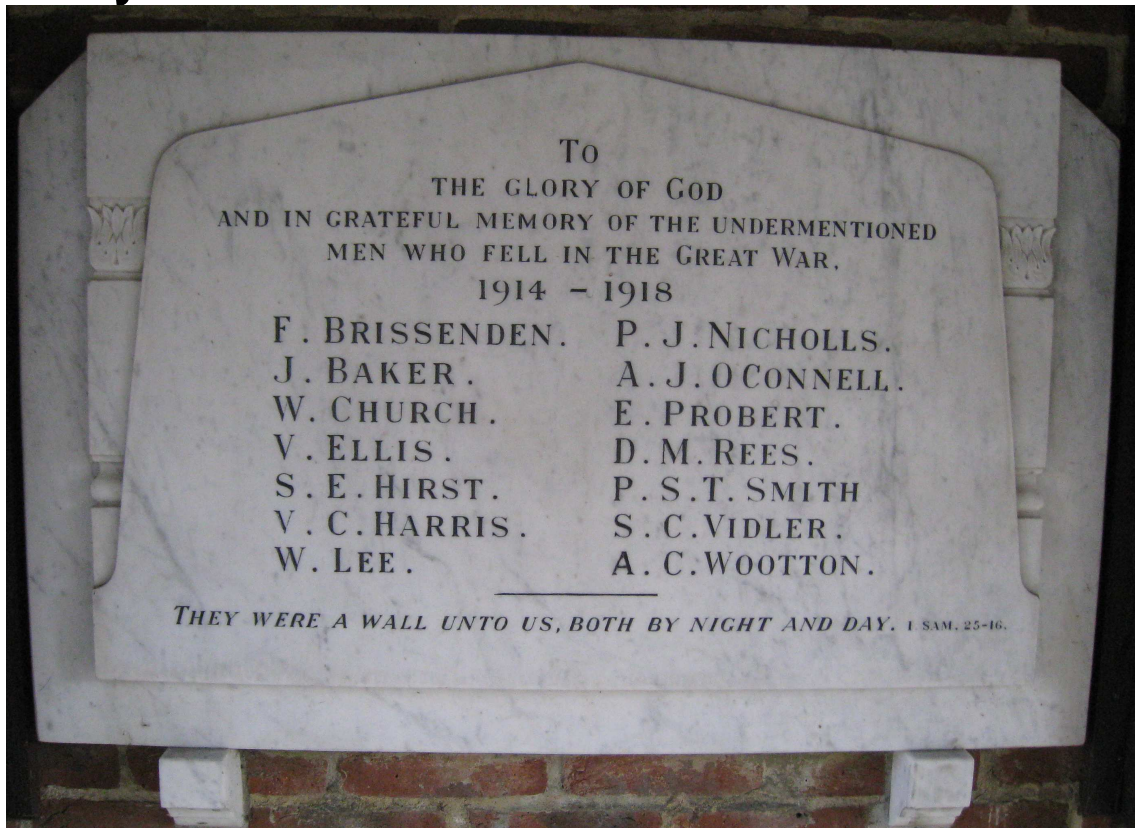


Hythe United Reformed Church



The white marble memorial plaque pictured above is located at the United Reformed Church, East Street, Hythe, Kent. We are given to understand, that it commemorates the Great War casualties who worshiped at the former Congregational Church, High Street, Hythe, and that it was moved and erected at its new location, when the United Reformed Church was built at its present location. Although thankfully only 14 casualties are commemorated on the memorial plaque, as is now our customary practice, the surnames of those remembered are set out below in alphabetical order for ease of reading. Thanks are due to Patrick D. Scullion for providing the accompanying photographs, and for carrying out the updated transcriptions below. The memorial plaque bears the two following inscriptions:-

To
THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE UNDERMENTIONED
MEN WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR
1914 - 1918.

THEY WERE A WALL UNTO US, BOTH BY NIGHT AND BY DAY.

The Great War

1914 -1919

BRISSENDEN, FRANK. Sergeant, G/18399.

1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

Died 23 August 1918.

Born Folkestone, Kent. Enlisted Herne, Kent.

Foster son of Mrs. Mary Pook of Hales Place Cottages, High Halden, Ashford, Kent. Formerly of 6, Mill Place, Horn Street, Hythe, Kent.

Buried Adanac Military Cemetery, Miraumont, Somme, France.

Grave Ref: IV.E.15.

Also commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial, and at St. Leonard's School, Hythe, Kent.

Formerly Private, 2136, 2/1st Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles. Frank enlisted for 4 years as a member of the Territorial Force on 9 October 1914. When he enlisted, Frank stated that he resided at 17, Prospect Road, Hythe, Kent, and that he was employed as a Boot Salesman. On 17 August 1915 Frank was appointed to be a Lance Corporal, and was then promoted to the rank of Corporal on 13 September 1915. When he was posted to serve in France on 21 September 1916, Frank reverted to a Private. On 11 October 1916 whilst serving with the British Expeditionary Force, Frank was transferred to the 11th (Service) Battalion, (Lewisham), Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), but retained his Yeomanry rate of pay. Only four days after joining the battalion, Frank was promoted to a Lance Sergeant, and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant on 25 November 1916. Having received a gunshot wound to his back, Frank was evacuated back to England, and from 3 March 1917 to 10 April 1917, he was treated for his wound at the Military Hospital, Endell Street, London, WC, the hospital where Frank was treated was open from May 1915 to the end of 1919. Entirely staffed by women, Endell Street Military Hospital was the only women's unit run by militant suffragists. Following his treatment for his back wound, Frank served in England until he was posted back to France on 25 March 1918. Following his death, Frank's foster mother later resided at Court Lodge Cottages, Burwash, Sussex, where she was residing when she received his medals.

BAKER, JOHN. Private, G/8690.

8th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs, (East Kent Regiment).

Died 5 September 1916. Aged 26.

Born and resided Hythe, Kent. Enlisted Canterbury, Kent.

Son of William and Ruth Baker of 24, Frampton Road, Hythe, Kent. Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. Pier and Face 5D, and on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial.

At the time of the 1901 census, the Baker family resided at 14, West End Cottages, Hythe, Kent. Head of the house was 41 year old Sittingbourne, Kent native William Baker, who was an Own Account Fisherman and Dealer. John was the sole fatality in his battalion on the day that he was killed in action.

CHURCH, WILLIAM ROBERT. Private, TF/1202.

1st/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion, Army Cyclist Corps.

Died 12 October 1915.

Born Dover, Kent. Enlisted Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Resided Hythe, Kent.

Son of Lawrence John Church and Blanch Church (née Chadwick) of 8, Sun Lane, Hythe, Kent.

Buried Horn Street Burial Ground, Hythe, Kent. Grave Ref: 178.

Commemorated on the 1st/1st Kent Cyclist Battalion, Army Cyclist Corps memorial plaque in Canterbury Cathedral, Kent, and on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial, also on a Great War memorial plaque at St. Leonards School, St. Leonards Road, Hythe, Kent.

At the time of the 1901 census, the Church family resided at 90, Oswald Road, Dover, Kent. Head of the house was 37 year old Lawrence John Church, who was a native of Ireland, and an Own Account Shop Keeper. At the time of William's death, his father was an Insurance Agent at 8, Sun Lane, Hythe, Kent.

ELLIS, V. No clear trace at this time. During and after the Great War, there was Licenced Victualler's with the surname Ellis trading at Hythe, Kent, including Isaac Ellis of "The Globe," 6, High Street, and Mrs. Rachael Helen Ellis of "The Rose & Crown, 38, High Street. Possibly the casualty commemorated at Hythe, was a member of one of the two Ellis families above, but the transcriber of these brief commemorations has not been able to establish a tangible link with them.

HIRST, STANLEY EWART. Second Lieutenant.

200th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery.

Died 24 October 1917.

Born Hull, Yorkshire.

Son of the Reverend Frederick Arthur Hirst F.R.G.S. and of Helen Hirst of 17, Earlsfield Road, Hythe, Kent.

Buried The Huts Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Grave Ref: XII.A.12.

Also commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial.

At the time of the 1901 census, the Hirst family were visiting the home of retired Surgeon Matthew Shannon, at Melcombe Regis, Dorset. Stanley's father was recorded by the census enumerator as being a 35 year old native of Bryhouse, Yorkshire, and as being a Congregational Minister. Stanley enlisted in the army in 1914, and initially served as Private, 4077, in The Squadron, Inns of Court, Officers Training Corps. On the completion of his training he was placed on the Reserve of Officers, and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, in the Royal Garrison Artillery on 3 May 1917, and also served in the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Prior to Stanley enlisting in the army, he was employed by the General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation Ltd in London. When Stanley's father; the Reverend Frederick Arthur Hirst submitted an application to be sent his late sons medals, the correspondence appertaining to same was c/o A.S. Winchester Esq, Barrister Gate, The Federal Building, 85, Richmond Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

HARRIS, VICTOR CHARLES. Private, G/9492.

1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Died 19 September 1918.

Born and resided Hythe, Kent. Enlisted Folkestone, Kent.

Son of Herbert Harris and Ellen Eliza Harris of 5, Mill Road, Hythe, Kent.

Husband of Ethel Robertshaw (formerly Harris), (née Jeffery) of 407, Culler Heights Lane, Bradford, Yorkshire.

Buried Chapelle British Cemetery, Honlon, Aisne, France. Grave Ref: III.E.2.

Also commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial, and at St. Leonard's School, Hythe, Kent.

At the time of the 1901 census, the Harris family resided at Seaway House, Hythe, Kent. Head of the house was 32 year old Bromley, Kent native Herbert Harris, who was an Aerated Mineral Water Manufacturer, employing staff. Victor enlisted in the army 'For the Duration of the War,' on 14 February 1916. At the time of his enlistment, Victor stated that he was 23 years and 144 days old, employed as a Bottler, and that he resided at 2, Seaway House," Mill Road, Hythe, Kent. Having initially been placed on the Army Reserve, Victor was mobilized on 7 March 1916, and posted to the 9th (Reserve) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) to commence his training. On 19 May 1917, Victor was appointed to be a (unpaid) Lance Corporal. On 23 September 1917, Victor married Miss Ethel Jeffery at Southend-on-Sea, Essex, who resided at 5, Stromness Place, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. At the time of Victor's death, his wife was residing at "Martog House," Anerley Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. When Ethel (having remarried) filled in Army Form W.5080 on 4 October 1919, to enable her to be provided with the Memorial Scroll and Plaque in remembrance of Victor, her home address was 25, Pawson Street, Laisterdyke, Bradford, Yorkshire. On 24 January 1918, Victor was transferred to the 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), as a Private and posted to serve in France with the British Expeditionary Force. Victor was numbered amongst the 11 other ranks deaths, which were suffered by his battalion on the day that he fell. Honlon village and wood were the scene of heavy fighting between the 6th Division, to which the 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) belonged, and the enemy between 14 and 19 September 1918. Chapelle British Cemetery where Victor is at rest, was named from a wayside shrine, and was made after the Armistice, by the concentration of graves of 1917-18 from the battlefields to the west of St. Quentin, and from Honlon Communal and French Military Cemeteries.

LEE, WILLIAM GEORGE. Private G/21368,

1st/5th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Died Wednesday 9 October 1918. Aged 41.

Born Folkestone, Kent. Enlisted and resided Hythe, Kent.

Son of William George Lee and Sarah Lee.

Husband of Alice Annie Lee (née Stoakes) of 2, New Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent.

Buried Hosur Road Cemetery, Bangalore, India.

Commemorated on the Madras 1914-1918 War Memorial, Chennai, India. Face 7, and on the Hythe, Kent, civic war memorial.

At the time of the 1901 census the Lee family resided at 26, London Road, Folkestone, Kent. Although Bonnington, Ashford, Kent, native Alice Lee has been entered above with the maiden name of Stoakes, it being the name used at the time of her marriage to William in 1896. Alice's true family name was Boulden, but she was brought up for most of her childhood by Samuel and Eliza Annie Austen (née Stoakes) at 'Copperhurst,' Knoll Hill, Aldington, Ashford, Kent, at which time she had been known to all and sundry as Alice Annie Austen. Although recorded by the enumerator of the 1901 census with his names spelt Charlie Austin, it would seem likely that the visitor at 26, London Road, Folkestone, was in fact Aldington, Kent, native Charles Austen and a natural brother of Alice, who had also been brought up by Samuel and Eliza Annie Austen. Another of the Austen brothers, Samuel Ernest Austen died on 23 October 1914 whilst serving in the 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

NICHOLLS, PERCY JOHN. Guardsman, 25521.

1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards.

Died 6 August 1917.

Born Hythe, Kent. Enlisted Folkestone, Kent.

Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 10, and on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial, also at St. Leonards School, St. Leonards Road, Hythe, Kent.

Of all the casualties who are, (or should be) commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial, the above casualty has the greatest number of variances of any of the surnames, which have been entered on the various data sources that have been used to try and ascertain the identities of the Hythe victims of war. Amongst the surnames found for this casualty were: - NICKOILS, NICHOLLS, NICHOLS, NICKOLLS and NICKELLS. Although purely conjecture on the part of the transcriber of these brief commemorations, but it would also seem likely that this casualty was PERCYVAL JOHN NICKOLLS, who was a son of Delosse James Nickolls and Charity Jane Nickolls (née Gower), and was born at Hythe in the third quarter of 1893. At the time of the 1901 census, the Nickolls family resided at 3, Cyprus Terrace, Hythe, Kent. Head of the house was 32 year old Sellindge, Kent native Delosse James Nickolls, who was employed as a Journeyman Baker.

O'CONNELL, A. J. Lieutenant.

4th Battalion, Nigeria Regiment, West African Field Force.

Died between 4 August 1914 and 31 August 1921.

Commemorated on the Ibadan Memorial, Nigeria, West Africa.

The Ibadan Memorial commemorates 360 Commonwealth soldiers of the 4th Battalion, Nigeria Regiment, West African Field Force who lost their lives during the Great War. It comprises of a clock tower, located near the railway station in the centre of the city of Ibadan. The names of the dead are recorded on bronze tablets, one of which bears the inscription: "IN MEMORY OF THE OFFICERS,

BRITISH N.C. OFFICERS, NATIVE N. C. O. 's AND MEN OF THE 4TH BN. NIGERIA REGT. WHO FELL IN THE CAMEROON CAMPAIGN 1914-1916 AND THE EAST AFRICAN CAMPAIGN 1916-1918."

REES, D. M. No clear trace at this time. Only two Great War casualties are commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as being D.M. REES. After carrying out a number of searches on various data sources and publications, no obvious Hythe, Kent connection could be established for either of the CWGC commemorated casualties. Although currently in need of more in-depth research, but it might be the case that this casualty is numbered amongst the thousands of Commonwealth casualties who died in or resultant of both world wars, who were not commemorated by the former Imperial War Graves Commission, and now of course by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It is also possible that the casualty commemorated on the memorial plaque, might have been done so by the use of either wrong initials or surname, the former form of error usually being the most prevalent form of error found.

SMITH, PERCY SYDNEY THOMAS. Private, M2/187027.
347th Motor Transport Company, Royal Army Service Corps.
Died 14 June 1918. Aged 21.
Born Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey, Kent. Enlisted Grove Park, London. Resided Hythe, Kent.
Son of Thomas H. Smith and Hetty Smith of 16, New Road, St. Leonards Road, Hythe. Kent.
Buried Gaza War Cemetery, Israel. Grave Ref: XXXII.D.5.
Also commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Smith family resided at 3, Park Road, Sittingbourne, Kent. Head of the house was 29 year old Edenbridge, Kent native Thomas H. Smith, who was employed as a Police Constable by the Kent County Constabulary. Percy's unit was formed on 17 June 1915, and originally served in the United Kingdom as the 34 Ammunition Sub Park (Motor Transport) Army Service Corps. In its guise as the 347th Motor Transport Company, Army Service Corps and later the Royal Army Service Corps, it served as Lines of Communication Troops in the Ismailia District, Egypt and in Palestine as Lines of Communication Troops. The 347th Motor Transport Company, Royal Army Service Corps was finally disbanded on 30 September 1919.

VIDLER, STEPHEN CHARLES. Private, G/15702.
7th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died 3 May 1917. Aged 20.
Born, enlisted and resided Hythe, Kent.
Son of Mrs. Eliza Vidler of 13, Frampton Road, Hythe, Kent.
Commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Bay 2, and on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial.
Albeit with no entry for Stephen shown as being with them on the night of the census, but there was a Vidler family recorded by the census enumerator at the

time of the 1901 census, as residing at 63, High Street, Hythe, Kent. Head of the house was 40 year old Ticehurst, Sussex native William Vidler, who was employed as a General Labourer. With some justification it is probably fair to say that the various commentators remarks about the action fought on the 2/3 May 1917 at the village of Chérisy, to the south east of Arras, France, by the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), and by the other battalions taking part, along the lines of it being a failure are well grounded. It should be hastily pointed out however, that non of those (irrespective of country etcetera) who have passed judgment on same, have ever leveled any criticisms or disparaging remarks about those who took part in the action, which was undertaken as part of the overall battles of the Scarpe. On the night of 2/3 May 1917, Stephen's battalion was opposite the village of Chérisy, which is situated only a short distance to the south of the Arras to Cambrai road (D939). Waiting in readiness for the attack were the officers and other ranks of both 'A' and 'B' Companies who had been selected to be the assaulting companies, with 'C' as the supporting Company, and 'D' Company being held in reserve, waiting in shell holes to the rear of the support trench. At 0345 hours the first two companies set off towards the battalions prime objective allotted the battalion on the morning of 3 May 1917, it being a location named Keeling Copse. Fortunately all members of the battalion were clear of the front trench prior to it, and other locations being bombarded by German artillery. Blame for the confusion which had prevailed during the attack has been ascertained to numerous causes and people, but an overriding factor oft referred to was the fact that during the early stages of the days events, it had been pitch black. As the direct result of the lack of light, all the sections, platoons and even companies seen got mixed up and muddled. At one point virtually the whole of the 12th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, had crossed in front of the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), but with a measure of commendable skill that error was corrected. With the coming of dawn the village of Chérisy was not only reached but actually passed, and as it was entered by the battalion touch was made with the same Middlesex battalion which had 'strayed' across its front earlier in the attack. Upon reaching the river Sensée beyond Chérisy, it was noted that the adjacent battalions had in fact lost touch with each other again. As the result of the set-back, Captain Black of 'A' Company wisely halted the battalion, and set about forming a defensive flank along the road which runs to the south east of Chérisy. Before the reorganization could be accomplished, the troops were heavily attacked, which had the additional result of the message sent back by Captain Black failing to get back. By 0900 hours Captain Black's Company on the right flank of the battalion was unable to move. Resulting from the situation which 'A' Company was in, had the effect of those on the opposite flank losing what advantages it had made, with both 'B' and 'C' Companies having by that time also fought their way to the Sensée. Shortly afterwards, fresh orders were received by the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), to advance in unison with the 8th (Service) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment to the 'Red Line,' and their fellow 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division, members of the 7th (Service) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), to

consolidate the 'Blue Line.' At approximately 1100 hours unclear reports filtered through that a general retirement was taking place, at a time when stretcher bearers and the like were engaged on rescue undertakings. An unfortunate result of the confusion generated by the 'retirement' was that those engaged on the rescues, those retiring and the enemy soldiers were to all intents and purposes intermingled, which had the knock on effect of making it virtually impossible to open fire. After the 'retirement' was stopped the attack, albeit with less momentum got under way again, and as late as 1915 hours an attempt was made to reoccupy 'Cable Trench' by the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment), supported by Stephen's battalion, but it was to no avail as the assaulting battalion was driven back by intense German machine gun and rifle fire. By the end of the day on 3 May 1917, the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) was back in the original front line trenches. As the result of the failed attack at Chérisy, the battalion had two officers killed, six wounded and four missing, and the casualties to the other ranks were one hundred and twenty killed, one hundred and sixty nine wounded, and approximately one hundred missing.





WOOTTON, ALFRED GORDON. Lance Corporal, M/298036.
985th Motor Transport Company (Deptford), Army Service Corps.
Died 8 December 1917. Aged 19.
Born and resided Hythe, Kent. Enlisted Dover, Kent.
Son of Cornelius and Elizabeth Wootten of 18, South Road, Hythe, Kent.
Buried Horn Street Burial Ground, Spring Lane, Hythe, Kent. Grave Ref: 167.
Also commemorated on the Hythe, Kent civic war memorial.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Wootten family resided at 9, Saltwood Gardens, Hythe, Kent. Head of the house was 46 year old Croydon, Royston, Cambridgeshire native Cornelius Wootten, who was a Builder employing staff. It was noted whilst carrying the researches of the Hythe, Kent casualties that originally the surname on Alfred's British War Medal and his Victory Medal, were erroneously named A.G. WOOLTEN. As can be seen on the photograph above, Alfred's parents share his grave