

# Summoned from the Hillside

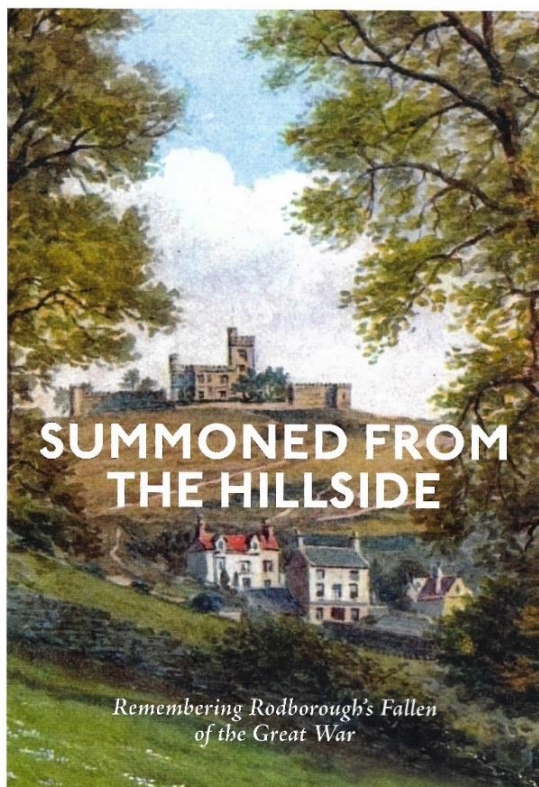


## Rodborough, Stroud, Gloucestershire

In 2014 Remembering Rodborough, a small local history group, undertook to research the 60 names on the Great War memorial located inside St Mary Magdalene Church, Walkley Hill, Rodborough.

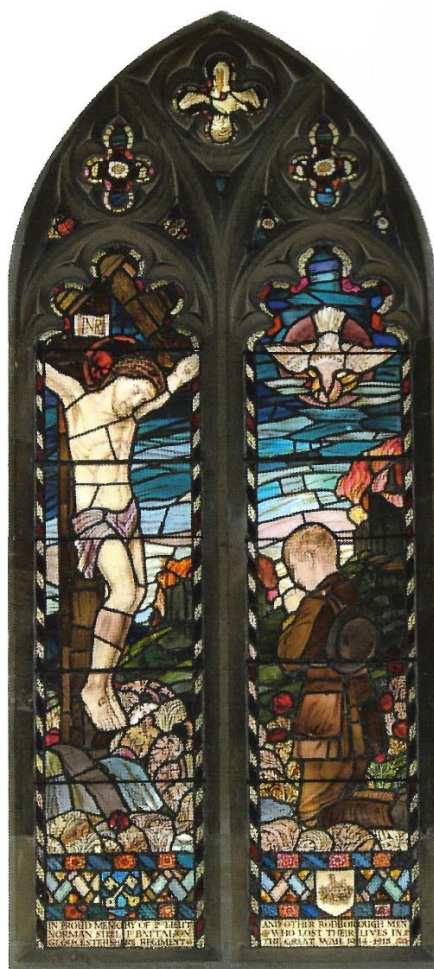
Much like the people of Rodborough in 1914, we never imagined where we would be four years later. We soon realised that there were other local men whose names could justifiably have been included, and that none of those lives and deaths could be isolated from their involvement with, and impact on, the local community. Four years later saw the publication of our book, **Summoned from the Hillside - Remembering Rodborough's Fallen of the Great War**, a detailed study of 74 lives lost, many others affected and how the community adapted to war and its aftermath.

The book is self-published and available via [www.rememberingrodborough.org.uk](http://www.rememberingrodborough.org.uk)



Along the way, we joined forces, as the Five Valleys Great War Researchers, with other groups and individuals researching local war memorials. We had tremendous support and interest from the community and some of the families involved. The local newspaper, the Stroud News & Journal, loaned their original war years volumes and Rodborough Parish Council funded several archive copies of the book for the local museum, archives dept, library and churches.

The book's front cover



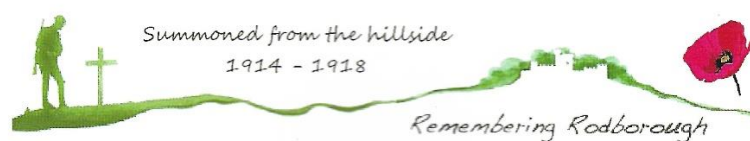
On November 11th 1918 Rodborough was wild with excitement.

The air rang with sounds not heard in four long years, as hooters blasted and bells pealed, the mills closed, and children were dismissed from school. It was said that, "The Rodborough boys had played a noble part in crushing the most terrible menace the world had ever seen", but at what cost?

With an intimate glimpse into how our parish adapted to the hardships of war, this volume gives a detailed portrait of over seventy men whose lives were lost and reveals how a community resolved to remember them.

## SUMMONED FROM THE HILLSIDE

*Remembering Rodborough's Fallen of the Great War*



The back cover of our book

Events during the period enabled information sharing and gathering and the community to commemorate our loss.



**November 2014** – ‘Summoned from the Hillside’ exhibition, St Mary Magdalene Church, Rodborough. James and Owen Ltd, Stroud, printers, very kindly sponsored printing of material that was reused in many subsequent commemorations. Herbert Maurice Owen, a founder of the business is named on the memorial.



4 Commonwealth War Graves were identified in the churchyard and a further 20 family graves noted that were either the resting place of, or carried a commemoration to, a lost soldier.

Since 2014 the Scouts, Guides and local community have been actively involved in keeping these graves tidy and during the lockdown Armistice Commemoration in 2020, a temporary trail of brief histories was installed.

Details of the soldiers commemorated in the churchyard can be found here together with a layout map: <http://www.rememberingrodborough.org.uk/ww1-2/soldiers-named-on-graves-st-mary-magdalene-churchyard/>









**1<sup>st</sup> July 2016**

At 7am around 60 people gathered in Rodborough Churchyard for 'Whistle for the Somme' a poignant tribute held at the graveside of two soldiers who died of injuries sustained at the Somme. An 8-year-old member of the Beavers blew the whistle.

Edward Vosper representing Rodborough Scout Group (with permission)



One of these men was Private Charles Burroughs whose grave is marked by a simple iron cross thought to have been made by his father. His details have now been registered with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



In 2018 the war memorial was cleaned, removing nearly 100 years of grime; funding was provided by a Parish Council donation and money raised from events and donations.



At the 2018 Remembrance Service the community created a reconstruction of the floral tributes laid at the 1920 unveiling of the war memorial



Collaboration with local theatre group Spaniel in the Works, allowed us to bring powerful and moving dramas about the home front, Gallipoli, and shell shock to the community. Performed in the impressive settings of Parish Church and Little Chapel at Rodborough Tabernacle they afforded insight and impact.

On Nov 10th, 2018, a memorial concert at Rodborough Tabernacle included stories from our research, some told by those with family memories.

**Rodborough Tabernacle**  
**WW1 100th Anniversary**  
**Commemoration**

**Thursday November 10th, 3.00**  
An invitation to visit the WW1 exhibition at the Museum in the Park

**Friday November 9th 7.30pm**  
An Evening of Music, Poems & Readings

**Saturday November 10th 2.30 - 4.30pm**  
An afternoon of tea and cakes in the "Tab's" own Lyons tea room

**Sunday November 11th 10.45 am**  
Joint service of Remembrance at Rodborough Parish Church

See over for details . . .

In summary, the project, its researchers, and the community gained far more than was ever anticipated. A lasting record has been created, knowledge has been shared and local people of all ages have participated with empathy and greater awareness in commemorations. The Five Valleys Great War Researchers group has evolved into the Five Valleys Local History Association and will continue to work in collaboration.

We hope that we have ensured that the lives lost will not be forgotten.

