

ALEXANDRA ROAD UNITED METHODIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

1914-1919

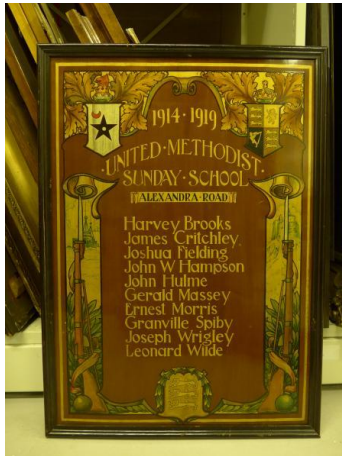


Image by Joan Secker Wlodarczyk. The memorial is now housed at Tameside Archives.

Remembering the men of Alexandra Road Methodist Sunday School, Ashton Under Lyne who gave their lives in the First World War. The names marked with an asterisk are also commemorated on the war memorial at Christ Church, Oldham Road.

Research by Meg Gain 2026

***Harvey Brooks 1896-1917 Service Number: 351817**

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 2/9th Battalion

Harvey Brooks was born in Ashton under Lyne in 1896, son of Richard Harvey Brooks and his wife, Harriet nee Oldfield. His parents had married at St Michael's Parish Church in 1896.

In the 1901 census Harvey was four years old, living with his parents and a younger brother, Frank aged 7 months. His father was working as a cotton spinner and the family lived at 43 Howard Street, Ashton.

By 1911 Richard Brooks, Harvey's father, was a widower (Harriet Brooks had died in 1907 aged 33) with three children: Harvey aged 14 was a 'learner' as a cotton

operative. He had two younger brothers: Frank aged 10 and Eric aged 8. They were living at 18 Elizabeth Street, off Henrietta St Ashton.

Lance Sgt Harvey Brooks aged 21 was killed in France on 9 Oct 1917. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

James Critchley 1900-1918 Service Number: 32444

Regiment and Unit: Devonshire Regiment 1/5th Battalion

James Critchley was born in the first quarter of 1900 in Ashton under Lyne, son of Albert Critchley and his wife Emma Armitage. His parents married in Ashton in 1886. In the 1901 census James was aged one, living with his parents and four older siblings: Sarah Annie, Ethel, Elizabeth Ann and George. His father was employed as an electric motor merchant. The family lived at 53 Katherine Street. By 1911, in the next census, the family had moved to 16 Romney Street. One of James' older sisters, Elizabeth Ann had died in 1902 aged 8. A younger sister, Emily aged 8 had been born between the censuses. James was 11 years old. In addition to Albert, now working in a cotton warehouse and his wife Emma, there were five children and a boarder, a 50-year-old widower, named James Armitage. This is likely to be a relative of Mrs. Critchley.

Private James Critchley first joined the Cheshire Regiment and had the service number 52440. He later transferred to the Devonshire Regiment with service number 32444. James was killed in action on 14 Sept 1918 in France. He was buried in the Ribecourt Railway Cemetery. Grave reference C4, son of Albert and Emma Critchley of 16 Romney Street, Ashton under Lyne.

Ribecourt was taken on 20 November 1917 by the 6th Division but at the end of the Battle of Cambrai, it remained practically on the British front line. It was lost in March 1918. It was recaptured by the 3rd and 42nd (East Lancashire) Divisions on 27 September 1918, but James had lost his life by then. He was 18 years old.

His name is shown on the grave of his mother, Emma Critchley died 1935 and his sister, Elizabeth Ann, died 1902, which is in Dukinfield Cemetery.

Joshua Fielding 1899-1918 Service Number 72851

Regiment and Unit: Welsh Regiment 15th Battalion

Joshua Fielding was born on 23 June 1899 in Shaw, Oldham, eldest child of Benjamin Fielding and his wife Sarah Alice Wolfenden. In the 1901 census Joshua, aged 1, lived with his parents at 72 Lansdowne Road, Chadderton. His father was employed as a stationer and newsagent. By 1911 the family had moved to Ashton, and they were living at 276 Stockport Road. Joshua (11) had three younger siblings: Joseph (9), Ella (5) and Eric (1). Joshua's father had a newsagent business. Sarah's unmarried sister Marie was helping in the business.

As soon as he was 18, Joshua enlisted at Ashton on 27 July 1917. His service records show that he was 5 feet, 5 inches tall with a fresh complexion and brown hair. He was assigned to the Training Reserve with service number 62085. He gave his address as 'Fernlea' Carlton Road, Smallshaw, Ashton. He was transferred to the Welsh Regiment on 5 April 1918 on his arrival in France at Le Havre.

Private Joshua Fielding was killed in action on 8 October 1918. He was buried in the Moulin-de-Pierre British Cemetery in Villers-Outreaux. Grave reference B.10. The CWGC entry gives his parents' names Benjamin and Sarah Alice Fielding and their address as 10 Nursery Avenue, Onchan, Isle of Man. They may have moved there for the rest of the war as, by 1921, they are back in Ashton, living at 76 Stockport Road with their three remaining children: Joseph, Ella and Eric.

Later his father was informed that his son had been awarded a Military Medal for 'conspicuous gallantry' at Gouzeaucourt Ridge in France. Gouzencourt was the scene of fierce fighting during 1917-1918.

An article in the Manchester Evening News of 24 May 1919 "*A posthumous honour has been awarded to Private Joshua Fielding, son of an Ashton newsagent, Mr B. Fielding who has received an official communication that the Military Medal has been awarded to his late son who was killed in action on 8th October last whilst serving with the 15th (Carmarthenshire) Battalion, Welsh Regiment. Private Fielding was acting as a runner at Gouseaucourt Ridge through the trying days of September 18-20. During those three days he was the only runner who managed to maintain uninterrupted communication with Battalion headquarters from the right flank over an area exposed for 2000 yards to murderous barrage of machine gun fire from the enemy's position in Gouseaucourt.*"

Joshua Fielding is also commemorated on the Ashton Civic Memorial and the Hurst War Memorial.

John W Hampson 1889-1916 Service Number: 268394

Regiment and Unit: Kings (Liverpool) Regiment 7th Battalion

John William Hampson born on 18 Sept 1889 in Audenshaw is the most likely match, but I have been unable to find anything to link him to Ashton or Alexandra Rd Methodist chapel.

John William was the son of William Henry Hampson and Mary Jane Dearden. He was baptised at the Methodist New Connexion chapel on Shepley Road, Audenshaw on 17 Nov 1889. He had several siblings: George Ernest b 1890; Mary Elizabeth born 1892; Sydney Dearden born 1894 and Thomas Leslie born 1896.

In the 1891 census, the family lived at 154 Audenshaw Road. William Hampson, John's father was a pawnbroker. By 1901 they had moved to Hurst and lived at 9 Lower King Street. William was a confectioner and John, aged 11, was a school boy. In 1911 the family lived at 27 King Street, Dukinfield. By then John was employed as a cotton spinner.

John William Hampson married Bertha Revell, daughter of Charles Revell on 18 August 1913 at St Mark's Dukinfield. They had a child Edith Mary born on 21 Feb 1915. She was baptised on 21 March 1915 at St Mark's Dukinfield.

John William Hampson enlisted in Ashton Under Lyne, initially joining the Manchester regiment with service number 3571. He later transferred to the King's (Liverpool) Regiment with service number 268394. John William Hampson was killed in action on 17 Sept 1916. He was 27 years old. He was awarded the British and Victory War Medals. His last resting place was the Guards' Cemetery, Les Boeufs. Grave Reference IV. N.9

John Hampson is also commemorated at the Ashton Civic Memorial.

***John Hulme 1896-1917 Service Number: 351820**

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 2/9th Battalion

John Hulme was born in Ashton on 8 October 1896. He was baptised on 4 April 1897 at St Michael's Parish Church, son of William Hulme and his wife Maria Ann Lee. His parents married at St Peter's on 18 April 1896.

In the 1901 census William and Maria Ann with three sons, John (4), William (2) and Harry (2 months) were living with Maria's mother at 37 Turner Street, Ashton. William Hulme was a railway labourer.

By 1911 John Hulme was 14 and working as a cotton spinner. His father states he has been married for 15 years and had eight children but two had died before 1911. The family were still living at 37 Turner Street.

John joined the Manchester Regiment. His Army records no longer exist, so we do not know when he attested. John had just passed his 21st birthday when he was killed in action in Belgium on 9 October 1917. His mother Maria is listed on the register of Soldier's Effects. John Hulme is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, the main Ashton under Lyne Memorial as well as the Christ Church Memorial.

William and Maria Ann Hulme, with four children, were still living at 37 Turner Street in the 1921 census.

Gerald Massey 1895-1915 Service Number: 1289

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 1/9 Battalion

Gerald Massey was born on 23 July 1895 and baptised at Stamford Street Methodist New Connexion chapel on 1 Sept 1895. His parents were James Quinton Massey and Sarah Ann Marriott.

Gerald first appears in the 1901 census aged 5 living at 13 Mount Street, Hurst. His father James was employed as a cotton spinner. Gerald had three younger siblings: Hubert (4), Alfred (2) and baby Sydney (3 months).

By 1911 Gerald aged 15 was working as an apprentice brick setter. His father was now working as an insurance agent. Hubert and Alfred, his younger brothers were employed as errand boys. Sydney, Florence and James Quinton junior were all at school. The family lived at 4 Castle Street, Stalybridge.

Lance Corporal Gerald Massey was killed in action at Gallipoli on 19 June 1915. He was 19 years old, son of James Quinton Massey and Sarah Ann Massey of 55 Montague Road, Ashton under Lyne. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial Panels 159-171. His name is also on the Ashton Civic Memorial.

***Ernest Morris 1896-1917 Service Number: 53308**

Regiment and Unit: Royal Garrison Artillery

Ernest Morris was born on 31 July 1896 in Ashton. He was baptised at St James' church on 9 September 1896, son of Charles W Morris and his wife Martha Elizabeth Hibbert.

In the 1901 census Ernest was four years old living with his parents and four siblings at 25 Turner Street, off Turner Lane, Ashton. His father, Charles, was a colliery worker, underground. By 1911 Ernest aged 14 was working in an iron foundry. He was one of ten children. A sister, Edith, had died as a young child.

Ernest attested on 16 November 1914 in Ashton. He was aged 19. He joined the Royal Garrison Artillery. Gunner Ernest Morris died of wounds on 1st May 1917 aged 21. He was buried in the British Cemetery at Sainte Catherine, Calais, France. Ernest is commemorated on the headstone of his parents' grave which is in Christ Church graveyard.

***William Granville Spiby 1895-1918 Service Number: 47363**

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 12th Battalion "C" Company (Duke of Lancasters Own Yeomanry) (listed on IWM site as W. Grenville Smith)

William Granville Spiby was born in the last quarter of 1895, son of William Spiby, a drysalter, and his wife Martha Ann Taylor. His parents had married in 1884 at Godley, St John's. William was one of eleven children. However, five of those had died before 1911. William first appears in the census in 1901 when he was aged 5, living with his parents and seven siblings at Set View, Turner Lane, Ashton. He is listed as William G. Spiby.

In 1911 Granville Spiby was 15 and "learning cotton spinning". He was living with his parents and four siblings at 154 Turner Lane.

William Granville Spiby joined the 12th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. He was presumed dead on 25 August 1918 when he was 23 years old. He is commemorated on the war memorial at Christ Church, Oldham Road as well as the Vis-en-Artois Memorial.

Leonard Wilde 1895-1917 Service Number: 352144

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 2/9th Battalion

Leonard Wild (no e) was born in 1895 in Ashton, son of John Wild and Alice Ann Margerison. His parents married at Christ Church in 1892. In 1901 the family lived at 9 Robinson Street, off Turner Lane. John Wild was a municipal pavior. Leonard was five years old with an older sister, Jane, aged 8 and two younger siblings: Edward (3) and Gladys (1).

In 1911 the family lived at 53 Turner Street, Ashton, John Wild (50) was still employed as a pavior. Jane (17) was a ring spinner; Leonard (15) was a cotton twiner, Edward (13) was a half-timer meaning he attended school for part of the day and worked in the cotton mill for the other part of the day. Gladys (11) was at school.

Leonard joined the Manchester Regiment and was killed in action on 9 October 1917 in France. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, panels 120-124, son of Mrs Wild of 53 Turner Street, Ashton. Leonard is also named on the Ashton Civic Memorial.

***Joseph Wrigley 1899-1919 Service Number: 69495**

Regiment and Unit: Royal Defence Corps 308th Protection Company

Joseph Wrigley was born in Ashton in 1899, son of Joseph Wrigley and Hannah Jones. His parents had married in 1897 in Ashton. His father died in 1900 leaving Hannah with two very young children. In the 1901 census Hannah Wrigley, a widow aged 27, was living with James (3) and Joseph (1) at 11 Cobden Street, Ashton. John Mason was a boarder at the same address.

Hannah married John Mason later in 1901. In the 1911 census John Mason and Hannah Mason with three Mason children all under 9 years plus James Wrigley (13) and Joseph Wrigley (11) were living at 27 Turner Street. Joseph was a schoolboy.

Private Joseph Wrigley died on 9 June 1919, aged 20. He is buried in Dukinfield Cemetery. Grave reference Ch.A.I.765. Joseph is also commemorated on the war memorial at Christ Church, Oldham Road.