

# EAST FARNDON WAR MEMORIAL



## THE HISTORY OF THE WAR MEMORIAL

Shortly after the end of World War I on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, a committee of villagers met to discuss the erection of a war memorial.

The first meeting took place on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1918, and the minutes of East Farndon's War Memorial Committee record that it was "resolved to erect a monument". A few days later, the site was proposed: "...an enclosed piece of waste ground opposite Mr Adkins' house...". The Committee agreed that "...the owner be approached with a view to the ground being given for free..." together with "... an application to be made to the Rural District Council for a grant for levelling the site."

The War Memorial Committee consisted of:

Reverend William Brooke, who was Rector of East Farndon between 1911 and 1927.



John A Hart, who lived at The Grange, Marston Lane.

Frederick (Freddie) Goodhall Cox, who lived at The Orchards. He was Chairman and Managing Director of R&WH Symington in Market Harborough, known generally as The Corset Factory.



Francis (Frank) William West, who lived at Home Farm.

Walter Tebbutt Snr, who lived at Hawthorn Cottage.

Henry Ward, who lived at Farrer Farm.

Shortly after the first meeting, it was recorded that Mr Brocklehurst, the owner of the proposed site, had agreed to give the land and that the Rural District Council had agreed to give £20. The Committee then resolved to apply to Mr Morcom of Leicester to design the memorial, together with a memorial tablet for inside the church. The memorial shrine was to consist of a wall and seat with central pillar "shewing a tablet of slate" and water supply at a lower level.

On 9<sup>th</sup> September 1919 it was reported that only one tender was received for building the memorial, which was from Mr Allsop of Market Harborough, using some donated stone. The total cost was estimated at £221. An Entertainment Committee was set up to raise funds.

ESTABLISHED 1870

Wm. Allsop & Son

*Monumental and  
General Masons*

BUILDERS OF THE  
HARBORO' WAR MEMORIAL

—

Designs and Estimates submitted  
:: for all kinds of Memorials ::

BUILDERS' MERCHANTS

—

ST. MARY'S ROAD  
MARKET HARBORO'

TELEPHONE . . . . . 102

The architect for the project was J H Morcom of Leicester, who also designed the memorial tablet in the church.

Joseph Herbert Morcom (1871-1942) was responsible for many war memorials in Leicester and the surrounding counties. He attended the Leicester School of Art in 1910 and soon became a much-respected teacher and sculptor. He remained in the city until his death in 1942.

His work as a sculptor and letter cutter can be found in over 45 villages in Leicestershire and in the neighbouring counties of Rutland, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Most of his work in the villages of Leicestershire and beyond was on First World War memorials and tombstones. A collection of his smaller, portable works is housed in Wrexham Museum and includes items specifically made for clients in Leicester and further afield. There are also at least three objects in New Walk Museum, Leicester. Morcom was responsible for several significant public works in the city and these continue to figure in the townscape.

The photograph below is part of an unsigned portrait of J H Morcom.



The following photographs show J H Morcom (in white) with his brother, Tom Morcom, and seated (front row) with his workforce, June 1919.



References taken from *Joseph Herbert Morcom Sculptor (1871–1942)* by Alan McWhirr

After completion, the memorial was unveiled by Viscountess Downe of Dingley Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1920. There seems to have been some confusion about whether Lady Downe or Lady Beatrix Stanley would be available. There is also reference to “some argument with Mr Morcom over fees”, which continued until September 1921 when a sum was agreed by Morcom’s solicitors.

**Sitter:** Florence Viscountess Downe, later Mrs. Arthur Maxwell Bury, née Florence Faith Denning (d. 1958).



**Biog:** Daughter of Rev. Thomas Henry Denning; m.1stly, as his 2nd wife, Hugh Richard Dawnay, 8th Viscount Downe (1844-1924); m.2ndly (1931) Rev. Arthur Maxwell Bury (d. 1936).

The Imperial War Museum's War Memorial Register describes the East Farndon memorial as follows:

'Several steps lead up to a small garden area and cenotaph which is incorporated into a low stone wall. Incised inscriptions on two slate tablets on front of memorial. Laurel garland in relief surrounds the WW1 plaque'.

The following photograph was taken before World War II because there is no second memorial plaque. Unfortunately, the identity of the child isn't known. There were more steps than there are today, and it's possible that the lower steps were removed when mains water was installed in 1950.



## MAINTENANCE OF THE MEMORIAL

The final meeting of the War Memorial Committee was held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1922, and according to the minutes written by Rev Brooke, “all bills were paid” – a total of £280 10s 8d. “Custody” of the memorial was offered to the Parish Meeting/Council, “with a view to its being continually kept in order”.

The Parish Meeting subsequently looked after it until 1977 when this changed to the Parish Council, who continue to maintain it.

The following is a summary of the minutes from various Parish Meeting/Council meetings regarding the war memorial’s maintenance:

- On 28 February 1922, the Parish Meeting appointed Mr Tebbutt Senior as Caretaker of the War Memorial for one year from 1 March 1922.
- From 1924 until 1926, the Parish Meeting paid for the maintenance of the War Memorial, the cost of which was met by donations and the Village Hall Committee.
- From 1927 until 1944, the War Memorial was looked after by The Women’s Sewing Party (a village organisation), who the Parish Meeting thanked each year. When the Women’s Sewing party ceased to exist in 1944 due to wartime regulation, the Parish Meeting resolved to find another person to look after it.
- From 1946 to 1961, the War Memorial was looked after by Mr Hurn. Mr Hurn was paid by the Parish Meeting, the cost of which was met by fundraising activities such as whist drives and raffles, and donations from villagers.
- Following Mr Hurn’s death, the Parish Meeting agreed at a meeting on 16 July 1962 that the maintenance of the War Memorial should be done on a voluntary basis. This was felt to be a more suitable arrangement, rather than paying for it through the rates or by subscription.
- From 1962, the War Memorial was looked after by different volunteers living in the parish, organised and thanked by the Parish Meeting.
- On 20<sup>th</sup> July 1977, the Parish Meeting was replaced by East Farndon Parish Council, and at the Inaugural Meeting, it was agreed that the business of the Council included the War Memorial.
- From 1977 to 1980, Mr J Hill, who lived at Wren Cottage, looked after the War Memorial on a volunteer basis.
- From 1981 to 1984, Mr J Hill looked after the War Memorial and was paid £10 per year by the Parish Council.
- Following Mr Hill’s death, the War Memorial was looked after by Mr and Mrs Moulard, who lived at Horseshoe Cottage, on a volunteer basis from 1984 until 2005. In that time, the War Memorial required work as follows:
  - In 1996, the Parish Council paid £40.00 to have the trees cut around the War

## Memorial.

- In 2000, the Parish Council paid £1,790.00 for stone repairs to the war memorial, plus some changes to the plot to ease maintenance in the future, the money having been raised by the Village Hall Committee at the Parish Council's request.
  
- From 2005 to 2007, Mr Ernie Piggin, who lived at Moyargot, looked after the War Memorial on a volunteer basis.
  
- In 2008, a car caused damage to the war memorial wall. In dealing with this:
  - Northamptonshire Highways advised that the repairs were not their responsibility and believed it was the Parish Council's responsibility.
  - The Parish Council secured grant funding for the repair to the damaged wall and other remedial works.
  - The War Memorial was added to the Parish Council's insurance policy.
  
- From 2013 to present, the Parish Council has organised for residents to look after the war memorial on a volunteer basis. Grateful thanks to David James and Ben Williams who kept it in immaculate condition until passing the role on to Jess Oakden, Jo Shaw and Judy Hodgetts in 2018.

## REDEDICATION OF THE WAR MEMORIAL

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 a service of rededication was held at the war memorial to commemorate the Centenary of the Armistice. With Main Street temporarily closed, villagers gathered in front of the war memorial for the service, which was led by Rev James Watson. The wreath was laid by Signaller Oliver Burton from the Royal Corps of Signals.

Villagers had been busy knitting poppies, and these were attached to black netting, which was draped from the war memorial as a tribute to those who lost their lives. The poppies are now on permanent display in St John the Baptist Church, East Farndon.

After the service, everyone was invited to the village hall for tea, coffee and cake. Research was displayed, telling the stories of the men from East Farndon who served in the war and of those who tragically lost their lives.



## INSCRIPTIONS

The plaque commemorating the men who died and who served in World War I was put on the memorial at the time of building it. Further information about these men can be found on the village website [East-Farndon-War-Memorial.pdf](http://East-Farndon-War-Memorial.pdf) ([eastfarndon.org](http://eastfarndon.org))



In 1945, a small panel was added below this main inscription, bearing the names of servicemen from the village who died in WWII. Further information about these men can be found on the village website [Men-from-East-Farndon-who-Lost-their-Lives-During-World-War-2.pdf \(eastfarndon.org\)](http://eastfarndon.org/Men-from-East-Farndon-who-Lost-their-Lives-During-World-War-2.pdf)



In 2021, two brass and wooden plaques on stakes were added, bearing the names of five airmen killed in two separate air crashes in East Farndon in July 1944, during WWII. Further information about these crashes and the men who died can be found on the village website [Air-Crashes-in-East-Farndon-1944-Updated-1.pdf \(eastfarndon.org\)](http://eastfarndon.org)



Jess Oakden and Judy Hodgetts, November 2022