
Suffolk Roll of Honour

After the Great War it was decided that the memorial to the fallen from the Administrative County of East Suffolk should take the practical form of a new wing attached to the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital in Anglesea Road, Ipswich. The building was funded by public subscription and opened on 28 July 1924. Unlike most war memorials the names of the men and women who had given their lives were not recorded anywhere in it. It was therefore decided that a list should be compiled of the dead - not just of East Suffolk but of the two Administrative Counties of East and West Suffolk, because contributions to the Hospital extension had been received from both counties.

A circular letter was therefore sent out in January 1923 to the Chairmen of Parish and District Councils, inviting them to 'procure the names of the men and women belonging to, or having associations with your Parish', and to submit them, with details of rank, 'name of Regiment or Ship or description of service' and 'honours or distinctions'.

In July 1924, after a number of reminder letters had been sent, the organisers felt that the list of names was as complete as it was likely to be. The information received was sorted alphabetically and written up in a volume by Graily Hewitt of Treyford (near Midhurst) in West Sussex. Hewitt also designed the glass-topped case in which the book was to be displayed. The case and the book were handed over to the custody of the East Suffolk County Council on 7 October 1930 and are now on display at Endeavour House, the headquarters of Suffolk County Council. The Roll and its case were paid for from the money raised for the hospital extension.

Most parishes sent in all the information they had been asked for. However a number of places, including a large number of the middling-sized market towns - Beccles, Haverhill, Southwold, Newmarket, Woodbridge, Mildenhall, Felixstowe, Leiston, Framlingham - sent in only the names, without any information about rank or regiment having simply copied the names from the war memorial as had been suggested:

'If your parish has a war memorial we would suggest you might send us a copy of the names and other particulars which appear thereon. We are aware that in some instances all the information indicated in the form is not given on the local memorials, but we believe that parishes would prefer that the names of all should be included in the County Record, rather than that any should be omitted merely because the fullest details are not available'

It was '*difficult*' or '*impossible*' to collect all the required information as the war had ended over four years earlier, families had moved away or the people who remained had either forgotten or might not want to remember details. There were also many cases where identical names occurred in the lists of more than one parish. The compilers of the Roll decided that no man should be listed more than once, even though he might have equally valid connections with more than one place. Therefore where two or more places had submitted what looked like the same name, they were written to and asked to explain the connection with their town or village. When the replies were received by the

Secretary to the County War Memorial Committee, he decided which place had the most plausible claim on the man in question. He left no written guidelines as to how he had reached his decisions, each case seeming to have been decided on its merits.

The response to the appeal for names and information about the Fallen was nearly 100% in East and West Suffolk. When the compilers decided that they would not send out any more reminders, returns had been received from all the towns and villages in Suffolk except three. These were Kirkley, Leavenheath and Wissington. In order to make the electronic version of the Roll as full as possible, the names of men from these parishes have been taken from the local war memorials and added to the Roll - just as happened with many places at the time. In the case of Kirkley, many of the names on the war memorial had already been sent in by Lowestoft, Pakefield or Kessingland, and these names have been left under those places. Similarly some of the names on the Leavenheath memorial had been submitted by Assington or Stoke-by-Nayland.

There was one other place that did not feature in the County Roll of Honour, the county town of Ipswich. Ipswich was a County Borough, and quite separate from the Administrative County of East Suffolk. The County Roll therefore did not include any Ipswich names. Instead they were recorded separately on the Borough War Memorial, which was unveiled in Christchurch Park on 3 May 1924. The bronze panels behind the cenotaph contain all the information requested by the compilers of the County Roll of Honour, and this data has been incorporated into this electronic version of the Roll, so that the names of men and women from the whole of the modern county can be accessible in one database.

One result of doing this is that names appear on the Ipswich list which seem to be identical with some submitted by parishes on the edges of the town but just outside its boundaries - Whitton, Westerfield and Rushmere St Andrew in particular. As there is often no way now of proving that the names related to the same men, the two versions have been left in the database, on the grounds that it was better to have a man listed twice than for him not to appear at all.

Useful links:

- Detailed research has recently been done on some communities in Suffolk. For example, [email Rod Gibson](#) for information on Kedington, Barnardiston, Great and Little Wratting, Haverhill, Stoke-by-Clare and Withersfield.
- For information about names on any Suffolk War Memorial and more information about the Roll of Honour, contact the Suffolk Record Office.
- Local sources of information include newspapers, parish magazines, rolls of honour and lists of local men serving in the forces.
- Records in the [National Archive](#).
- [Soldiers Died in the Great War](#), available on CD-ROM, published by the Naval and Military Press.
- [The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour database](#).
- The Cross of Sacrifice series of books by S D and D B Jarvis (6 volumes, based on the CWGC registers).
- The indexes of military deaths at the [Family Record Centre](#)

Bury Record Office

77 Raingate Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 2AR

Telephone: 01284 741212

Email: bury.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich Record Office

Gatacre Road, Ipswich, IP1 2LQ

Telephone: 01473 263910

Email: ipswich.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Lowestoft Record Office

Clapham Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DR

Telephone: 01502 674680

Email: lowestoft.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk Archives website:

www.suffolkarchives.co.uk

Opening hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday:

9.30am – 4.30pm

Wednesday and Sunday: Closed

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