

St James's War Memorial

During 1916 it was proposed to have a war memorial for those "resident in, or connected with, Hampton Hill, who have fallen, or may fall, in the War". After the war the Vestry ordered that "no artificial wreaths under glass should be placed on the graves". So it was decided to erect a memorial to all those parishioners who had lost their lives during the war.

The Revd Coad-Pryor reported in the magazine of December 1918: "For the first time since I have been Vicar I am able to wish you all a very Happy Christmas without the shadow of war hanging over our Country and our homes. It was very delightful to see so many of you in Church to thank God for His great mercy in giving Victory to the Allied Countries, and our very earnest prayer must now be that we may be led to a durable and righteous peace. I am glad that it has been decided to erect a memorial in the Village Churchyard to those who have given their lives for us in the war. A strong and representative Committee of more than thirty has been elected to make the necessary arrangements, and it is hoped that a donation, however small, will be given by every inhabitant in the Parish. You will shortly be called upon for that purpose. It will be a thank offering for the safety and deliverance which the sacrifice of these brave men and lads has secured for us."



The July 1920 magazine reported: "May 26th, will long live in the memories of those who took part in the impressive service of unveiling the War Memorial; the Bishop's address, the singing, the quiet sad thankfulness of the occasion all contributed to make it a real 'Red Letter' day in the Parish. The arrangements were carried out with a restful reverence which we must all have felt. There was careful preparation of the 'Form of Service', containing the names of those whose death of honour we were commemorating."

The inscribed plinth is surmounted by a tall stone Latin cross, shown above left, which is visible from nearly all the churchyard. The memorial was designed by PM Andrews and eventually unveiled on May 26th, 1920. It bears the following inscription: "Their name liveth for ever more. These died the death of honour for God, King and Country in the Great War 1914-1919." At the intersection of the cross head is a crowned sword, carved in relief. Roses are carved onto four sides of the octagonal cross shaft, which rises from a small octagonal plinth which stands on a two-staged base. The upper stage of the base is formed of four broad pilasters on which panels record, in metal lettering, the names of those who died during the First World War. The lower, octagonal, stage is carved with a general dedicatory inscription and floral designs. On the lower stage there are four separate panels which record the names of those who died during the Second World War. The memorial is surrounded by the original low bollards carrying a chain.

The war memorial actually commemorates those men and women from local families who died in the forces in the service of their country during both the two world wars. The plinth of the memorial is inscribed with the names of 124 such men who died in the first world war (1914-18) and the 29 men and women who died in the second world war (1939-45). Wreaths are laid at the War Memorial in a ceremony on Remembrance Sunday every year.

The war memorial became a listed monument in 2015. The recommendation for Grade II-listed status came from Historic England as part of their First World War Commemoration Project. It described the monument as 'tall and striking' and 'an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community and the sacrifice it made' in two world wars. The church already has Grade II-listed protection. Read the [Report](#).

