

Crowle Soldiers' Walk

This walk commemorates the 18 men from Crowle, Sale Green and Huddington who lost their lives serving their country in the First World War. The circuit guides you through the fields and villages where they worked and lived before they left for France, Belgium, Turkey and Mesopotamia.

As you go through the village, it may look as if little has changed, but in 1914 many of the cottages were subdivided into smaller households, with cramped, dark rooms and no electricity or running water. Families were much larger and children were often farmed out to relatives to relieve overcrowding. Live-in jobs such as farm labourers and servants were much sought after. Both Crow and Sale Green were close-knit communities, and many of the 18 men joined up with their brothers, cousins and friends, whose names appear alongside theirs on a plaque in Crowle CofE First School

The numbers below refer to sites associated with the 18. A full biography of each man can be found "The Fallen", a book by Brian Humphreys, Stephen Denne and Richard Loudon, available at the Exhibition and in Crowle Post Office.

1. Amberley Cottage was where **Bertie Rogers** (1893-1915), a bricklayer, lived with his widowed mother and three siblings. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment and took part in the 2nd Battle of Ypres, Belgium, before being killed on patrol in no-man's land.

2. **John Bull** (1892-1918), the gardener at The Vicarage, lived at 1 Crowle Villas with his parents and eight siblings. He joined the Queen's Own Worcestershire Hussars and took part in the British Army last sword-drawn cavalry attack at Huj in the Sinai Desert in 1917. He died of malaria in Mesopotamia 17 days before the armistice was signed.

Further down the road, **Hubert Holt** (1894-1917), a bricklayer's labourer, lived at the tiny Thatch Cottage with eight other members of the Holt family. He joined the 9th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment with his cousin, **William Workman** (see below), and the two died in Mesopotamia on the same day at same battle.

3. **George Bromley** (1879-1918), a grocer's assistant from Stoke-on-Trent came to live at 1 White House Cottage with his wife and two young children in 1914. He was in the 1st Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters when he was killed during the final advance on Artois, France, four weeks before the armistice.

4. The Malthouse was divided into multiple households in the early 20th century.

Charles Wilks (1891-1917) lived here with his family, working as an assistant to his father who was carrier. His aunt ran a butcher's shop in the same building. Charles joined up after his two brothers died fighting with the 6th Battalion of the Somerset Regiment at Passchendaele in Belgium.

Sidney Hine (1899-1918) also lived here. He was the youngest of 12 and he joined the 2nd Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment. He died during a tank battle at Villars-Bretonneux in France, aged 18.

Albert Fincher (1894-1917) lived here as a child. He was a carter and cowman in Flyford Flavell, and took Sunday school at Crowle Methodist Hall. He joined the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment as a signaller and died during the Battle of Arras, at Bullecourt, France.

5. **Percy Hemming** (1884-1916) was the head teacher at Crowle School (not on walk) and lived in school house with his wife and two young children. He joined the 10th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment and died at La Boisselle during the Battle of the Somme.

Just around the corner at Bramley (now Springfield) Cottage, which was then the post office, lived **Percy Harrison** (1895-1915). He collected the mail and was fondly remembered as the village joker. The first Crowle boy to enlist, he joined the 4th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment and died in the Gallipoli Campaign aged 18.

6. Across the paddock is the back of the cottage in Foredraught Lane where the mother of **Benjamin Bunn** (1892-1918) was living when he died. After a childhood of hardship, Benjamin had emigrated to Canada, but he managed to visit his mother before he was killed near Lens, France, serving in the 27th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

7. From this point you can see:

a) Mordaunts and Rectory Farm. **William Workman** (1891-1917) grew up in the area by the two farms, before becoming a farm labourer at Hadzor. He joined the 9th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment and died during the same battle as his cousin, Hubert Holt, in Mesopotamia.

b) Froxmere Court, where **Tracey Perry** (1878-1917) worked as a gardener. He lived at the gardener's tied cottage, but had to move to Crowle village with his wife and three children when he enlisted. He joined the 8th Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment and died at Bullecourt near Arras, France.

c) The Manor House is on the site of Manor Farm where **Horace Sudlow** (1893-1918), the son of the manager of a chemist's shop in Malvern, lived briefly with his wife's parents before their wedding in 1915. He joined the 6th Battalion of the Worcester Regiment and died during the Spring Offensive on the Western Front, leaving behind his widow and baby daughter.

d) The grounds of Huddington Court. **Arthur Wells** (1891-1918) grew up in Huddington and later worked at the Droitwich Steam Bakery. He joined the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment and died at the Battle of the Lys, Belgium.

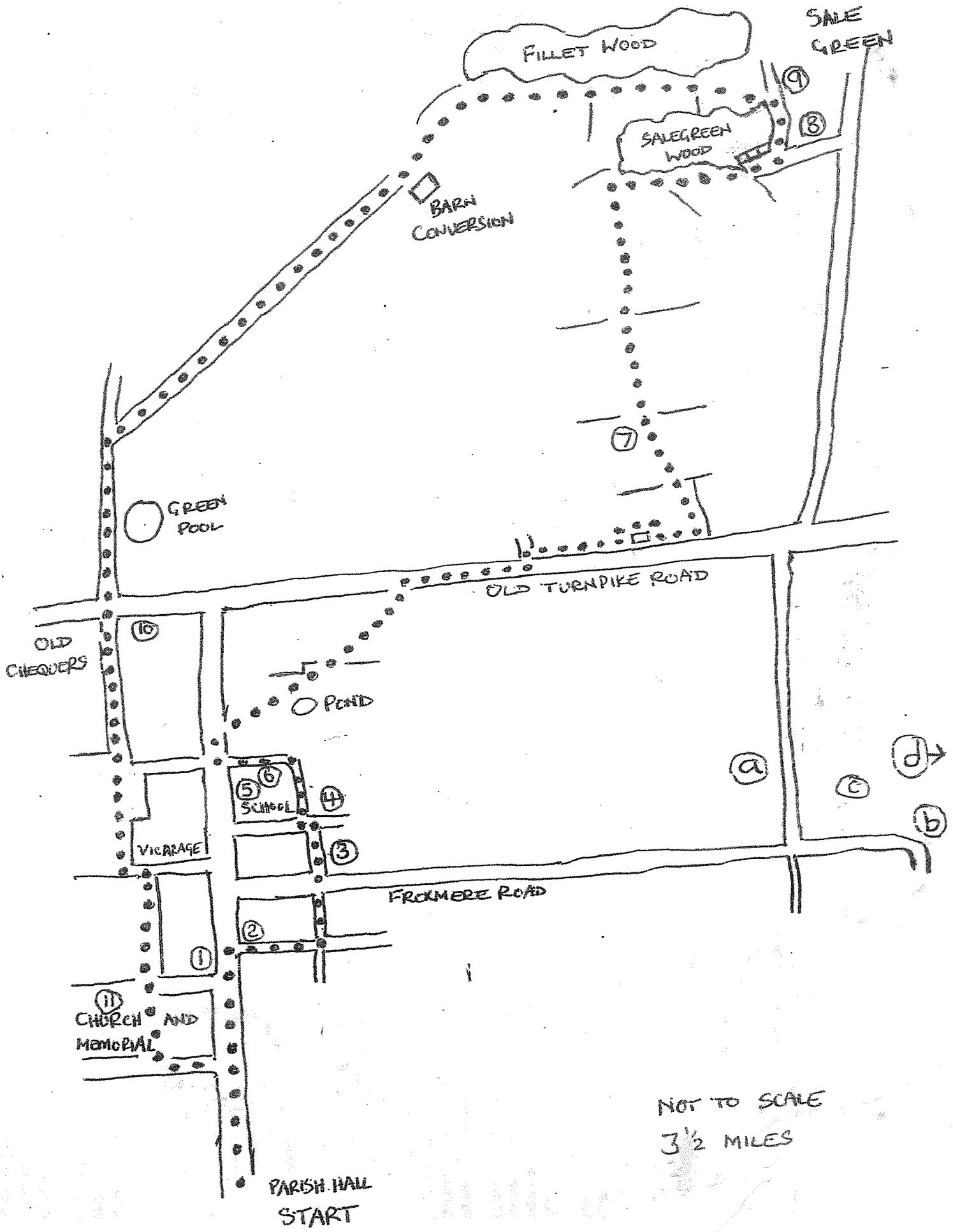
8. **William Perkins** (1883-1915) grew up near The Holly Bush Inn (now "Hollybush") and The Fox Inn, before moving to Huddington to work as a farm labourer. He joined the 4th Battalion of the Grenadier Guards with his friend, Henry Gittus, and died at the Battle of Loos, France, leaving a wife and five young children.

9. Garden Cottages were once three much smaller cottages, approached by the footpath from The Fox Inn.

Henry Gittus 1882-1918 worked at a limestone quarry and lived at the family home, 1 Garden Cottages. He joined the 4th Battalion of the Grenadier Guards and was killed at Vieux Berquin, France. **William Price** (1890-1918), a farm labourer and the oldest of 10, lived at 3 Garden Cottages with his aunt and 7 year-old sister. He enlisted with the 1st Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment and spent two years teaching PE at a training camp in Plymouth, before being killed during the Spring Offensive on the Western Front.

10. This is the site of the demolished blacksmith's shop of **George Till**, "Farrier George" (1877-1916). He lived behind the forge at Anvil Cottage with his wife and three sons, and joined the 111th Horse Transport Company of the 22nd Division of the Army Service Corps to serve as a farrier. He died in Malta of malaria.

11. All 18 names of the fallen are on the War Memorial, St John's Church, Crowle, erected in 1919.



NOT TO SCALE
 3 1/2 MILES