

Greenford War Memorial

This simple cross is the centre of the remembrance services held in November each year as a mark of those servicemen who fought in the wars of the twentieth century.

After the First World War, Greenford, as with most other villages in rural England, decided that a fitting memorial to its men who fell in the recent conflict, should be erected. Out of a population of 1,148 in 1921, 19 men had been killed in the war.

In early 1920 the memorial fund was formed with 47 members. Each contributed a sum of money, but there was little support at first. It was even mooted that the money should be returned. The committee also suspended its sittings. However, once a receipt book was placed at the post office, more money was contributed and by the autumn more money was raised. Mr H E Chiosso, the treasurer, asked for further contributions, as £150 was needed to pay for the memorial. Councillor Alfred Cooper made the decision about having the cross.



Work was eventually completed in early 1921, carried out by Frederick Pushman of Hanwell. The cross was made of Portland stone and stood 13 feet high. Apart from the names of the 19 men it included the following words: “Ye who live on mid English pastures green, Remember us, and think what might have been” and “Their Name Liveth for Evermore”.

The memorial was unveiled on Sunday afternoon, 12 June 1921. According to the local press, “In the presence of nearly everybody in Greenford as well as a large number of visitors from Ealing and Hanwell, the memorial cross...was unveiled”. Some people had been specially invited, but most had turned up on their own initiative. Among those present were the social elite of the parish such as Lord and Lady Lawrence, and Lady Mosley (her son, Oswald, was the local MP). There was also the band of the Hanwell Church Lads’ Brigade, the choir of Holy Cross Church, Greenford and members of the newly formed Greenford Park Lodge. Last but not least, there were the near relatives of the Greenford men who fell during the war; they had been specially invited and stood inside the green, in the immediate vicinity of the cross.

No less a personage than Mr Fane de Salis, chairman of the Middlesex County Council, presided over the ceremonies. He removed the Union flag from the cross and made a short speech, praising the men who had gone off to fight and commiserating with the relatives of the fallen. Wreaths were placed, one of behalf of the people of Greenford, the other on the part of the council. Greenford Urban District Council (Greenford was not incorporated into Ealing until 1926) decided to accept and maintain the cross as council property.

After a closing prayer had been said, there were other events. Lady Thurston provided tea to 200 children in the village hall. A grander event was the garden party at the Cottage, a home of the Lawrences. There was musical entertainment as well as refreshments. It had been a day to remember for all taking part, and, for the future, a memorial for evermore.

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