

A War to end all Wars.

One hundred years have now passed since the start of the 1st World War. A war to end all wars! But it wasn't was it? But it should have been. Who wants to learn from history? Some men joined the armed services willingly and others were conscripted. Some even lied about their age to join in the fight. The war would last for four long years and many of these brave men would not return while others would return maimed, some without limbs, shell shocked or gassed. Most families throughout this area were affected in some way or other. We only have to look at our village war memorials to see the list of names of those who did not return.

My wife's father (Sidney Frank Olliffe) who was born in Bishopstone served and returned safely at the end of the war but his older brother Philip Joseph Olliffe died on the 14th July 1916 and has no known grave whose death is listed on the Commonwealth War Grave Commission Memorial in Basra, Iraq.

Cyril Jeffrey, a native of Dinton, died on the 9th September 1918 and is buried in the cemetery at St. Sever, Rouen, France. William Walker who was born in Westlington joined the Veterinary Corps to look after the war horses. He also returned safely to Dinton. These deaths are just two of the many in our area and the local war memorials display the names of those who did not return. The next of kin of the deceased received an 8cm diameter bronze Death plaque showing the name of the deceased only.



Sidney Frank Olliffe



Philip Joseph Olliffe



William Walker

**In Memory of
Private CYRIL JEFFREY**

**68338, 4th Bn., Devonshire Regiment
who died age 19
on 09 September 1918**

**Son of Alfred and Jane Jeffrey, of Joiners Lane, Chalfont St. Peter,
Gerrard's Cross, Bucks. Native of Dinton, Aylesbury.**

Remembered with honour

ST. SEVER CEMETERY EXTENSION, ROUEN



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

It is not known how Cyril Jeffrey died. He was however interred in St. Sever Cemetery extension in Rouen France and the army records show that he died of wounds received in France and Flanders

**In Memory of
Lance Serjeant PHILIP JOSEPH OLLIFFE**

**9128, 1st Bn., Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry
who died
on 14 July 1916**

**Remembered with honour
BASRA MEMORIAL**



The Rolls of Honour held at the Commission's Head Office commemorating by name all the Commonwealth casualties who died in Iraq during the two World Wars

**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

Lance Serjeant Philip Olliffe died as a POW probably at ALLEPO in Syria, then part of the Ottoman Empire, following his capture as part of the Anglo/Italian expeditionary force after the battle of KUT AL AMARA when what remained of the 1st (43rd) Oxford and Bucks. Light Infantry surrendered.
Philip probably died of disease, starvation or ill treatment.

The war poets were soon producing poetry and Lawrence Binyon (who was too old to enlist) wrote with great foresight his poem 'For the Fallen', the fourth verse of which is quoted many times during the Remembrance Sunday services. He wrote this poem whilst living in Cornwall in 1914 and the full carnage of the war was yet to start. In 1915 Sub Lieutenant Rupert Brooke while serving in the Royal Navy wrote 'The Soldier' which virtually foretold his own death which occurred very shortly after he wrote it but not in battle but at sea from a mosquito bite! Rupert Brooke (aged 27) was buried on the Greek island of Skyros. John McCrae a Canadian doctor who enlisted in 1914 and treated the wounded in a field hospital at Ypres wrote 'In Flanders Field', the inspiration coming from the death of one of his friends. John McCrae died in France in 1918 of pneumonia. There were many other poets who wrote moving poems in addition to those named.

In the weeks preceding the Christmas of 1914 parties of German and British soldiers along the Western front began to exchange seasonal greetings and on occasion gifts were given. Troops from both sides were friendly to each other and games of football were arranged. Fraternalism was and is totally forbidden and it was soon stopped. Perhaps if it had been left to the troops they would have packed up and returned home after the games thus saving much heartbreak which was to follow as after Christmas the war began again. There were many battles, Mons, Ypres, Passchendaele, Arras, The Somme, Verdun, Jutland and many more. So many lives were lost on each side, over 16 million in total!

At 11am on the 11th November 1918 the guns fell silent and it was finally over. There was rejoicing all over the world on both sides. There would have been happiness and sadness in the household of Louisa Olliffe in Bishopstone. (Her husband Eli had died in 1914) They had lost a son but their other sons were to come home. There would have been happiness and sadness in the household of Jane Jeffrey in Dinton (Her husband Alfred had died in 1916). They had lost a son but their other sons were to come home. There would have been happiness and sadness in the household of the Walker family. Their sons would be coming home but they would be sharing the sadness with all of their neighbours around them who had lost someone. And so it would be for all of the families of Dinton, Westlington, Upton, Ford, Stone, Bishopstone, and Hartwell and all over Great Britain and indeed all over the world. Even those whom we called 'the enemy' were someone's sons, fathers, brothers or husbands and they probably didn't want to go to war either! And there were many civilian casualties as well.

So, after 100 years we still remember and condemn the horrors of this war (and of all wars since) each year and I'm sure that the remembrance service will continue for yet another 100 years but will 'lessons be learned'? I don't think that I need to answer that question do I?



The Rupert Brooke's grave on the Greek island of Skyros as it is today.

Lest we forget 1914-1918

Gordon S.Weedon