

Biddulph Town Council



Centenary Service

1 May 2022

THE UNVEILING—29 APRIL 1922

The War Memorial at the junction of Congleton Road and John Street was the second memorial dedicated to the fallen of the First World War to be erected in Biddulph. The first was erected in 1921 in St Lawrence's churchyard, with the names of 73 soldiers from Biddulph and the surrounding district.

The proposal for a second memorial met with controversy, as some thought having two memorials unnecessary. Following the donation of land at Albert Square by Biddulph Urban District Council, a War Memorial was unveiled by Corporal J J Gibson on the 29 April 1922. Funded through public subscription, a life sized sculpture of a soldier leaning on a reversed rifle, with a jagged piece of rock carved behind, was created in Italian Carrara marble by Jonah Cottrell, who had a monumental mason's yard on Congleton Road. The soldier stands on a granite plinth, with the names of the 73 fallen soldiers inscribed in gilt on the four sides.

At about 3.30pm, a procession, which was formed at the Public Hall and headed by the Biddulph Prize Silver Band, marched by way of King Street and John Street to Albert Square. Corporal Gibson of the first Battalion Grenadier Guards, was severely wounded in the Great War and so performed the unveiling from his wheelchair.



THE UNVEILING—29 APRIL 1922

During the service the hymns, 'O God Our Help in Ages Past' and 'For all the Saints' were sung and prayers were offered by Mr J Hamlet (Childerplay Mission). A lesson was read by the Rev W A Unsworth (Wesleyan Church).

The Rev J K Cowburn, the Rev F A Ingham and Mr W I Beech addressed the crowd and the Biddulph Prize Silver Band gave a rendering of the Dead March in Saul. The service concluded with the singing of the National Anthem and the sounding of the Last Post. Wreaths were laid and children laid spring flowers, which they had picked, around the base of the monument.



Following World War Two, a granite plaque was placed at the base of the monument to accommodate the names of 39 soldiers who had fallen in that conflict. Around that time the protective railings were installed.

At the end of the millennium a second granite plaque was placed which has the names of 9 soldiers omitted from World War One, 10 soldiers omitted from World War Two and 3 soldiers who fell in other conflicts later in the 20th century.

In later years, the statue has acquired the affectionate name 'Albert'.

CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

Elements of the unveiling service were created 100 years later, remembering the historic event and those who gave their lives so that we may be free.

In war, there are no unwounded soldiers and our thoughts were also with those who returned to our community.

Biddulph Town Crier—an introduction by John Robinson.

Hymn—‘O God Our Help in Ages Past’.

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy
blast,
And our eternal home.*

*Within the shadow of thy
throne,
Still may we dwell secure.
Sufficient in thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.*

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while life shall last.
And our eternal home.*

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748. Music: William Croft, 1677–1727

Prayer—Linda Reeves —Life Stream Church.

Reading—John 15 v 9-17—Councillor Tony Hall
English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church.



CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

Biddulph Town Crier, John Robinson, a cry with historical information courtesy of Michael Turnock and Adrian Lawton of the Biddulph and District Genealogical and Historical Society:

OYEZ! OYEZ! OYEZ!

A CENTURY OF REMEMBRANCE HAS NOW PASSED,
SINCE BIDDULPH'S HEROES BREATHED THEIR LAST.

THEIR NAMES DESERVE TO BE REMEMBERED AND CHERISHED.
THOSE TOWN HEROES, WHO WENT TO FIGHT, AND PERISHED.

COTTRELL'S OF BIDDULPH MADE THIS COMMEMORATION.
PAID FOR BY THE PUBLIC BY GENEROUS DONATION.

THE NAMES OF THE FALLEN ARE ENGRAVED HERE IN STONE.
WITH OTHER NAMES ADDED, AS THEY BECAME KNOWN.

A SOLEMN PROCESSION OF THOUSANDS, LED BY A POLICE BAND,
MARCHED THROUGH THE TOWN, TO WHERE WE ALL NOW STAND.

CORPORAL J J GIBSON PERFORMED THE UNVEILING
AND IN LATER YEARS THERE WAS ADDED THIS RAILING.

ALBERT IS NOW ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD,
EACH NAME BELOW HIS FEET, STILL HAS A STORY TO BE TOLD.

FATHERS, UNCLES, SONS, AND BROTHERS
THEY WOULD NEVER RETURN TO WIVES, DAUGHTERS AND MOTHERS.

LET ALERT STAND, FOR AS LONG AS MANKIND SHALL REMEMBER.
YEAR UPON YEAR, FROM JANUARY TO DECEMBER.

TO EACH OF YOU HERE, I ASK BEFORE YOU GO,
WHEN YOU LOOK AT ALBERT, THINK OF THOSE NAMES BELOW.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

Reading—‘There Stands a Soldier’

Read by local school pupil, Henry Amison, from Our Lady of Grace School.

*There stands a soldier,
Tall, proud and still
Guarding and protecting,
The rights of all who will...*

*All who will remember,
All who live so free
In this great country, England,
Home for you and me.*

Written by Audrey Waters.



Re-dedication of the Cenotaph- Rev. Keith Jones, an alternative to the unveiling in 1922.



CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

Unveiling of a new plaque— by Pte Alex Oakes of the Mercian Regiment. Also attending were Pte Derby by the 32nd (the Ram and Mascot of the Mercian Regiment) with his handlers Ram Mayor Cpl Philip Thornton and Ram Orderly Pte Joe Holmes.

The Biddulph Cenotaph Centenary – 2022

The memorial was unveiled by Corporal J.J. Gibson on April 29th. 1922

to the memory of his fallen comrades in World War One.

It now includes the names of those who fell in

World War Two and in later conflicts.

This Cenotaph will continue to provide a

Lasting memorial to them all for the future.

‘We will remember them’

Hymn— ‘For All the Saints’.

*For all the Saints who from their
labours rest,*

*Who thee by faith before the world
confessed,*

Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Oh, may thy soldiers, faithful, true,
and bold,*

*Fight as the Saints who nobly fought of
old,*

*And win with them the victor’s crown of
gold.*

Alleluia, Alleluia.

From earth’s wide bounds, from ocean’s farthest coast,

Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,

Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Alleluia, Alleluia.



Text: William Walsham How, 1823–1897. Music: SINE NOMINE, by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958. From the English Hymnal.

CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

A reflection from the Deputy Mayor of Biddulph, Councillor Jim Garvey:

It is my great privilege to speak to you this morning on behalf of the Mayor of Biddulph, Councillor Sylvia Rushton, and my colleagues at Biddulph Town Council. We are delighted that so many of you have come to see the rededication of the cenotaph and to experience a very similar service to the original ceremony 100 years ago.

Those who work to support the community in Biddulph are custodians of important memorials within our time. It is not wealth, social standing or our role within the Town Council that will ensure we are remembered, but our actions. We must ensure that we represent our communities and make decisions that will protect and enhance our town, as Councillors did 100 years ago.

The cenotaph in Biddulph town centre is known and loved by those who live in the town, and those who return to visit. In November each year, there are several hundred people who congregate here to reflect in their own ways on their families and friends who have been affected by war.

100 years ago, the Rev. Ingham addressed the crowd at the unveiling and delivered a dramatic and foreboding message: When the youngest boy grows to be an old man, may this memorial stand where it stands now, and the names engraved thereon be as legible as they were at the unveiling.

He said, this monument has been erected in grateful memory. If ever the community forgot that memory, Rev. Ingham hoped the forces of the air would blast the monument to the ground, and as it lay in a thousand pieces, it would be a reminder to them of their base ingratitude. He concluded that the men who left their homes went out to save our homes, and by the Grace of God and their lives, we had inherited a great future. As a result of what the men had done, that victory had given our lives an enhanced value.

Today, we make the commitment that the memory will not be forgotten. We will ensure that the cenotaph is maintained and that we will provide a place for our community to reflect, grieve and remember loved ones.

We thank those in the Biddulph Urban District Council who strived 100 years ago to fund and install this memorial. We will remember them.

CENTENARY SERVICE—1 MAY 2022

Floral tributes—wreaths of spring flowers were laid by the Town Mayor of Biddulph, Councillor Sylvia Rushton and the Biddulph Branch of the Royal British Legion, represented by its Chairman, Elaine Rice. The Mayor was assisted by Knypersley First School pupils Charlotte Marsh and Sam Chandler. LCpl Louie Marshall of the Mercian Regiment also laid a wreath.



The Musical Director, Anthony Marks conducted the Biddulph Male Voice Choir in singing 'Mansions of the Lord' and 'My Lord, What a Morning', accompanied on the piano by Wendy Brown.



National Anthem

Last post played by Eddie Pollet, with second bugle chorus by William 'Billy' Huskinson.

Final Prayers: Amy Wyatt (Pastor, Oasis Community Church) invited the community to lay spring flowers and meet afterwards in the Town Hall for refreshments.

ROLL OF HONOUR—1914-1918

Harry Bailey	Joseph Evenson	George Savage
John Bailey	Fred Foden	Walter Shaw
James Barlow	Frank Fox	William Shawcross
Jonathan Barlow	Albert Goldshaw	Robert Sherratt
James H Barnett	Ernest Griffin	Harold H Simpson
William Barnett	James Hambleton	John B Slack
William Biddulph	Clarence Hollinshead	H W Smith
James A Booth	William Kennerley	John W Smith
John T Booth	Arthur Lacey	Harry Stockton
John T Bowers	Thomas Lancaster	Fred Stott
John Bowyer	Charles Lancaster	James Stubbs
Frank Brammer	Robin Lees	Herbert Taylor
Ernest Brereton	Harry Lievesley	Alfred Whalley
John Brown	Walter Lovelock	Reginald Whalley
Austin Burke	John E Machin	Wilfred Whitehurst
William Callimore	George Maudsley	Jack Wilshaw
Jonathan W Camm	Abram Millward	Jesse Wright
Tom Charlesworth	Harold W Minshall	Joseph Yates
Charles Charlesworth	S Mitchell	Charles W Yorke
Arthur Bateman	William Morris	
Cheetham	Charles Morris	
Jonathan Cheetham	Jack Moss	
Arthur Clay	Charles T Mellor	
George A Copeland	J Nevill	
William Copeland	W Henry Nixon	
Charles Cotterill	Allen Pemberton	
W Herbert Cottrell	Charles Pointon	
James A Casey	Harold T Powell	
George Crompton	John Reeves	
John Doorbar	John Harold Rhodes VC	
Henry Duff	Harold Roberts	
Leonard Edwards	David Robinson	

ROLL OF HONOUR—1939-1945

Lewis Adams	Reginald Dutton	F Arnold Middleton
Samuel Allcock	Fred R Facey	Albert Newton
Kenneth Bailey	Frank E Fox	Robert Oliver
William Baker	George Gibson	J Hedley Oultram
Percy Beech	J Hedley Hancock	Peter W Pimlott
Leonard Boden	Colin Hayward	S Poole
T Arthur Booth	G Johnson	Samuel Rafferty
Enoch Brereton	Fred G K Jones	Bert Rhodes
Thomas Brereton	Walter S Jukes	Jack Simner
S Bromley	George F Keeling	Harold Tatton
T Arnold Brough	T Harry Lancaster	George R Taylor
Frank Byatt	William Lancaster	Ivor Townsend
Frank Carthy	Thomas Lawton	William West
Fred J Chaddock	Cyril Little	Jack Wilshaw
Reginald Copeland	Herbert Lovatt	W J T Wise
E Dolphin	Harry Lowe	
Jesse Dooley	William Lowe	

1952

Harry Holland

1976

Frank A Fallows

2007

Johnathon D Wysoczan

THANK YOU

Thank you to Biddulph and District Genealogical and Historical Society, Biddulph Male Voice Choir, English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, John Robinson, Judy Tingle, Knypersley First School, Life Stream Church, Neil Nevil, Rev Keith Jones, Oasis Community Church, Our Lady of Grace School, Reubens, The Mercian Regiment and The Royal British Legion.

This booklet has been created by Biddulph Town Council as a souvenir of the centenary of 'Albert'. We hope it serves as a memento of a memorable year in our history.

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