on HMS Defence when it was sunk on 1st June 1916 at the Battle of Jutland with the loss of 903 lives.

“Both the Defence and Warrior had already hit the doomed Wiesbaden. Still Admiral Arbuthnot, in spite of straddling salvos, held on till within 5,500 yards of his prey he turned to starboard. Both ships were now in a hurricane of fire, which the Germans were concentrating with terrible effect to save their burning ship, and there quickly followed another of the series of appalling catastrophes which so tragically distinguish this battle from all others. Four minutes after crossing the Lion's bows the Defence was hit by two heavy salvos in quick succession, and the Admiral and his flagship disappeared in a roar of flame”.

Edgar Rundle is not listed on war memorials but is named on the Roll of Honour in St Nicolas church, Compton.

CAPT. GEORGE HENRY HALL SCOTT

George Hall Scott was born in Northumberland, the son of Sir Henry Hall Scott and Henrietta his wife of Stratton Street, Piccadilly, London. She was living at Down Place, Compton, at the time of her son's death. George was educated at Charterhouse and became a mining engineer. He was a captain in “C” Company, the 7th Battalion of the Queen's Royal (West Surrey) Regiment. He joined up at the outbreak of war, arrived in France in July 1915 and was killed in the attack on Montauban on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1st July 1916, aged 34 years. He is buried in **Dantzig Alley British Cemetery**, Mametz, France. Captain Scott was a keen sportsman and spent much of his time salmon fishing and deer stalking when at his Highland residence near Inverness.

CPL. JESSE STOVOLD

Jess was born in 1887. He was the son of Henry and Caroline Stovold who lived in a cottage next door to the Harrow, which has since been demolished. Henry was a farm labourer and Jess was one of six children living in this tiny, four-roomed home on census day 1901. At that time he was working as a bricklayer's labourer but when he joined up in September 1914, he was 27 years old and working as an attendant. According to the Roll of Honour in Compton church, Jess joined the 7th battalion the East Surrey Regiment, which conflicts with the Essex Regiment listed as his in the Surrey Recruitment Registers. He was killed in action on the eighth day of the Battle of the Somme on 8th July 1916. He has no known grave and is remembered on the **Thiepval Memorial**, Somme, France.

PTE. ST THOMAS STOVOLD

Thomas was Jess's elder brother, the husband of Katherine and was a private in the 6th battalion the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. He was killed on the third day of the Battle of the Somme on 3rd July 1916 aged 29. He is buried in the **Ovillers Military Cemetery**. The battalion lost 78 men killed in action on this day.

1939—1945

Work in progress. Any information about these men will be gratefully received.

JOHN R F BOND

H P E HODGSON

WILLIAM HAROLD CLIFF HODGES

Son of William and Joan Cliff Hodges, he was a Captain in the Royal Artillery. Killed in action in Italy on 16th January 1944. Not on the war memorial but is commemorated in a window in St Nicolas church, Compton. In 1918, his parents lived at Hillsleigh, Nightingale Road in Godalming.

THOMAS W JUPP

Tom was the son of Mr Jupp who owned and ran the grocery and baker's shop near the Harrow. He had intended that his son should carry on the business after him but when Tom was killed in the war whilst serving in the RAF, Mr Jupp lost heart. He sold the shop and bakery business to George and Doris Ellis in 1949.

STEWART W LENTON

EPHRAIM A SMITH