Offham
The Offham, West Malling civic war memorial, is located within the curtilage of the parish church of St. Michaels, Church Road, Offham which a fairly small isolated church that is set some way from the actual heart of the village. Unfortunately as with virtually every other form of rememberance of the victims of war in Kent, and elsewhere, the Offham civic war memorial has several of the parish war dead not commemorated on it. As has now become our customary practice, those who have been found to be not commemorated, have been added as ‘Lost Men.’ Thanks are due to Mrs. Naomi Fletcher for furnishing the photograph of the private commemoration plaque in rememberance of Lieutenant-Colonel Walter Adams Nicholson, which is in St. Michael’s church. Transcriptions are by Patrick D. Scullion.

**The Great War**

**BELLINGHAM, THOMAS HENRY.** Stoker 1st Class, K/6334.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Hawke.
Died 15 October 1914. Aged 22.
Born West Malling, Kent 9 October 1891.
Son of George and Mary Bellingham of Pond Road, Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 4, as shown above.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Bellingham family resided at 3, Tower Hill, Offham. Head of the house was 50 year old Peckham, Kent native George Bellingham, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer.

**BENSON, GEORGE THOMAS.** Private, 5424.
6th (Service) Battalion, Cheshire Regiment.
Died 2 November 1918.
Born Woolwich, Kent. Enlisted Dover, Kent.
Son of Thomas and Rosa Benson.
Husband of Ethel Benson (née Chapman) of 1, Hayes Cottages, Offham, West Malling, Kent.
It would seem likely that at the time of George’s birth, his father had been stationed at Woolwich whilst serving in the Royal Artillery. At the time of the 1891 census when George was 9 years old, the Benson family resided at 5, Bells View Terrace, Portland, Dorset. Head of the house was 41 year old Quebec, Canada native Thomas Benson, who was a Warrant Officer in the Royal Artillery. At the time of the 1881 census, it being the year prior to George’s birth, his parents and sister Nellie resided at Dover Castle, where his father was serving in the Royal Artillery as a Sergeant.
COLEMAN, JABEZ. Stoker 1st Class, K/15856. Royal Navy, H.M.S. Bulldog. Died 16 April 1916. Aged 25. Born West Malling, Kent 30 January 1891. Son of Jabez and Sarah Ann Coleman (née Evans). Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 17, as shown above. At the time of the 1901 census, the Coleman family resided at 4, Rose Terrace Offham. Head of the house was 39 year old Wrotham, Kent native Jabez and Sarah A. Coleman (senior), who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer.

HAFFENDEN, HERBERT. Arguably the best match for this casualty as commemorated on the Offham civic war memorial is the following local soldier:-

HAFFENDEN, FREDRICK HUBERT. Driver, 141020. 127th Army Troops Company, Royal Engineers. Died 29 October 1918. Aged 29. Born Goudhurst, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided West Malling, Kent. Son of Demas and Harriett Haffenden (née Maynard) of Chestnut Cottage, Birling, West Malling, Kent. Buried Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria, Greece. Grave Ref: 702. Frederick is also probably the casualty who is commemorated on the West Peckham, Kent civic war memorial as HUBERT HAFFENDEN. At the time of the 1901 census, the Haffenden family resided at Sweatlands, Staplehurst, Kent. Head of the house was 56 year old Heathfield, Sussex native Demas Haffenden, who was employed as a farm Bailiff.

IRVINE, JAMES ERNEST. Private, G/51768. 2nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). Died 11 April 1918. Born and resided Offham, West Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Buried Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez, Pas de Calais, France. Grave Ref: XXI. B. 13. Formerly Private, 6901, Middlesex Regiment. At the time of the 1901 census, the then 18 year old James resided at 4, Tower Hill, Offham. Head of the house was James’s grandfather 85 year old Alexander Irvine, who was a widower and a native of Ireland living on his own means. James was recorded by the census enumerator as being employed as a Farm Labourer. It was noted whilst carrying out the research of the casualties who are commemorated on the Offham civic war memorial, that when the 1891 census had been conducted, James had resided at the same address as shown above, with his grandfather recorded by the enumerator as having been the head of house, and as being employed as an Agricultural Labourer.
LOCKYER, FRANK. Private, 61487.
103rd Company, Labour Corps.
Died 28 October 1917. Aged 41.
Born Leybourne, West Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Son of the late William and Ann Lockyer of Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Buried Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: VIII. I. 87.
Formerly Private, 30492, 35th (Labour) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). At the time of the 1901 census, the Lockyer family resided at 3, Manor Cottages, Offham. Head of the house was Frank’s mother; 63 year old Ticehurst, Sussex native Ann Lockyer who was a widow.

MARTIN, CHARLES RICHARD. Private, 11798.
1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards.
Died 8 October 1915.
Born West Malling, Kent. Enlisted Woolwich, Kent. Resided Offham Green, West Malling, Kent.
Son of Richard and Jemima Jane Martin.
Probably the casualty who is commemorated on the West Peckham, Maidstone, Kent civic war memorial as Charles Martin. Charles was posted to France on 22 January 1915.

MILLS, WALTER. Rifleman, 2202.
14th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles.
Died 7 December 1917.
Born Offham, West Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, Nord, France. Panel 10, and on the West Peckham, Maidstone, Kent civic war memorial.

MORGAN, ALFRED THOMAS. Private, G/4055.
8th (Service) Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died 17 June 1916.
Born Offham, West Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.
Son of Harry and Kate Morgan of Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Buried Dranoutre Military Cemetery, Heuvelland, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Morgan family resided at 2, Stone Kettle Cottages, Offham, West Malling, Kent. Head of the house was 39 year old Offham native Harry Morgan, who was employed as a Stone Quarry Labourer. Alford was recorded as being 6 years old by the census enumerator, which means that when he died he would have been about 21 years old.
SILVER, HARRY GEORGE. Able Seaman, J/15370.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Vanguard.
Born Yarmouth, Isle of Wight 25 April 1896.
Brother of F. A. E. Silver of Malling Place, West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 22, as shown above.

NORLEY, SIDNEY HENRY. Chief Stoker, 295527.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Aboukir.
Died 22 September 1914. Aged 33.
Born Offham, Kent 1 January 1881.
Husband of the late Daisy Edith Norley.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 4, as shown above.

SCOTT, ALFRED THOMAS. Private, L/9221.
"G" Company, 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Son of Alfred Stephen and Mary Scott of Putts Cottages, Offham, West Malling, Kent.

STEVEN, BENJAMIN, Private, 25234.
1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards.
Died 26 May 1918.
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.
Buried Bagnieux British Cemetery, Gezaincourt, Somme, France.
Grave Ref: II. A. 27.

SUTTON, STEPHEN. Stoker 1st Class, K/6539.
Royal Navy, H.M. S/M. "H10."
Died 19 January 1918. Aged 27.
Born West Malling, Kent 13 April 1890.
Husband of Rose H. Large (formerly Sutton), of 2, Ryarsh Terrace, West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 29, as shown above.
WARRENER, ALFRED JAMES. Private, G/42585. 
11th (Service) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. 
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Hadlow, Tonbridge, Kent. 
Son of Edward and Maryan Warrener of Manor Cottage, Offham, West Malling, Kent. 
Husband of Harriett Lillian Warrener of 37, Ivy Street, Rainham, Kent. 
Commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Iraq. Panel 7, and on the West Peckham, Kent civic war memorial. 
Formerly Private, G/16686, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). At the time of the 1901 census, the Warrener family resided at 1, Manor Cottages, Offham. Head of the house was 43 year old Offham native Edward Warrener, who was employed as a Roadwork Foreman.

The Great War
1914 – 1919
Lost Men

BATTIS, WILLIAM HENRY. Lance Corporal, 200721. 
1st/4th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. 
Died 26 December 1916. Aged 32. 
Born Offham, Kent. Enlisted Hamilton Camp, Hampshire. 
Son of William and Ann Batts of Southam Cottage, South Street, Oakham, Rutland. 
Commemorated at the Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq. 
Ref: Angora Memorial 19. 
Formerly Private and Lance Corporal, 4/2785, 1st/4th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. William was posted to the Asiatic war theatre on 18 March 1915. William’s place of birth (Offham, Kent) as shown above was accessed from his entry in/on SDGW. At the time of the 1891 census, the Batts family resided at the same address as shown above. Head of the house was 37 year old Farringdon, Berkshire native William Batts (senior), who was employed as a Solicitors Clark. The then 7 year old William Henry Batts was recorded by the census enumerator as having been a native of Oakham, Rutland, as opposed to Offham, Kent.

INKPEN, ALBERT STEPHENS. Private, 15298. 
3rd Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. 
Born West Ham, London. Enlisted Willesden, Middlesex. 
Son of Alfred Henry and Amelia Elizabeth Inkpen of High Bank, Tower Hill, Offham, West Malling, Kent. 
Buried Chocques Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. Grave Ref: I. E. 86.
NICHOLSON, WALTER ADAMS. Lieutenant-Colonel.
104th Army Brigade, Royal Field Artillery.
Died 4 September 1917. Aged 47.
Born 28 September 1869.
Husband of Mrs. Nora Nicholson (née Armitage) of 22, South Park, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Walter was educated at Shrewsbury School, and at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, Kent. On 27 July 1888 he was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on 27 July 1891 and to Captain on 17 February 1899 and to a Major on 13 July 1904. Serving under Colonel Hozier, on 9 March 1896, Walter was appointed the Adjutant of the 3rd Kent Volunteer Artillery. On 4 September 1900, Walter married Nora Armitage at Northaw, Herefordshire. During the Second Boer War (1899-1902), Walter had taken part in the operations in the Transvaal, Orange River Colony, and Cape Colony; he had also served in Egypt and India, prior to retiring from the army on 28 September 1909. Walter rejoined the Royal Artillery at the commencement of the Great War and served as a Major, after serving at home he was posted to France in February 1915. At the end of April 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres, Walter was wounded and gassed, resultant of which he was evacuated back to England. Having sufficiently recovered Walter was made a Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel and returned to the Western Front, and in 1916 took part in the Battle of the Somme, before returning to the Ypres Salient and taking part in the Battle of Messines Ridge. Walter was killed by a bomb which was dropped by a German aircraft.
PARRIS, ALFRED LEONARD. Private, 13194.
2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards.
Died 11 November 1914.
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.
Son of James and Jane Parris.
Buried Wimereux Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: I. A. 29.
Alfred is possibly the casualty who is commemorated in the nearby parish of St. Mary’s Platt, Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent, as Leonard Parris, and was a brother of the next casualty briefly commemorated below.

PARRIS, GEORGE LOUIS. Private, 71666.
24th (Service) Battalion, (2nd Sportsman’s) Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment).
Died 13 September 1918.
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Son of James and Jane Parris.
Buried Vaulx Hill Cemetery, Vaulx-Vraucourt, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: II. A. 1.
Formerly Private, TR/10/27314, Training Regiment, Battalion.
Commemorated in the parish church of (St. Mary’s) St. Mary’s Platt, Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.

POORE, ARCHIBALD ALWYN. Private, G/12361.
8th (Service) Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died 1 August 1918. Aged 30.
Born Wrotham Heath, Sevenoaks, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Offham, Malling, Kent.
Son of Henry and Helen Poore of Mote Farm, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Husband of Dora O. Parker (formerly Poore) of 3, Barn Cottage, Leybourne Wood. Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Commemorated on the Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent civic war memorial, as is his brother Cyril Edwin Poore who died on 4 October 1916, aged 21.

ROSE, ERNEST. Private, 5039.
21st Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry).
Died 30 May 1918.
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Buried Terlincthun British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: XVII. A. 21.
Commemorated in the parish church of (St. Mary’s) St. Mary’s Platt, Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Formerly Private, 11016, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
SHOESMITH, ELIAS. Gunner, 297626.  
2nd/1st (North Midland) Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery.  
Died 26 August 1917. Aged 23.  
Born Offham, West Malling, Kent. Enlisted East Ham, Essex. Resided Barking, Essex.  
Son of Elias and Alice Shoesmith of 6, Factory Road, Barking, Essex.  
Buried Duhallow A.D.S. Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.  
Grave Ref: I. B. 38.  
Formerly Gunner, 2873, Royal Garrison Artillery.

STICKINGS, NED (Neddie) LEWIS. Private, S/11081.  
1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.  
Died 22 July 1915.  
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted London.  
Son of Francis F. C. Stickings and Amy Stickings.  
Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 38.  
At the time of the 1901 census, the Stickings family resided at 3, Dutts Cottages, Offham, West Malling, Kent. Head of the house was 48 year old Maidstone, Kent native Frances F. C. Stickings, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer. Ned was recorded by the census enumerator as Neddie and as being 4 years old. In view of Ned’s recorded age in April 1901, it would appear that the time of his death he was about 18 years old. Ned was posted to France on 22 June 1915.

STICKINGS, WALTER THOMAS. Serjeant, 7521.  
2nd Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).  
Died 24 July 1915.  
Born Offham, Malling, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.  
Francis F. Stickings and Sarah Annie Stickings (née Coveney).  
At the time of the 1901 census, the Stickings family resided at Windmill Lane, Offham, West Malling, Kent. Head of the house was 45 year old Wrotham, Kent native Frances F. Stickings, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer. Walter was recorded by the census enumerator as being 18 years old and employed as an Agricultural Labourer. In view of Walter’s recorded age in April 1901, it would appear that the time of his death he was about 32 years old. Walter was posted to the Asiatic war theatre on 6 February 1915.
The Second World War
1939-1945

BELL, AREATAS. Driver, T/67696.
3 Armoured Divisional Troops Company, Royal Army Service Corps.
Died 31 May 1940. Aged 38.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Areatas and Minnie Bell (née Smith).
Husband of Eliza Kate Bell of Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Dunkirk Memorial, Nord, France. Column 134, and the
West Peckham, Maidstone, Kent civic war memorial.
Pre war member of the Royal Army Service Corps.

GOODSELL, JAMES JESSE. Sapper, 2198580.
22 Bomb Disposal Company, Royal Engineers.
Died 11 June 1941.
Born and resided Kent.
Buried St. Michael Churchyard Extension, Offham, West Malling, Kent

KING, WILLIAM GEORGE. Gunner, 849796.
95 Battery, 48 Light Anti Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died 1 December 1942. Aged 32.
Born Kent. Resided Surrey.
Son of Herbert and Roseanne King.
Husband of Gertrude Louisa King of Offham, West Malling, Kent.
Commemorated on the Yokohama Cremation Memorial, Yokohama War
Cemetery, Japan. Panel 3.
The 48 Light Anti Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery was a Territorial Army unit
that was formed in November 1940, from Batteries of 17 and 19 Light Anti
Aircraft Regiments, Royal Artillery. It was comprised of 49, 95, and 242 Batteries.
Following its formation, as part of the 29 Anti Aircraft Brigade, it served in Kent
until being posted to Java as part of the 16 Anti Aircraft Brigade, and was
equipped with 40mm Anti Aircraft guns. Less than a month after arriving at Java,
William’s regiment was captured when it fell to the Japanese. On 12 March
1942, the senior British, Australian and American commanders were summoned
to Bandoeng, where the formal instrument of surrender was signed in the
presence of the Japanese commander of the Bandoeng area, Lieutenant-
General Masao Maruyama, who assured them that the rights appertaining to the
protection of prisoners of war, as contained in the Geneva Convention would be
strictly adhered to by his country.
MILES, ERNEST JAMES.  
Died 20 July 1944. Aged 53.  
Husband of Eliza Miles of 2 Offham Place Cottages, Offham, West Malling, Kent.  
Ernest was injured at Church Farm, Offham, West Malling, Kent, and died later the same day, whilst he was a patient receiving treatment for his injuries at the Preston Hall Emergency Hospital, Aylesford, Maidstone, Kent.  
Commemorated on the West Peckham, Maidstone, Kent civic war memorial.

Post Second World War

DODD, FREDERICK. Able Seaman, C/JX290676.  
Royal Navy.  
Died 29 July 1947.  
Husband of Ann Emily Dodd of Offham, West Malling, Kent.  
Buried Brighton City Cemetery (Bear Road), Sussex.  
Grave Ref: Section Z.F.U. Grave 34.
Thomas Henry Bellingham
George Thomas Benson
Jabez Coleman
Herbert Haffenden
James Ernest Irvine
Frank Lockyer
Charles Martin
Walter Mills
Alfred Morgan
Harry Silver
Sydney Norley
Alfred Thomas Scott
Benjamin Stevens
Stephen Sutton
Alfred James Warrener
1939 – 1945

A. Bell

W. J. King

E. J. Miles
St MICHAEL’S OFFHAM

Sunday Services

9.30 a.m. Morning Service
1st Sunday - Morning Prayer
2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays Holy Communion
5th Sunday - B.C.P. Mattins

10.30 a.m. Sunday School
Every Sunday During Term Time

Rector: Canon R.B Stevenson
West Malling Vicarage
Tel. No. 01732 - 842245