

# EYES ON HANDS ON

Back in January, when life was just that little bit simpler, Kingham Hill School became the first school in the country to enter into partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, joining the “Eyes On Hands On” project. The project has been set up for local volunteers to help with the regular oversight and care of some of the 160,000 war graves spread out across 12,500 sites in the UK, often in local churchyards.

## THE IDEA IS TO MAKE SURE THAT THESE STORIES ARE SHARED WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

A group of pupils, led by the School’s resident military historian Gareth Williams, received training from the CWGC before visiting graves to inspect their condition, photographing them and sending the results to the Commission’s head office in Maidenhead. Major repairs or maintenance were programmed to be done by professionals. As official CWGC volunteers the pupils got stuck into a good clean of each grave, sprucing up the surrounding area - you may have seen them out and about in their volunteers’ surcoats on Tuesday afternoons.



Gareth Williams, Kingham Hill School's resident military historian outlines the work for the “Eyes On Hands On” team in Churchill cemetery. (NB: this photograph was taken in February before Government restrictions were put in place) (Kingham Hill School)

### Sharing stories with the local community

Back at School the group worked hard, researching the stories behind the names on the graves. Whilst we are familiar with the splendid cemeteries and memorials in France and Belgium, not to mention much further afield, it is an often-neglected fact that most people in the UK live within only four miles of a war grave. The Commission are keen to engage the public more in finding out about the war graves close to home.

In the context of the current coronavirus restrictions this term, given the size of the group and the secluded nature of the cemeteries where the graves were found, this proved one of the rare occasions that pupils could get ‘off-site’.

The first site visited was Stow-on-the-Wold Cemetery, which turned up some fascinating stories. In the run-up to Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day our team of pupils have put together their findings on each of the six men. The hope is that it will serve as a fitting tribute to their service, particularly at a time when remembrance ceremonies in our towns and villages will be curtailed for the first time since they were instituted 101 years ago.

## THE MEN

Six veterans of the First World War are buried in Stow-on-the-Wold Cemetery: four have distinctive CWGC headstones and two are private family memorials.

- Private Leonard Thomas Campin, 2/4th Battalion Norfolk Regiment
- Private Philip Dance, 449th Agricultural Company, Labour Corps
- Private Stanley Lockey, Army Cyclist Corps
- Corporal John James Murray, 1st Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment
- Private Frank Pulham, Royal Defence Corps
- Private William George Taylor, 8th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment

Alongside these men, on the two family memorials, brothers are commemorated who are buried somewhere in France:

- Private Walter Edward Campin, 7th Battalion Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), commemorated on the Pozières Memorial
- Private Christopher Edward Lockey, 38th Battalion Machine Gun Corps, buried in Highland Cemetery, Le Cateau

## LEONARD CAMPIN

Leonard Thomas Campin, b. Stow-on-the-Wold in 1884. His family lived in Sheep Street: his father, John, was a house painter and his mother, Margaret, a dressmaker. It appears they met as children in Lower Swell. Leonard had an older brother, Walter who followed his father into the painting trade. By age 26 Leonard was working as a grocer’s assistant in Evesham. He was conscripted into the Army after the Military Service Act (January 1916) training with the 2/4th Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment, a second line battalion. According to pension records, he died in the Royal Army Medical Corps hospital in Doncaster on 17th December 1916 before he got the chance to go abroad to fight.

## WALTER CAMPIN

his brother, was a Private in the 7th Battalion of the Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), serving with the battalion in northern France. His unit were in the line just south of St Quentin between the villages of Vendeuil and Moy when they were overrun by German troops launching their Spring Offensive, on 21st March 1918. Walter’s battalion (along with the rest of the British units holding the line in that area) were forced to withdraw, their retreat continuing for seven days. When all the stragglers had been accounted for, Walter was not among them and he was declared “missing, presumed dead”. His name is commemorated on the Pozières Memorial on the Somme. Walter’s body has still not been found.



Private Leonard Thomas Campin, 2/4th Battalion Norfolk Regiment. (Kingham Hill School)



Private Philip Dance, 449th Agricultural Company, Labour Corps. (Kingham Hill School)

## PHILIP DANCE

Philip Dance, b. Bidford-on-Avon in 1891, the son of William (an agricultural labourer) and Sarah Dance (a dressmaker). He had two brothers, all three of them worked as farm hands. Philip married a 17 year-old girl from Stow-on-the-Wold, Annie Elizabeth Betteridge, just before the outbreak of war in 1914. He enlisted in Stratford-upon-Avon, joining the Royal Field Artillery as a driver. Having been wounded he was transferred for “Home Service” with the 449th Agricultural Company of the Labour Corps, based in Taunton.

Philip died 28th June 1918 in Bridgwater. (There was a need for farm labourers given the numbers who had volunteered in the early years of the war, added to those who had been conscripted in the later years. One can only imagine how difficult it was for Philip’s young wife, Annie. She and Philip had only been married for a few months before the war started and she probably did not get to spend much time with him after that point, being widowed at the age of 21. She remarried in April 1919: her new husband was Arthur Stanley Winfield, a 25 year-old carter from Upper Slaughter. One of the witnesses on the marriage certificate was Ellen Elizabeth Pulham, the sister of William Pulham, the founder of Pulham’s coach company.)



A successful job done, the Kingham Hill School group returns to the minibus. (NB: this photograph was taken in February before Government restrictions were put in place) (Kingham Hill School)

## STANLEY LOCKEY

Stanley Lockey, b. 1897 in Naunton, the son of George (a slate maker) and Constance Lockey, with three younger brothers: Christopher, Henry and Wilfred. The 1911 census records the family living in Lower Swell. Stanley was a telegraph messenger for the Post Office at the age of 14. In December 1915 he enlisted, joining the Army Cyclist Corps.

*These days the idea of an Army Cyclist Corps seems strange and out of keeping with the idea of warfare on the industrial scale of the First World War. Given the majority of road transport at the time was still horse- or mule-drawn, with troops covering much of their distance on the march, having some troops ready as a rapid-reaction force on two wheels makes a degree of sense. However, the nature of entrenched warfare on the Western Front from autumn 1914 until spring 1918 quickly dispelled the plan for widespread use of cyclist troops.*

Stanley's name is recorded on a Medal Roll for the Kent Cyclist Battalion, which was converted to an infantry battalion and sent to India in February 1916, where he served in Bangalore and Lahore. The battalion was sent to defend the North-West Frontier against the Afghans before serving in Baluchistan and quelling a riot in the Punjab in 1919. Stanley was discharged from the army on 13th February 1919, three months after the Armistice, suffering from tuberculosis and injuries to his knee, foot and hip. He died on 6th May 1920, possibly owing to his wounds or a deterioration in his health following his illness.



Private Stanley Lockey, Army Cyclist Corps. (Kingham Hill School)

**CHRISTOPHER LOCKEY**, his younger brother, is mentioned on Stanley's grave inscription. A Private in the 38th Battalion of the Machine Gun Corps, he was killed three weeks before the Armistice on 21st October 1918. His unit were at Le Cateau, engaged in pushing the Germans out of French territory and back towards their border. He is buried in Highland Cemetery, just south of Le Cateau.



Corporal John James Murray, 1st Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment. (Kingham Hill School)

## JOHN MURRAY

John Murray, b. 2nd October 1890 in Cardiff, the son of John (a school master) and Mary Murray. His father was born in Pembroke Dock, an important army base during the C19th, so John may have been born into a military family. John became a regular soldier in the army before the outbreak of the First World War. He had served in India and Ceylon in the 1st Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, and promoted to the rank of Corporal, before arriving in France in August 1914 to face the Germans at Le Cateau. NB. Bernard Montgomery (who went on to lead the 8th Army in the North African Desert in the Second World War) was Adjutant of John's battalion. The unit retreated with the British Expeditionary Force in the face of the powerful German advance following the Schlieffen Plan (with which the Germans intended to win the war in the west very quickly before concentrating their attention on the Eastern Front), covering dozens of miles on the march each day before the French and the BEF managed to turn the tide of these early months of the war in the Battle of the Marne. (The first trenches were dug on the Chemin des Dames as the war of movement gave way to a war of position.)

John's war record reads like a history of the British forces on the Western Front. After 1914 he was involved in the Second Battle of Ypres, where the Germans used poison gas for the first time. In 1916 he saw action on the Somme, going into the attack in the area of Beaumont-Hamel on the first day of the battle. He was taken prisoner in an attack in the Arras Offensive of April 1917, remaining in captivity in a German prisoner-of-war camp until the end of the war. He was repatriated in November 1918 and returned to his home in Enoch's Row in Stow-on-the-Wold, just off Oddington Road. He died in December 1919.

## FRANK PULHAM

*The automatic reaction was to assume that Frank Pulham was related in some way to William Pulham, the founder of Pulham's Coaches, but it has not been possible to prove a link.*

Frank Pulham, b. 1882 in Lower Swell, son of Thomas and Mary Ann Pulham. He married Lavinia Jane Perkins of Park Street, Stow-on-the-Wold in 1908. By 1911 they were living in Bannings Alley (we would very much like to know where this is, if there are any locals who can point us in the right direction) and had four children: Milicent,

Richard, William and Mary.

From his war record, Frank served as a Private in the Gloucestershire Regiment before being transferred to the Royal Defence Corps (in 1916). The RDF was put together to provide a force to defend the British Isles from invasion, and Frank would have spent a degree of his time on "Home Service". He died on 1st December 1918, possibly of Spanish 'flu.



Private Frank Pulham, Royal Defence Corps. (Kingham Hill School)

## WILLIAM TAYLOR

William George Taylor, b. in 1888, son of George (a foundry labourer) and Sarah Taylor. The family lived in Enoch's Row, possibly some doors down from John Murray. William had two sisters (Maud and Florence) and one brother (Reginald), all younger than he. As a young man he worked as a groom for Frederick Cripps Esq., the owner of Waterton House at Ampney Crucis. His war record catalogue some of the most well known episodes of the First World War. He saw action with the 7th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment at Gallipoli, where he was wounded and sent back to Blighty. On his recovery, he was transferred to the 12th Battalion on the Somme, where he may have been one of many casualties in early September in the attack on the heavily fortified village of Guillemont. He was transferred to the 8th Gloucestershire battalion, where he served until the end of the war. According to his pension record, he died of disease in May 1919.



Private William George Taylor, 8th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. (Kingham Hill School)

## An amazing project

*The School's involvement in the CWGC's "Eyes On Hands On" project began in January 2020. It has been a special experience for our pupils to be part of a conservation project which is of such importance, both locally and nationally. It is to be hoped that more stories will be uncovered in the months and years to come. At the same time, it is a privilege to help maintain the graves of those who have all contributed directly to the rich history of our nation.*

*If you have any information on any of these men, the pupils would love to hear from you. Please contact the Kingham Hill School CWGC "Eyes On Hands On" group via the master in charge, Gareth Williams - g.williams@kinghamhill.org*

*Researched and compiled by the pupils of Kingham Hill School.*

