

Elsenham Village Snapshots

The War Memorial...

... was first mooted in 1919 to honour the fallen of the first World War. Sir Walter Gilbey opened the subscription with £50 and also donated the land on which it was to be built. It was finally unveiled on 3rd October 1920 and dedicated by the Reverend Sant then Vicar of St Mary's Elsenham.

The cross standing some fourteen feet tall was made of Clipsham stone from a small village in Rutland also used in the construction of Kings College Cambridge, it stood on a hexagonal base resting on two further bases. The cross developed a crack not long after being erected and although the architect was contacted no action seems to have been taken. The crack slowly got worse over the years until in 1958 the cross was condemned as unsafe and removed. The following year a bronze plaque was erected on the base thought to commemorate the dead of both World Wars but this cannot be confirmed as the plaque has long since disappeared. Disquiet about the poor state of the memorial led to the current cross being commissioned on a new base inscribed with the dead of both wars and subsequent conflicts that was re-dedicated on Remembrance Sunday 1993.



The original memorial

Since then new slate plaques have been fitted around the base of the Village War Memorial so that all the men of the Village who gave their life in the service of their Country are now recorded.

This was done in time for the Village Remembrance Service in 2015 where the Vicar, Gary Townsend re-dedicated the Memorial, fittingly using the original order of service used by the Reverend Sant to dedicate the memorial in 1920.



The new memorial and plaques

Photo: Chris Bush

(Our thanks to the "For The Duration" editorial team for some of the above information)