

Guide to World War One Records



Cover illustration: Award of Distinguished Conduct Medal to Company Sergeant Major G[?] Alder, following action at Asiago, Italy, 1918 (D/EX229/4/7)

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Using this Guide

This is a guide to the sources we have at the Royal Berkshire Archives on World War I.

It is divided into the following sections:

Active Service overseas
Home Front
Remembrance

The guide is arranged by place for towns and villages throughout Berkshire. Records that are not place-specific are grouped under 'General' at the beginning of each section.

The reference listed after each entry is the document reference to quote if you would like to see that specific record. (Please note that some references are for more than one item). If you have any questions, just ask staff for advice.

If you would like to visit us to carry out your research, please email or call us to make an appointment. See our **Planning Your Visit** leaflet for further information.

Who Did What?

During wartime many emergency functions were run by the Government. The two most important local councils in Berkshire at the time were Berkshire County Council and Reading Corporation, which were responsible for effecting emergency orders. These principal councils either carried out the orders themselves or delegated them to the other borough or district councils. The guide also includes records kept by other bodies and individuals.

Active Service Overseas

General	
Letters of Apsley Cherry-Garrard on life as a dispatch rider, and attempts to set up units of dogs to find wounded soldiers at Front, 1914.	D/EHR/Z8
Diaries and correspondence relating to the Spencer family of Cookham, including their wartime experiences, 1914-1918, the war artists scheme, a letter of complaint to Lord Kitchener, 1914, a war-theme Christmas card, 1916, and menus from brigade dinners, 1916, 1917.	D/EX801
Copy of letter regarding action off Coronel, [1914].	D/EX1159/5/8
Lyrics of 'Hymn for the War', by P H Ditchfield, n.d., c.1914-1918.	R/D134/1/5
Words and music to 'Hymn for the War', by P H Ditchfield, n.d., c.1914-1918.	R/D134/35/1-2
'Berkshire Men in the Battle Line', article in the Reading Standard, 1915.	D/EX1142/1
Photograph album including Royal Army Service Corps servicemen posing for pictures, 1915-1918.	D/EX1926/1
Leaflet entitled Angels of Mons... the marvellous deliverance of our Troops from the Germans, c.1915-1918.	D/P154/28/24
Article on life in wartime Reims, France, 1916.	D/EX1557/1/22
Prayers for use on active service, 1916.	D/P122/1C/1
Berkshire and the War: the Reading Standard Pictorial Record, 1916.	On CD. Please ask staff for access.
Extract from letter from Captain Austin Longland, serving in Salonika, Greece, to his wife, 1916; and letter to [his wife or father], written on his way home for leave, 1917.	D/EX2564/1/7-8
Letters from John Heading, serving in 142nd Labour Company, Berkshire Expeditionary Force, France, 1917.	D/EX2547/2/3/11
Letters from Harold Blackall in Salonika, 1915-1918.	D/EX1485/2/9
Prayer found in pocket of dead soldier, 1917.	D/P162/28/79
Photographs and papers, Royal Berks Regiment at Asiago, Italy, 1918.	D/EX229/1-5
Words of 'Hymn of Thanksgiving for Peace', by P H Ditchfield, n.d. [c.1918-1919].	R/D134/7/36
Letter to a former prisoner of war recalling captivity in Belgium, 1919.	D/EX1350/4/3
Programme for lectures (including 'Causes of the German Defeat'), German language classes, concerts, evangelistic meetings and services [for occupying troops] at the YMCA Central, Cologne [Koln], Germany, 1919.	D/EX2771/3/7
Records of Berkshire War Memorial Committee, 1919-1947.	R/D134/3
East Shefford	
Lists of parishioners serving in the war, 1914-1918.	D/P107/8/1
Faringdon area	
List of servicemen, c.1916.	D/EX1303/11/1
Newbury	
Medal awarded to Edward Pellew Plenty, [1921].	D/EX2381

Reading	
Roll of honour of staff in HM forces, Samuel Elliott and Sons (Reading) Ltd, 1914-1915.	D/EX1263/12/8
Certificates of character, transfer and discharge and other papers relating to the army career of Albert Edward Adey of Reading (born 1875), 1899-1919.	D/EX1348/10
Stanford-in-the-Vale	
Lists of men serving in the war, c.1919.	D/P118/28/11
Stubbings	
Printed lists of parishioners in the armed forces, 1915 (with prayer), and 1918.	D/P195/28/32; D/P195/28/33
Waltham St Lawrence	
List of parishioners in armed forces, 1918.	D/P141/28/7

Home Front

School log books and parish magazines can give further information about the effects of the war, though the amount can vary. Please see the schools index and parish catalogues for further information.

Rural and Urban District Council minutes touch on subjects including appeals against conscription of vital employees, coal control, the Defence of the Realm Act, 1914, employment of ex-servicemen, food control, guarding bridges and culverts, national registration, recruiting, relief of distress, salvage, troop comforts, war agricultural committees and war pensions.

General	
References to war-related matters in general files of Berkshire County Council Clerk's Department, 1903-1951.	C/CL/G1/25/42, 43; G1/28, 39, 60, 68/4, 75, 77, 84, 86, 89, 112, 113, 116/20
Florence Vansittart Neale's 'odd and end book', 1904-1923.	D/EX73/3/17/12
Diary including many comments on news of the war, 1914-1918.	D/EX73/3/17/8
World War I hand-made greetings cards, n.d. [1914-1918].	D/EX1030/1
Reminiscence of Zeppelin raid in London during World War I, 1982.	D/EWN/F97
Agricultural Instruction Committee minutes: include references to labour shortages, training of women and disabled servicemen, use of waste land, etc, 1914-1918.	C/CL/C3/7
Standing Joint Committee minutes: include references to special constables, guarding of bridges and military depots, aliens' identity cards, insurance against air raids, etc, 1914-1918.	C/CL/C2/1/5-6
Diaries and correspondence relating to wartime experiences of the Spencer family of Cookham, 1914-1918, including letter of complaint to Lord Kitchener, 1914; diary of Sydney Spencer, 1914-1918; war-theme Christmas card, 1916; menus from brigade dinners, 1916, 1917; and diary of Percy J Spencer, 1918.	D/EX801/12-19, 23-25, 43, 51, 67, 78-81
Certificate of service to the War Savings Movements, 1914-1918, 1918.	D/EX863/9
Flag-day sellers' badges, 1915.	D/EX863/8
Poster regarding recital in aid of Serbian Relief Fund, 1915.	D/EX1734/1
Letters on experiences in war, 1915.	D/EX1795/1/5
Printed notice of administration of Berkshire in the event of invasion, from J H Benyon as Lord Lieutenant; and copies of letters concerning the Berkshire Yeomanry, 1915-1921.	D/EBY/O13
Report of visit to French farms run by women during war, c.1916.	D/EX1738/1
War Charities Committee minutes: include names of war-related charities permitted to take up collections, 1916-1917.	C/CL/C3/1/6
Berkshire War Agricultural Committee papers, collected by Albert Castle, 1916-1918.	D/EX 734/28-30

Porridge figurines made by conscientious objector in prison [c.1916-1918].	D/EX1795/3/62
Photograph and autograph album of Silwood Park, used as auxiliary hospital, with photographs of northern France, 1919, and souvenirs of 1919 Henley Peace Regatta, 1916-1919.	D/EX755/1
Berkshire County Forage Committee (responsible to Army Council): minutes regarding allocation of hay and straw from Berkshire farms, 1916-1920.	D/EX364/1
Certificate awarded to Lady Vansittart Neale by the Grand Fleet Fund, for work with Vegetable Products Committee for Naval Supply, 1917.	D/EX73/3/17/13
Press cutting about food rationing, 1917.	D/H10/A6/6/1
Letter offering Miss E Holifield a post as military housemaid at Sutton Coldfield in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, 1917.	D/EX323/2
Proclamation regarding reduction in grain production, 1917.	D/P194/28/1
Notification by War Office to Revd Charles Boxall Longland that his son Austin had been admitted to a convalescent home, 1917.	D/EX2564/1/9
Christmas card from the Bear Wood Institute to 'the Bear Wood Boys, fighting for Blighty', 1917.	D/EX2771/1/3/3
Proclamations regarding reduction in consumption of flour, oats and grain, and the end of war, 1917 and 1919.	D/P43B/1/3
Papers relating to Frederick Arthur Greet's service in the Royal Berkshire Voluntary Regiment, 1917-1920.	D/EX2229/3/3
National Registration and exemption certificates of railway clerk, 1918.	D/EX1750/4
Berkshire War Agricultural Committee accounts, 1918-1920.	C/TR4/2/1-2
Certificate of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St John for war services, c.1919.	D/EBY/F45
Account of service of Revd William Rushby, 1920.	D/EX1638/25
Printed annual statements of accounts of the Comrades of the Great War Charity, 1921-1922; and annual returns of Admiral Vansittart Trust Charity, 1913-1948 [included care of wounded sons of members].	P/CC1/120/4; P/CC1/22/2
Illustrated menu for first annual dinner of Old Comrades Association of Berkshire Yeomanry, 1928.	N/D5/1
Conscientious objector's memoir of war [c.1930s].	D/EX1795/1/51
Appeal letter from the Imperial Association for Assisting Disabled Naval and Military Officers, [c.1915-1916].	D/EX1839/7/1
Abingdon district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/A/CA/1/3, 4
Abingdon and Culham Rural Joint Food Control Committee minutes, 1917-1920.	J/FC1/1/1
Ardington and Speen	
War intercessions book, 1914-1920.	D/P116/28/9
Ascot	
Album containing photographs of soldiers convalescing in Ascot, c.1914-1918.	D/EX2243

Basildon	
Sale catalogue of Basildon Park, including hospital furniture used when building used as war hospital, 1920.	D/EZ166/1
Barkham	
Papers regarding loans for land settlement of ex-servicemen at Brook Farm, 1919-1926.	C/CL/G1/25/43
Bisham	
Award of King Albert Medal of the Kingdom of Belgium to Sir Henry Vansittart for services in the war, 1921.	D/EX73/3/16/17
Bradfield district	
Rural district council minutes, 1913-1919.	RD/B/CA/1/8-13
Caversham	
Papers relating to provision of horseshoes for cavalry.	D/EX1485/1/25
Childrey	
Defence of the Realm Act lighting order, 1916.	D/P35/28/2
Cholsey	
Fair Mile Hospital correspondence and press cuttings relating to wartime food rationing, 1917 [The hospital received patients from similar institutions converted to war hospitals.].	D/H10/A6/6/1
Clewer	
Letter about assistance to Belgian refugees, 1918.	D/EX1675/1/11/14
Roll of Honour, St Augustine's Boys' Home, 1917.	D/EX1675/23/4/3
Cookham	
Letter regarding Cookham Dean parish collection for sufferers from the European War, 1914; programme of National Mission of Repentance and Hope, 1916; and two proclamations, regarding reduction of grain consumption, 1917, and thanksgiving, 1919.	D/P43B/1/3
Welcome home concert for soldiers and sailors from Cookham Dean and Pinkneys Green, 1919.	D/P43B/28/11
Cookham district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/C/CA/1/8-9
Crowthorne	
Admission registers of Broadmoor Hospital showing admission of prisoners of war, including German POWs from Crowthorne War hospital, 1916-1919.	D/H14/D1/1/4/1
Correspondence relating to previous item, 1916-1919.	D/H14/A6/2/51
Didcot	
Letter on soldier's return, c.1918-1919.	D/EX1485/1/43
Earley	
Plans for rifle range for Earley Defence Force, 1914-1915.	D/EWK/B2/4/21/2
Easthampstead district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/E/CA/1/6-7
Faringdon district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/F/CA/1/6-7

Clerk's letter book includes letters about exemption applications at Local Tribunals, 1916-1917.	RD/F/CZ1/1
Sale to raise funds for Red Cross, 1916.	D/EX284/302-303
Hungerford district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/H/CA/1/6
Hurst	
Hurst Women's Institute: references in Committee minutes to war-related activities including bandage-making and food economy, 1916-1918; and letter of appreciation to Queen Mary for her war work, 1918.	D/EX1925/33/1/1; D/EX1925/33/5/2
Photograph of Bearwood House, taken during use as Canadian Convalescent Hospital for wounded soldiers, 1919.	D/EX2122/1
Maidenhead	
Assessment for payment of war damage contribution to HM Inspector of Taxes for All Saints, Boyne Hill, 1914.	D/P182/8A/25
Maidenhead Congregational Church discussions on war, 1914-1915.	D/N33/7/4/1
Papers regarding Belgian Refugee Home, Maidenhead, 1914-1919.	D/N33/11/3
Commendations of discharged soldiers to local clergymen, Boyne Hill, 1918-1919.	D/P182/28/1
Newbury	
Register of military patients treated at Newbury District Hospital, 1916-1917.	D/H4/10/10
Minutes of Retail Coal Prices Committee, 1917-1918.	N/AC2/2/3
Sports Committee minutes relating to peace celebrations, 1919.	N/D14/5
Account for erecting enclosure and sports ring for peace celebrations, 1919.	N/D14/6
Article in The Record, annual school magazine produced by Newbury County Girls' school, referencing the 'appalling waste' and suffering resulting from war, 1934.	SCH12/14/1
Newbury district	
Council minutes.	RD/N/CA/1/4
Reading	
Minutes of Smallholdings and Allotments Committee refer to drive for increased food production, use of uncultivated land, etc, 1914-18.	R/AC1/3/18
Reading Prison: remission and discharge books refer to military prisoners sentenced by court martial, and Belgian prisoners detained there and released by Belgian Government, 1914-1915); nominal register includes alien and Irish internees, 1916-1918.	P/RP1/1/9; 13/1
Minutes of Watch Committee (police) refer to formation of relief force and special constables, wartime duties, members serving at the Front, casualties, appointment of women as police officers, charity fund-raising days, and widows' pensions, 1914-1918.	R/AC1/3/12-20
Photographs, mostly of Reading, c.1914-1919.	D/EX1638/65-66

Records of Soldiers' Welfare Committee, Broad Street Congregational Church, 1914-1925.	D/N11/4/2; 5/1/4
Plans for rifle range at Reading School, Reading, 1915.	D/EWK/B2/4/22
Photograph of 32nd (late 41st) Divisional Signal Company, Royal Engineers, outside Wantage Hall, 1915.	D/EX1840/1
Letter about insurance against air raids, Reading, 1915.	D/EX1942/1/1/36
Papers re attempts to avoid enlistment of F E Butler of Reading, 1916.	D/EX1557/1/24
The Ration: Magazine of Reading War Hospitals (reflecting government control of fuel supplies), 1916.	D/EE/Z34
Letters about effects of war in Reading, including Pioneer Company, calling up of clerks, low rents, evacuation to Reading of people leaving air raid areas, etc; also air raids in Surrey and damage to convents in Belgium, 1916-1917.	D/EX208/B2/17
Reading National Savings Committee records, 1916-1918.	P/NS2
Letter about death of soldier and toll of war on 'our men', 1917.	D/EX1942/1/1/40
Minutes of Coal Supplies Committee and Retail Coal Supplies Committee, 1916-1918.	R/AC1/3/17, 19
Diary of Joan Evelyn Daniels of Reading, 1918.	D/EX1341/1
Legal bill regarding application to exempt employee from military service, Reading, 1918.	D/EX1942/1/1/54
Correspondence about use of premises in Reading by War Department, for troop accommodation, 1918.	D/EX1942/2/3/21
Photographs of Red Cross nurse Battle Hospital), n.d.	D/1750/3
Menu for a dinner for employees who had served in World War I, Samuel Elliott and Sons Reading) Ltd, 1919.	D/EX1263/11/1
Minutes of Peace Celebrations Sub-committee, Reading Borough Council, 1919-1920.	R/AC2/18A, 18B
Digital copies of records of Alice Shorter, VAD nurse at St Luke's Auxiliary Hospital 1915-1917, 2022.	D/EX2912
Shellingford	
Sale of hospital effects, 1916.	D/EX284/304
Slough	
Planning application for club room for discharged and disabled ex-servicemen, 1919.	S/SB2/1743/1-2
Wallingford district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/W/CA/1/7
Wantage district	
Appeal leaflet for aeroplanes: Wantage's special effort for the war, sponsored by Prudential Assurance, 1918.	D/EX2547/4/5/7
Rural district council minutes.	RD/WT/CA/1/5
Urban district council minutes include references to War Charities; war damage compensation, War Savings Association, billeting of troops and anniversary meetings of outbreaks of war, 1914-1918.	UD/WT/CA1/3
West Woodhay	
Record of service of parishioners, including nurses, 1919.	D/P155/28/2
Windsor	

Stationmaster's memoir about the impact of war on railways etc, 1914-1918.	D/EX1952
Minutes of borough watch committee refer to effect of the war on police force, including wartime duties, members serving at the Front, casualties, and widows' pensions, 1914-1918.	WI/AC2/2/2
Records regarding treatment of wounded soldiers at King Edward VII Hospital, 1917-1918.	D/H6/1/7, 10; 11/15; 12/1; 22/2
King Edward VII Hospital, Windsor, and the European War, 1920 booklet about the hospital's military work, 1914-1919.	RBA Library
Windsor district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/WI/CA/1/9-11
Windsor Conservative Association minutes, including reports of Joint Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (East Berks) on encouraging men to join the Armed Forces and letter about requesting the Prime Minister not to hold a General Election during the war, 1915-1918.	D/EX2923/1/1/1
Winnersh	
Papers regarding loan for purchase of property at Haines Hill for land settlement of ex-servicemen, 1919-1924.	C/CL/G1/25/42
Wokingham	
Wokingham police records including references to the deployment of special constables and ambulance men, posters and public notices, and correspondence, c.1914-1918.	PS/FT26/1-21
Letters from the Wokingham borough surveyor acting as the local fuel overseer, 1918-1920.	WO/SA4/1
Wokingham district	
Rural district council minutes.	RD/WO/CA/1/7-9

Remembrance

General	
Plans and papers for Berkshire War Memorial, 1919-1931.	D/EWK/B2/3/2/1/1-2
Plans for Nettlebed Memorial Lych Gate, Oxfordshire, 1921-1925.	D/EWK/B2/3/2/2
Booklet containing list of World War I war graves in Berkshire, 1930.	D/EZ110/19/1
Ascot	
Roll of honour of men who died in World War I and World War II.	D/P185/28/50/1-4
Brightwell	
Roll of honour and list of war workers, 1917.	D/P25/28/31
Caversham	
Plans for Caversham War Memorial, 1921.	D/EWK/B2/3/2/3
Chaddleworth	
Printed account of unveiling of war memorial, 1920.	D/P32/28/17
Cookham Dean and Pinkneys Green	
Papers regarding war memorial, 1917-1920.	D/P43B/1/3; D/P43B/28/3
Pamphlet on Cookham Dean Wesleyan Methodist war memorial, with biographical sketches, 2013.	D/MS12/8/1
Research notes compiled for the pamphlet on the Wesleyan Methodist war memorial, 2013.	D/MS12/8/2
Great Coxwell	
'Book of Remembrance' relating to servicemen from the parish killed in two World Wars, c.1914-1989.	D/P44/28/4
Crowthorne Parish Council	
Minutes relating to war memorial, 1919-1920.	CPC102B/3/2
Papers relating to war memorial, 1919-1920.	CPC102B/5/2
Details of dedication of war memorial, 1920.	D/P44/28/6
Easthampstead	
Papers relating to war memorial cross in churchyard, 1919-c.1945.	D/P49/6/4
East Lockinge	
Lady Wantage's diary with references to Lockinge war memorial, Versailles peace conference, Russian Revolution and postwar issues at home and in Europe, 1919.	D/EX2862/1
Grazeley	
Order of service and press cutting regarding war memorial, 1922.	D/P124B/1B/3
Hampstead Norreys	
Civil Parish Council minutes with decision to erect a German gun, captured in the last advance of 1918, in the churchyard, 1919.	CPC62/1/1
Lyford	
Typed transcription of inscriptions on war memorial in Lyford Church, 1915.	T/T55

Newbury	
Notes in admission register of St Bartholomew's Grammar School of names of former pupils killed in the war, c.1919.	SCH11/11/1
St Bartholomew's Grammar School World Cup Record, including biographies of four old boys killed in the War.	SCH11/13/2
St Bartholomew's Grammar School printed roll of honour and list of subscribers to First World War memorial.	SCH11/18/3
Article on St Bartholomew's Grammar old boys killed in the First World War.	SCH11/18/14
Printed appeal leaflet for St Bartholomew's Grammar School War Memorial, 1948.	SCH11/18/15
Committee minutes regarding memorial tablet in Newbury Congregational Sunday School to those killed, 1920.	D/N32/7/1/4
Order of service for unveiling and dedication of war memorial, including Roll of Honour, 1922.	N/D14/7
Padworth	
Notes on men named on World War I war memorial, 1983.	D/P90/8A/20
Shrivenham	
War memorial voucher, 1918-1930.	D/P112/6/15
List of servicemen, 1914-1916.	D/P112/28/9
Stratfield Mortimer	
Faculty for memorial in parish church, 1919.	D/P120/6/6
Stubbings	
Roll of honour, 1918; and list of names on parish war memorial, c.1920.	D/P195/28/33; D/P195/28/34
Sunninghill	
Articles on the history of the Victory Fields, Sunninghill, war memorial with photocopy of trust deed (1919) and copy of email concerning the research, 2019.	D/EX2917/5/5
Wallingford	
Report on premises used by the Comrades of the Great War, including a rifle range, c.1920-1931.	WA/Q/1/5/11
Programme and press cuttings relating to the unveiling of Wallingford war memorial, 1921.	D/EX2055/5/3/1-3
Order of service for Armistice Day, Wallingford, c.1927-1933.	PS/MN/26/1
Watchfield	
Watchfield men in armed forces, 1914-1915.	D/P112C/28/5
Winkfield	
Plans for war memorial, c.1920.	D/P151/28/55
Wokingham	
Printed ephemera relating to the Comrades of the Great War [founded in 1917 to represent the rights of discharged servicemen of the First World War], c.1917-1921.	D/EX1839/5/2/1-5
Roll of honour, Wokingham parish war memorial, c.1918-1919.	D/P154/28/23
Photograph of the war memorial, Wokingham town hall, c.1920.	WO/D1/3/32/9
Programme for peace celebrations, 1919.	WO/D1/3/32/8

West Woodhay		
Faculty for war memorial tablet, 1920.		D/P155/6/3/2
Woodley		
Woodley Memorial Recreation Ground papers, 1919.		D/EX2733/3/1

Further Information

Service Records

For information on individuals serving in World War I:

The National Archives
Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU
Tel: 020 8876 3444 www.nationalarchives.org.uk

Records of central government operations during World War I

The National Archives: contact details as above.

Local Regiments

Information on the Royal Berkshire Regiment can be obtained at:

The Wardrobe: The Rifles, Berkshire and Wiltshire Museum
58 The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2EX
Tel: 01722 419419 www.thewardrobe.org.uk

War Memorials

The Imperial War Museum undertook a survey of war memorials in the UK, entitled the National Inventory of War Memorials. For further information, please contact:

War Memorials Archive
Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6H2
Tel: 0207 207 89863 Email: memorials@iwm.org.uk
memorials.iwm.org.uk

War Graves

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
2 Marlow Road, Maidenhead, SL6 7DX
Tel: 01628 634221 www.cwgc.org

Blogs

RBA WWI blog: www.berkshirevoiceswwi.wordpress.com