



## CLINTON DEVON ESTATES



**Date:** 4th November 2019

### **Memorial waymarkers honour Devon village's First World War heroes**

A century ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1919, the people of Otterton, like millions of others across the country, fell silent for two minutes to honour their husbands, sons, fathers and brothers who gave their lives for their country in the Great War.

By the following summer, the villagers had raised enough money to erect a permanent tribute to their war dead, and on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1920, the Otterton Memorial Cross was unveiled at a ceremony attended by the then Lord Clinton.

Today, the men whose names are inscribed on that memorial cross are again being honoured as each has his name on one of 16 new timber memorial waymarkers being put in place across the parish.

Funded by Otterton Parish Council through the Parishes Together Fund, and supported by Clinton Devon Estates and Ladram Bay Holiday Park, the new waymarkers will replace old ones which were weather-worn and beyond repair.

Ottertton Parish Council chairman, Councillor John Hiles, said: “We realised that there were 16 old waymarkers which needed to be replaced, which coincidentally was the same number of names on the World War One faces of the memorial cross.



“So we thought it would be appropriate, and fitting, to give each of those men their own waymarker, so their names would perhaps be seen more often, and their sacrifices not forgotten.”

Among those honoured is Cecil Till, who was born in Ottertton on 28 December 1890 and before enlisting worked as a groom and gardener. He joined the Royal Engineers in Ottertton on 18 September 1914, with the rank of Driver.

In 1917 Cecil married Alma Payne, the sister of Hubert Payne who is also named on the Ottertton memorial. They had no children, and Alma never remarried. She is buried in the same grave as her husband.

Cecil was wounded in France in March 1918, and while recovering at a military hospital in Brighton died of influenza and pneumonia just eight days before the 11<sup>th</sup> November Armistice. He was the last of the servicemen from Ottertton to die in the Great War.

Ottertton born and bred Petty Officer Wallace Harding, is another of the men whose names are inscribed on the new waymarkers. He died when the vessel he was serving on, HMS Bergamot, was sunk after being struck by a German torpedo to the north of Ireland in August 1917, aged 39.

Originally from Plymouth, Petty Officer Telegraphist Robert Larcombe was 21 when his parents moved to Ottertton upon his father becoming the village’s railway station master. He married Minnie

Murgatroyd in 1910 and served on a Royal Navy submarine during the Great War, losing his life at the age of 36 when one of the craft's batteries exploded in December 1916.

Clare James from Clinton Devon Estates said: "Hundreds of men and women from across the Estate communities gave their lives in the First World War and we are determined that they will be remembered. Tragically, although that conflict was thought of at the time as the war to end all wars, seven more names were added to Otterton's memorial cross at the end of the Second World War.

"Supporting the parish council's remembrance waymarker initiative is another way to keep the memories of Otterton's Great War heroes alive."

More information can be found via the [War Memorials Register](#) and [Devon Remembers](#).

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors:**

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact Andrew Howard at KOR Communications on [Andrew.howard@korcommunications.co.uk](mailto:Andrew.howard@korcommunications.co.uk) or 01392 466733.

**Pictures © Guy Newman/Rekord Media. 31.10.2019. Left-to-right: Otterton Parish Council chairman, Councillor John Hiles; Steven Harper-Smith from Ladram Bay Holiday Park; and Ranger Ed Lagdon from Clinton Devon Estates with one of the new waymarker signs that honour the WWI heroes of Otterton village.**

### **About Clinton Devon Estates**

Clinton Devon Estates is involved in farming, sustainable forestry and timber products, deer management and residential property. It has a portfolio of commercial property across the South West and provides one of the region's best equipped equestrian event venues at Bicton. It also owns commons at Woodbury which form the major part of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Clinton Devon Estates has been awarded the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in the category of Sustainable Development in 2005, 2010, and 2015, reflecting its commitment to conservation management through Countryside Stewardship Schemes and privately funded Estate led environmental initiatives.

The East Devon Pebblebed Heaths are managed by the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust, a charity set up by Clinton Devon Estates to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the Pebblebed Heaths and the Otter Estuary for the benefit of future generations.

The East Devon Pebblebed Heaths are located in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and have both UK and European designations, including a Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

For more information, please visit [www.clintondevon.com](http://www.clintondevon.com)



