

Chesterfield FC's Roll of Honour

On Remembrance Sunday, people attend services up and down the country to respect those who gave their lives in defence of their nation, pausing for a minute or two in quiet contemplation.

There isn't a family in this country which hasn't been shaped in some way by the loss of loved ones in war, and the family that is our football club has given up its share of players and officials to the greater good. In tribute, we list them here.

1914-18:



Albert Edward Tye was a decent wing-half with a decent Chesterfield Town between 1904 and 1906. A painter by trade, he joined the 4th Battalion of the North Staffords and was posted to Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) in 1916. Albert was listed as "Missing, presumed dead" after the battle for the Hai Salient, near Kut, on January 25th, 1917.

Chesterfield-born **Arthur Revill** saw service with the Grenadier Guards before the war and was called back to the colours in 1914, joining the second battalion. He saw action at Loos, died of wounds suffered there on 29th September 1915, and is buried at Lapugnoy, in France.

Billy Gerrish was a Chesterfield Town player in 1912 but his time here was curtailed by a broken leg. He joined the 17th Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, the famous "Footballers' Battalion," and was killed in action on The Somme on August 8th, 1916.

Denaby-born Sergeant Major **Joe Smith** was a powerful centre-half who came to Chesterfield Town from Birmingham in 1914, and joined up halfway through the 1914-15 season, along with his pals in Chesterfield's half-back line. He too chose to join the Footballers' Battalion and died at Serre, in France, on November 13th, 1916 - the last action in the Battle of the Somme. He was mentioned in dispatches for bravery that saw him continue the rush into battle despite being shot.

Fred Bulcock was a half-back who joined from Stonegravel Red Rose in 1911 and played a few times for the reserves before joining Hardwick Colliery and Staveley. A lance-corporal in the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, he lost his life on the Somme in July 1916.

Brampton-born forward **Jimmy Knowles** played a few times for the first team in 1914-15 and scored with remarkable freedom for the reserves. He joined the 5th battalion of the Sherwood Foresters and saw service in Ireland before being posted to France. He was wounded in the advance to the Hindenburg Line in 1917 and succumbed to these wounds at Boulogne on May 1st of that year.

Lieutenant **Charles Newcombe** was a former Head Boy at the Chesterfield Grammar School and a Derbyshire cricketer, and played for Chesterfield Town as an amateur in 1911 and 1912. Serving with the 7th battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, he was killed in action on December 27th, 1915, at Fleuraix.

Albert Edward Nuttall, a director of the Chesterfield Town club, closed down his drapery business in July 1916 and joined the King's (Liverpool) Regiment. He was posted as missing after a battle on July 31st 1917, and was confirmed as having been killed in action a month later. In paying tribute, The Derbyshire Courier noted that "His breezy good nature and generous spirit won for him a host of friends." He is remembered on the Menin Gate memorial at Ypres.

Jimmy Revill was a Sheffield United man who guested for the wartime Chesterfield Town club and was posted to the 104th Field Company, Royal Engineers. He was killed in action on the first day of the Arras offensive, at the Battle of the Scarpe, on April 9th, 1917, and is buried with 3000 other British soldiers at Bethune.

George Arthur Woolley played in goal for Chesterfield Town during the 1901-2 season and was a miner in Codnor when war began. In 1917 he served with the 117th Tunnelling Company of the Royal Engineers. He was killed during a gas attack on 22nd July 1917 in earthworks near Hooze, while trying to rescue colleagues from a dug-out that had been filled with gas. The workings were destroyed by artillery before anyone could be recovered, and George is remembered on the RE grave at Railway Wood, east of Ypres.

Gerald Graham played for the old Town side in the Midland League during the 1910-11 season. Little is known of this Brampton-born moulder's football career beyond spells with the Town club and Rotherham County, but we know that he served with the 21st West Yorkshire regiment and was wounded three times in the space of ten days in 1917; after recuperation at home he returned to France and took part in the Battle of Valenciennes, losing his life on November 1st 1918, just days before the armistice.

Lieutenant **Vernon Bowmer**, of Crich, played once for the Town side. He served with the 16th Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters. He survived the shooting war but was badly wounded, and died in a military hospital at Bath on October 9th, 1919. He won the Military Cross in 1917 for conspicuous gallantry in action, having organised bombing parties that, according to his citation, "accounted for a large number of Germans."

Alfred Cooper, the son of the Grimsby Town Chairman, guested once for the Town club in an emergency when the team arrived short of three players for a match at Blundell Park in March 1917. Six months later and just two months after his 18th birthday, he enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps. Posted to the 7th London Regiment on August 5th 1918, he was wounded in action around Maricourt, on the Somme, and died of those wounds 22 days after joining his regiment. He lies in the Daours Communal Cemetery.

A goalkeeper with Kimberley St. John's named **Eustice Clay** played for Chesterfield Town in a public practice match at the start of the 1906-7 season. No further interest was taken in him and he returned to Kimberley before emigrating to New Zealand in 1912. During the war he volunteered for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and was posted to Egypt, where he contracted malaria and passed away in a Jerusalem hospital on October 12th 1918.

1939-45:

Albert Bonass played 98 times for Chesterfield, scoring 26 goals from the wing. He joined the RAF as a wireless operator and lost his life when his aircraft crashed at Tockwith, near York, on a training flight on October 9th, 1945.

Fred Fisher was another winger, who played 16 times for the club. He served in Lancasters with the 166th Squadron and was killed when his aircraft came down near Aubigny, in France, on July 26th, 1944.

Allan Sliman enjoyed the most significant playing career of all these men. He played 241 games over seven seasons in the pivotal centre-half position. He joined the RAF in 1943 and was posted to the 75th (New Zealand) Squadron. His outfit took part in the destruction of Hamburg and the famous raid on the V1 factories at Peenemunde. Sliman was mortally wounded during a mission to bomb U-boat yards at Kiel on April 13th/14th 1945, and is buried at Chelmsford.

Arthur Bacon, the Birdholme-born forward of 1932-3, was employed by Rolls Royce in Derby during World War Two. A member of the company's fire brigade, he was killed in a bombing raid on the city on July 27th, 1942.

Flight Sergeant **Bob Wrigglesworth** had a season here as an amateur in 1935, hoping to emulate the professional success of his older brother Billy. Bob joined the RAF as an air gunner and was posted to 38 squadron, flying Wellingtons from Egypt. His aircraft was shot down over Greece on January 23rd, 1943. Bob is buried in the Phaleron military cemetery, near Athens, and Spireites fan Dave Sheppard took this photo of his headstone on a visit to the cemetery in 2010.



Gunner **Leslie Baxter** joined Chesterfield in 1932 and had two years of reserve football before moving on to New Brighton. He served with the 89th battery of the 35th Light AA Regiment of the royal Artillery. He was in Burma when that country was overrun by Japanese forces in 1942 and became a prisoner of war in February of that year. His death is recorded as having taken place on September 19th 1943. He is buried in the Thanbyuzayat War Cemetery, in Myanmar.

Lieutenant **Alastair K "Alec" Campbell** served in both wars. He was manager of Chesterfield for a short time in 1927. He lost his life near Portsmouth on June 16th 1943, while serving with the Royal Artillery.

"At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them."