

This plan does not intend to show exact locations of the graves mentioned; it just indicates the area that should be the start of the search. Many more interesting stories exist on the many memorials that help fill the cemetery with a sense of peace and tranquillity.



Milborne Port Cemetery



For almost a thousand years the dead of Milborne Port were buried in the churchyard at St John's. However, in spite of being extended the churchyard became overcrowded. In 1898, it was decided that a parish cemetery was needed. Various sites were proposed, and trial holes were dug, but all proved too rocky, until Wheat Hill Lane was selected in 1899. It was agreed that the parish council would provide the cemetery, and the church would consecrate the ground. It took two years to get agreement that the site would be bought for £120, but by November 1901, a loan was approved and work commenced. In January 1902 the ministers of the three churches were invited to hold a joint service, and all agreed. In February a caretaker and clerk were appointed and in April a path 6ft wide was made through the middle of cemetery, to separate consecrated from un-consecrated ground. The cemetery has since been extended.

The cemetery is a pleasant place to sit. To the north east, East Hill rises, and below it the village solar park can be glimpsed. The village has an active climate action group who recently had a work party on East Hill to clear bracken and blackthorn to help the Marsh Fritillary butterflies and orchids to survive. They also spent time wilding the school playing field on Wheathill Lane. The cemetery acts as a link between these areas and it is hoped wildlife, birds, insects, and small mammals will move between them across the cemetery.

If you decide to explore the cemetery, many stories are hinted at; some residents have lived to over 100 years old while one stone just remembers Baby Wendy.

There are 5 war graves in the cemetery:

Grave 156

William Merrit, died 06.11.1918 Royal Garrison Artillery

At the time of his death, he was with the RGA. He was at the Front at Christmas 1914 with the Queen's Own Dorset Yeomanry. He died, aged 22 years, at the No.1 War Hospital in Birmingham. His parents John and Elizabeth lived in the High Street, Milborne Port with John working as a blacksmith/farrier.

Grave 385

James Tabor, died 28.03.1917 Royal Engineers

At the time of his death he was 40 years old. His parents, James Samuel and Sarah Ann Tabor, lived at 13 East Street, Milborne Port. Henry was a carpenter and joiner, and his tool stamp can be seen in the museum.

Grave 302

Ronald Leslie Greenstock, died 17.08.1940 Royal Army Service Corps

He was a driver with the RASC. He died after a short illness, aged 24 years, at Abingdon Hospital on 17th August 1940. His parents, Edward and Annie Greenstock lived in Paddock Walk, and Ronald was the youngest of their nine children. Prior to joining the RASC, he was employed at Thomas Ensor's Glove Factory in the village.

Grave 344

Herbert George Hinks, died 29.06.1942 Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

He was aged 35 when he was killed in an enemy air raid on Weston-super-Mare on 29th June 1942. Bought up in West View, in 1930 he married Winifred Browne and lived at 18 Manor Road; they had 3 children. He had only started his service a few weeks prior to his death and until then had served as a member of the Milborne Port Home Guard. He was employed as a glove cutter at Thomas Ensor's factory.

Grave 62

Arthur John Gosney, died 23.01.1942 Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

He was a devout member of the Methodist Church in the village. He married in 1938, and lived with their young son Michael, at Elmdene, Newtown. He was serving with the RAFVR at a base in East Anglia when he was injured in a bombing raid. At first taken to RAF Hospital Ely, he was later moved to Newquay, but died some months later, on 23rd January 1942 aged 31 years.

There are also graves that, while not directly war graves still commemorate those who died in service, such as:

Grave 64

Edward Hallett, died 3 November 1946, also **Stuart** his youngest son who lost his life in the Java Sea 1942, and **Theresa**, wife of Edward.

Grave 88

George Bewsey Dyke, Royal Garrison Artillery gave his life in the Great War 1916, also of his father **George E Dyke**, died 1925 and his mother **Annie**, died 1936.

Grave 172

Fred beloved son of **Henry & Rose Woodhouse** died 1928 aged 14, also in memory of **Clifford**, older brother, killed in action aged 32, 27 June 1944

Grave 283

William George Hale, June 1938 also his son **Ernest George** killed in action 12 April 1918

Other graves tell of different lives:

Grave 368

Margaret Tizzard, May 1917 at Sunny Hill School, Bruton, aged 13

Grave 400

Herbert David Shingleton, 1929, also wife **Florence Annie**, died 1976 aged 101

Grave 453

Thirza Lamb, late District Nurse died Sept 1949 aged 73

Grave 628

Dorothy Marshal, District Nurse 1930 to 1960 died 1990 aged 90

Grave 455

Oswald Harold who died in an aircraft accident in 1948

Grave 126

Arabella Chant, 1913 and husband **William Chant**, 1923 also in memory of their son **Edwin Chant** lost at sea off Australia in 1929.