

COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF

George Henry Cole

Private Royal Warwickshire Regiment



Who died in Italy on 6 November 1918
aged 22



Dawlish World War One Project 1914-18 /2014-18
Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and
Dawlish Town Council

www.dawlishww1.org.uk



Welcome to this Act of Commemoration.

Dawlish Town Council and Churches Together in Dawlish and District are commemorating the death in the service of the nation of every Dawlish person who was killed as a result of enemy action during the First World War.

Today we remember the death of George Henry Cole who volunteered for action but died of influenza.

After the First World War, it was decided in Dawlish that a single town War Memorial would be erected close to the parish church, and no church would have its own War Memorial. In keeping with this decision, these Acts of Commemoration take place in the town centre churches without regard to the denomination of the person they commemorate and they are led by a minister or pastor of the host church. The same Order of Service is used at each service. When we remember men listed on the War Memorials in St. Mary's Cofton or St. George's Holcombe, the service is held in the appropriate village church.

There will be opportunity to talk to the leader of the service afterwards. You are invited to take a reproduction of St John's Gospel which was given to every service person during the First World War.

Please join in the words which are in **heavy type**.

Churches Together in Dawlish & District
28 High Street,
Dawlish, EX7 9HP

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Introduction

We have gathered today as part of our commemoration of those Dawlish people who were caught up in the courageous but tragic events of the First World War.

We remember those who were killed in action,
those who were maimed and those whose minds were disfigured
by conflict.
the bereaved and the lost and those who lived in darkness,
the families which were shattered,
and all who held in silence the unspeakable memories of warfare.

In particular today on the 100th anniversary of his death we remember
George Henry Cole who died of influenza while in the service of his
country.

Prayer

Almighty God, the Lord of all,
today we pause to remember with gratitude
the life and death of George Henry Cole
knowing that he was, is and always will be
known and loved by you.

We thank you for his willingness to fight for our country
even if necessary to the point of death.

And today we remember his family and friends
who grieved at his death
and whose lives were never the same.

Amen.

We hear about the life and death of George Henry Cole

Reading Romans 8:31-39

What, then, shall we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord

please stand

A prayer of Commemoration

We remember before God George Henry Cole

Lord, have mercy

Today we commit George Henry Cole to the love of God

We give thanks for his life, and grieve at his death

May he rest in peace

and rise in glory.

He shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

age shall not weary him, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

we will remember him.

We will remember him.

A candle may be lit or a bouquet may be placed before the pieta.

A time of silence

We remain standing

The Commitment to all those who died in the service of the nation.

Lord God, Father of all,
in thankfulness for George Henry Cole
and in his memory
we pledge ourselves
to bring comfort to the sad, the lonely and the distressed;
to bring relief to all who are in need
and to serve you and to work for peace.
Keep us ever mindful of the struggles
and achievements of former generations
and so make us grateful
now and in the days to come.
Amen

O Lord, our maker and our strength,
from whose love in Christ we can never be parted
either by death or life:
Look in mercy on those for whom we pray this day,
and grant us your protection and peace,
that we may be saved in body and soul,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

As we ask for deliverance from the forces of destruction
and for peace in our time and In our lives
we pray together:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
AMEN.

The Blessing

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the Queen,
the Commonwealth and all the world
peace and concord:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

Amen.

George Henry Cole

Born St Marychurch, Q4, 1896 Died Italy, 6 November 1918, aged 22
Private 34342 Royal Warwickshire Regt, 2nd Battalion

George Henry Cole was descended from the Cole family of Hennock. His great grandfather, John Cole (1810-1889) married Sarah Loveys (1822-1869) and they were living at Hennock when John Cole, jnr, was born on 28 April 1852.

His father worked in lead and tin mines locally, but John jnr became a Police Constable. He married Eliza Ann Gibbs (1851-1936) in Charlton Mackerell, Somerset on 18 May 1871. They had ten children of whom George Herbert Cole was the third, born in 1874 in Hennock.

George Herbert Cole married Ellen Elizabeth Dist in 1895. Ellen Dist was born in Cockington to Henry and Anna Dist.

George and Ellen Cole lived for a while at Cockington and then moved to St Marychurch, Torquay, and they had five children. George Henry Cole was the eldest and they stayed at St Marychurch until ca 1900. Some time later they moved to Bow in Central Devon where, in 1911, George Herbert Cole was a coachman on the Great Wotton estate, the chief residence of the Pidsley family. His son, George Henry, was a groom.

It is probable that George Henry Cole was conscripted after his 18th birthday. He is known to have enlisted at Wokingham, Berkshire where he may have been working.

The Warwickshire Regiment moved to Italy on 24 November 1917 to strengthen the Italian Resistance against the Austrians and was involved in various actions including the Battle of Vittorio Veneto. The **Battle of Vittorio Veneto** was fought from 24 October-3 November 1918, near Vittorio Veneto, a part the Italian Front of World War I. The Italian victory marked the end of the war on the Italian Front, secured the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was chiefly instrumental in ending the First World War less than two weeks later.

The grave registration document (CWGC) shows that George Henry Cole died of influenza, a victim of the epidemic that swept Europe at that time. He was with 1034 Labour Company of the Warwickshires and is buried in a grave with the inscription:

“ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST, ONE OF THE BEST,
GOD GRANT HIM ETERNAL REST
FROM LOVING PARENTS”

He is buried in Staglieno cemetery, Genoa. His parents moved to Dawlish and lived in 11 Queen Street. His name is inscribed on the supplementary panel to the 1914-1918 memorial in Dawlish.

Wilfred Owen had also died within days of a cease-fire being brought to the fronts. He died on November 4th in Northern France, and one of his most well known poems is this, ‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’ -

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen

Orisons are funeral prayers