

Stonehouse Soldiers at The Somme



Private George Frederick Hill
8th Battalion
The Gloucestershire Regiment



Many of the local soldiers who died in the First World War are commemorated on a series of plaques in the chancel of St Cyr's Church, Stonehouse.



Private Walter Gould
7th Battalion
The Gloucestershire Regiment

George Frederick Hill was born in Stonehouse, probably in a cottage in Woodcock Lane, in October 1895. He was baptised at St Cyr's Church. His father James was a plasterer from Eastington and his mother Harriet, who seems to have lived in Woodcock Lane all her life, was a laundress working from home. In 1911 George was a general labourer living at home in Woodcock Lane with his parents and younger brother and sister. He enlisted at Stroud and joined the 8th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment.

Corporal George Hill was killed in action on 18th November 1916 (France and Flanders). He was 21 years old. He is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, the Stonehouse War Memorial and on a plaque in St Cyr's Church .

His photo is in "***Lest We Forget***".

It is striking to notice the similarity between the lives of George and Walter. They must surely have known each other, living only a few houses apart.

Walter Gould was born in Stonehouse, probably in a cottage near Woodcock Lane, in October 1891. His father Robert was a blacksmith. His mother Ellen was a laundress working from home. In the censuses of 1901 and 1911 Robert was working as a blacksmith away from Stonehouse. In 1901 Walter lived at home in Workhouse Cottages, Woodcock Lane with his mother, 2 sisters and 2 brothers. By 1911 they were living in the same 3 roomed cottage; his older brother had died aged 16 and his older sister had left home. The family had adopted a 2 year old girl. Walter was a labourer at the Brickyard, his younger sister helped with the laundry and his younger brother worked at the Brushworks. Walter enlisted at Bristol and joined the 7th or the 10th Battalion Gloucester Regiment.

Private Walter Gould was killed in action on 23rd July 1916 at the Somme. He was 24 years old. He is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, the Stonehouse War Memorial and on a plaque in St Cyr's Church.

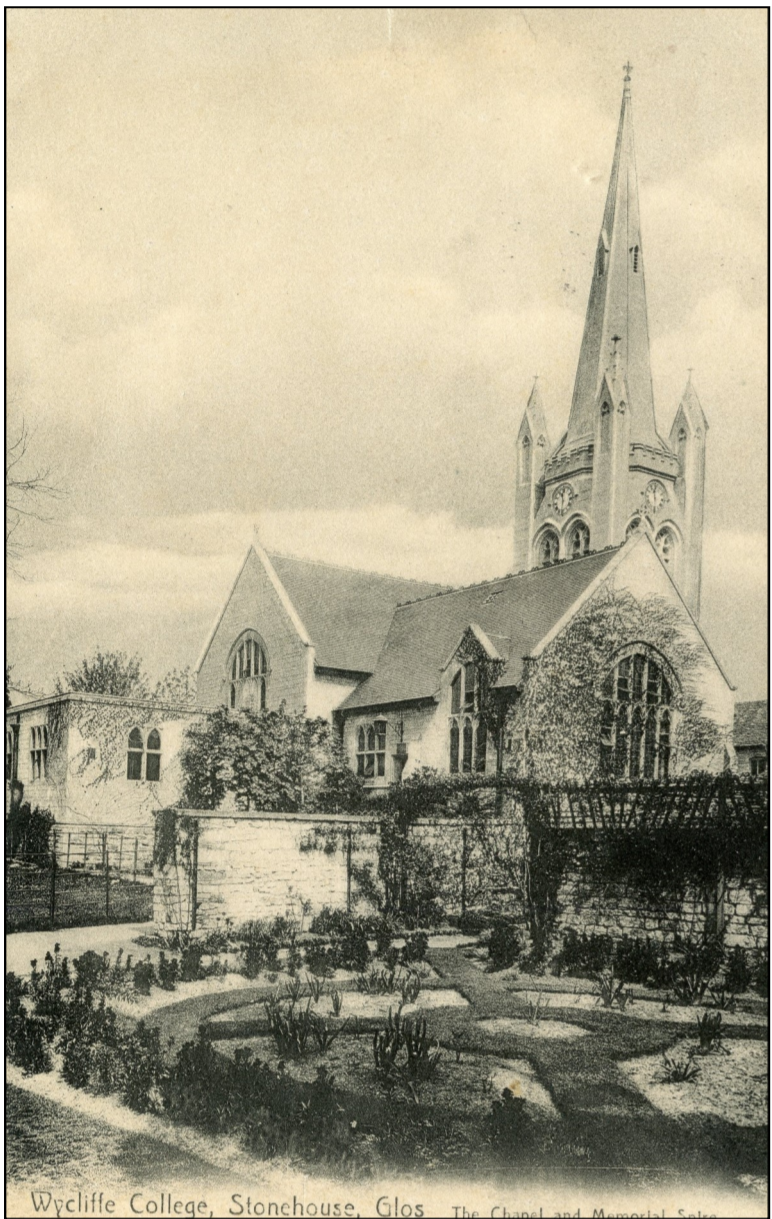
His photo is in "***Lest We Forget***".

Stonehouse Soldiers at The Somme

On the first day of the battle of the Somme on July 1st 1916 almost 20,000 British soldiers died and a further 37,000 were wounded. 51 soldiers who died in the First World War are remembered on Stonehouse War Memorial. We have discovered the names of at least 6 Stonehouse soldiers who were at the Somme. There may have been others whose records we have not been able to find.

Memorials

December 1919: **Mr JCC Kimmins** gave land at Laburnum Walk for a recreation ground to provide a Peace Memorial.



July 1921: dedication of **Wycliffe College Chapel** clock tower & spire as a Memorial to former pupils who had lost their lives.



*August 1919
dedication of the War Memorial on the Village Green.*

Memorial plaques were erected in the chancel of **St Cyr’s Church**.



Miss Kathleen Jenner Davies, of Hayward’s End, Stonehouse, served as an ambulance driver in Serbia and France. After the War, she compiled a Book of Remembrance of local soldiers with their photos.

The book was called “***Lest We Forget***”.

Edward Lionel Stephens was born in Stonehouse in 1892. In 1901 his parents Edward and Clara ran the Nag’s Head Inn in Regent Street. His father was a “bus proprietor”. They had 11 children.

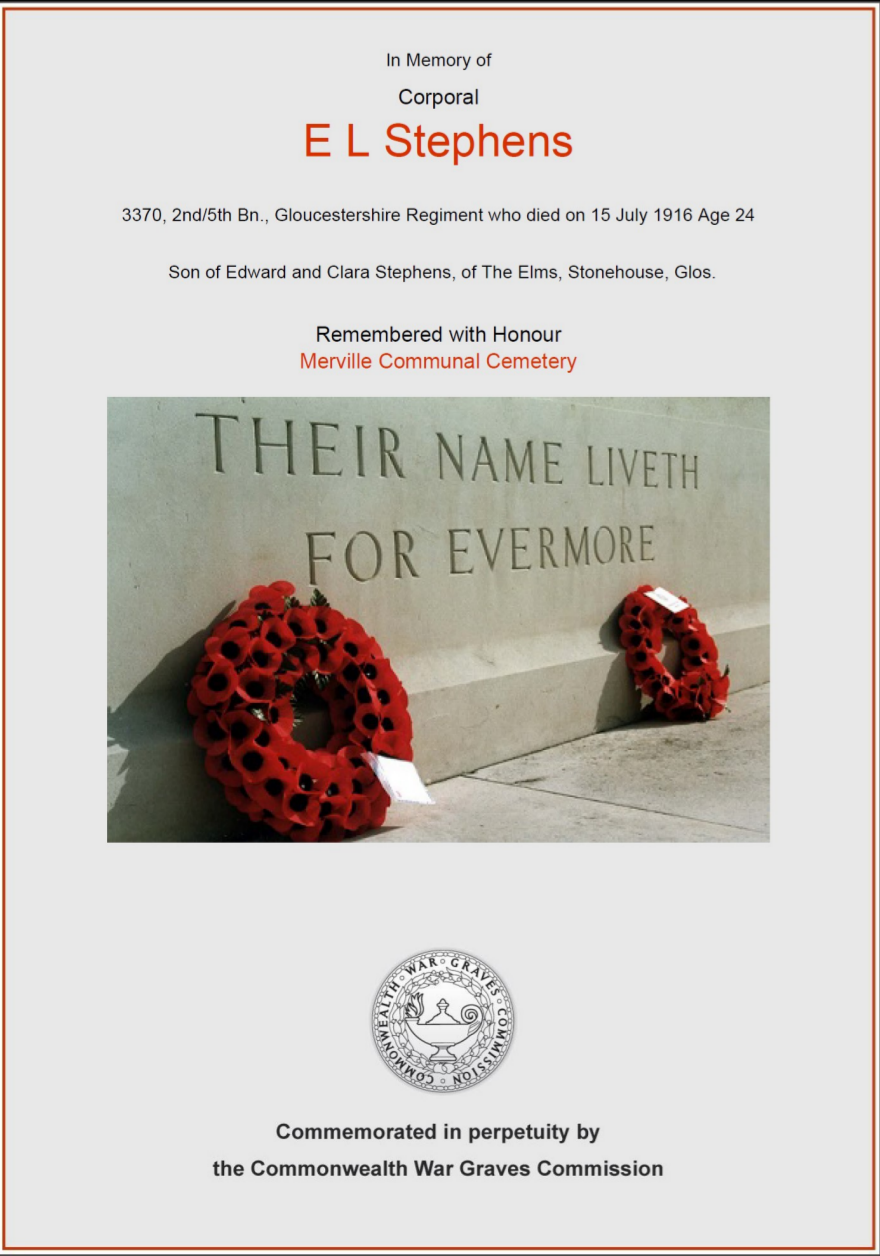
By 1911 the family had moved to The Elms (the white house in the centre of photo right, now demolished). Mr Stephens was a mail contractor; the Post Office was in the red brick building on the right of the photo. Lionel, as he was often known, was a postman. His brother Vivian was the postboy who alerted the fire brigade to the disastrous fire at Stonehouse Court in 1908.



AN EXCURSION BY HORSEBRAKE. In this atmospheric picture dating from around the period of World War One, a horsebrake can be seen outside the Nag’s Head Inn in Regent Street. The building is still standing and is now known as ‘Wayfarer’s Cottage’.



The Elms in around 1900



Lionel enlisted at Gloucester into the Gloucestershire Regiment.

Corporal Stephens died of wounds on 15th July 1916 at France and Flanders. He was 24 years old.



He is remembered at the Merville Communal Cemetery, the Stonehouse War Memorial and St Cyr’s Church choristers plaque. He is recorded in “***Lest We Forget***” but we have no photograph.

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In Memory of
Private
William Davis

34503, 9th Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 01 October 1916

Remembered with Honour
Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

William Davis was born in 1892 at New Town, Eastington, next to the canal near Stonehouse. His father Harry had been a carpenter, an oil merchant and a shipwright. In 1911 he lived with his parents and 4 sisters and 3 brothers. He was a groover at the metal works. He enlisted in Leeds into the York and Lancaster Regiment. His brother Ben died at home in 1914, of sickness. His brother Albert fought in the war but was invalided out in 1917. He was given the “Silver War Badge” to prove he had gone to fight.

Private Davis was killed in action on 1st October 1916 in France. He was 24 years old. He is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, the Stonehouse War Memorial and on a plaque in St Cyr’s Church but he is not included in **“Lest We Forget”**.

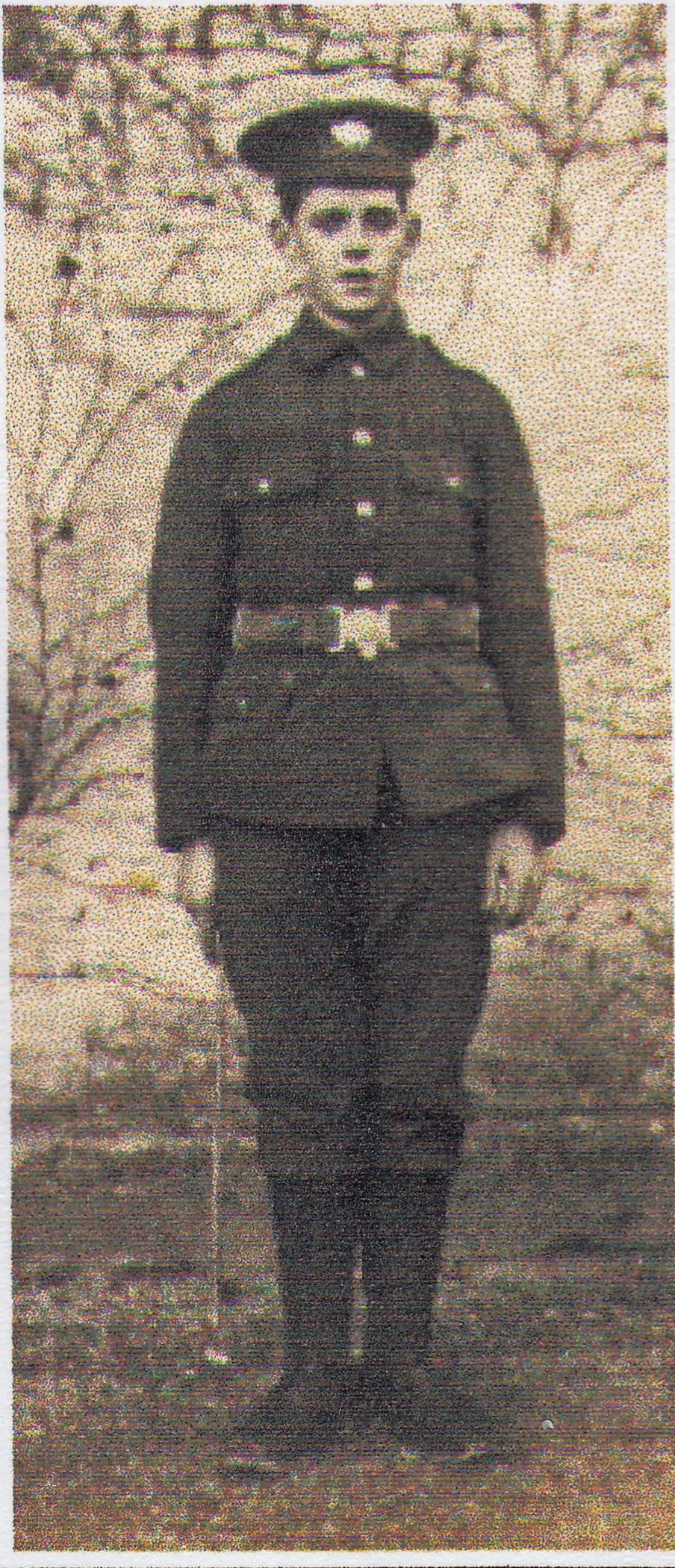


Lance Corporal Gilbert Freeman
2nd Batt. Grenadier Guards
4th Guards Brigade

Gilbert Freeman was born in Somerset in 1894. By 1911 his family were living in Upper Queen’s Road, Stonehouse. His father William was a Flock and Bedding manufacturer but Gilbert himself was in Cornwall, assisting his brother in his nursery, florist and fruit business. Gilbert served in the Grenadier Guards, 2nd battalion, and the 4th Guards Brigade.

Lance Corporal Freeman died on 16th September 1916 at the Somme. He was 22 years old. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, the Stonehouse War Memorial and on the St Cyr’s Church Choristers plaque.

His photograph is in **“Lest We Forget”**.



Private Wilfred Chapman
7th Battalion
The Gloucestershire Regiment

Walter Wilfred Charles Chapman was born on 8th Jan 1893; he was baptised at St Cyr’s Church in April 1893. His father Walter was a foreman with the County Council Road Works. His mother Elizabeth was a laundress. In 1911 Wilfred was living at Oak Cottages, Upper High Street, Stonehouse with his parents and 3 sisters. He was an apprentice fitter with a motoring works (could be Gardiner’s Garage). He enlisted on 29th August 1914 into the 19th battalion of the Gloucester Regiment. Private Chapman survived the Battle of the Somme. He was discharged on 14th November 1916 because of his wounds. In December 1916 he was given the “Silver War Badge”. His photograph appears in **“Lest We Forget”**. After the war he qualified as a mechanic and married Lillie Phillimore in 1922. They had a son, John in 1926. The family lived in Cainscross where Wilfred died in 1954 aged 61.

There are several soldiers who died in 1916, who are remembered on plaques in St Cyr’s Church.

Ronald Phillimore Dashwood came from Isle of Wight but his mother’s family lived at Berryfield House in Stonehouse. His aunt, Ethel Maud Phillimore was the Quartermaster at Standish VAD Hospital during WW1

We can find no Stonehouse connection with the three Munn brothers.



Stonehouse History Group 2016