

1280 War Memorial Listing

Summary

First World War memorial, 1921, with later additions for the Second World War.

Description

The tall limestone memorial comprises a Greek cross with ornamented arms and a moulded foot, rising from a tapering octagonal shaft. That stands on a square plinth, which is set on a two-stage octagonal base. The base is raised on a shallow square step.

An incised inscription on the front face of the plinth reads THIS MEMORIAL,/ ONCE AT/ MAGDALEN COLLEGE,/ COMMEMORATES THE INHABITANTS OF WHEATLEY WHO/ GAVE THEIR LIVES IN TWO WORLD WARS/ 1974. Inscriptions on either side of the plinth read MCMXIV and MCMXVIII.

The three front faces of the top stage of the base carry black slate tablets. The central plaque reads 1914 – 1918/ (12 NAMES) whilst the plaques to either side carry 12 names each. Another small plaque on the front face of the lower stage reads 2014/ THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN. A further slate plaque on the rear of the base reads 1939 – 1945/ (9 NAMES). The inscriptions on these plaques are incised and painted white.

This List entry has been amended to add the source for War Memorials Online. This source was not used in the compilation of this List entry but is added here as a guide for further reading, 11 January 2017.

History

Wheatley War Memorial stands to the south of the High Street, in a walled garden on the site of a medieval chapel demolished in 1792. The village's first memorial, unveiled on 12 June 1921 but demolished in the 1970s, stood nearby. The present cross, designed by Alfred B Yates FRIBA, had been erected at Magdalen College, Oxford. Unveiled by the Prince of Wales on 8 February 1921, it commemorated some 200 members of the college who had died in the First World War. This cross was moved to Wheatley and re-dedicated in October 1974, commemorating the servicemen from the village who had died in both the First and also the Second World War.

In the 1980s the cross was vandalised, and the broken crosshead restored. Further conservation and repair work was carried out in 2014, funded by War Memorials Trust and a plaque commemorating the First World War Centenary was added.

Alfred B Yates (1867-1944) was an architect based in London. He was articled to Arthur Cates from 1885 and passed his qualifying examinations in 1889. In partnership with Sir Ernest George from 1892 to 1919, he was responsible for a number of war memorials including at Eaton Socon and Godmanchester (Cambridgeshire) and the Category B-listed memorial at Berriedale (Caithness).

Reasons for Listing

Wheatley War Memorial, situated on Bell Lane, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Historic Interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community, and the sacrifice it made in the conflicts of the C20;
- * Architectural interest: an elegant war memorial cross by Alfred B Yates (1867-1944);
- * Group value: with 8, Bell Lane (Grade II-listed).