

## Historical Background

Charles Henry Slight was born at Hemswell in 1896. He was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles William Slight. The family moved quite regularly between the local villages, settling back at Willoughton by 1911, with eight of their nine children. Charles Henry was a farm labourer at Willoughton when in 1915 he enlisted at Lincoln and joined the 2nd Battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment. His military service was short, having been posted to France on the 7th April 1915 he was wounded and died on 12th May 1915.

'Much sympathy is felt for Mr and Mrs Slight and family, who have lost their nineteen-year-old son, Private Charles Henry Slight, of the 2nd Lincolnshire Regiment, in France. He only joined the army late last autumn, but through exceptional ability quickly became proficient in drill and shooting, and was recently sent to France, where he was seriously wounded, and died on May 12th.' Lincolnshire Chronicle, Willoughton- 5 June 1915, page 3.

'A memorial service was held at the Parish Church on Sunday evening for Charles Slight, who had died of wounds received at the front on May 12th. The vicar, the Rev. Burton Eastwood, intoned the prayers, and the sermon was preached by the Reverend Winhard, curate of Crosby, who made touching references. There was a good congregation, the deceased having always been greatly respected in the village.' Lincolnshire Chronicle, Willoughton- 12 June 1915, page 3.



▲ Playing cricket near The Old School 1912



▲ Charles Slight

## Useful Information for visitors

### Willoughton Village War Memorial Trail

**Route Location:** Willoughton is a small cliff side village between Gainsborough and Kirton in Lindsey in Lincolnshire.

**Starting Point:** Outside Willoughton Primary School on Northfield Lane. (Postcode DN21 5RT)

**Public Transport:** 103 bus route between Lincoln and Scunthorpe

**Parking:** Please park carefully and considerately on the roadside.

**Ordnance Survey maps for the area:** OS Explorer map 281 (Ancholme Valley)

**Route length and timings:** Approximately 1 mile

**Village route:** 30 minutes to 1 hour

**Terrain:** Paved and tarmacked surfaces.

**Note:** if you would like to extend your walk there is a very pleasant footpath through the trees at the end of Long Lane to Hemswell and returning along the track on to Templefield Road in Willoughton.

**Refreshments:** The Post Office has snack food, but there is no other catering in the village. The Stirrup Inn opens each evening and lunchtimes at the weekends, but does not serve food.

**Public toilets:** None

▼ The Commercial Inn



This route has been created by the children of Willoughton Primary School with the help and support of Willoughton Local History Society and Lincolnshire Memories and Memorials Project. Lincolnshire Memories and Memorials Project is funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, Armed Forces Community Covenant and Lincolnshire County Council

The images used are copyright to Willoughton Local History Society or Lincolnshire Archives (as indicated).

## Lincolnshire Memories and Memorials Walk



## Willoughton

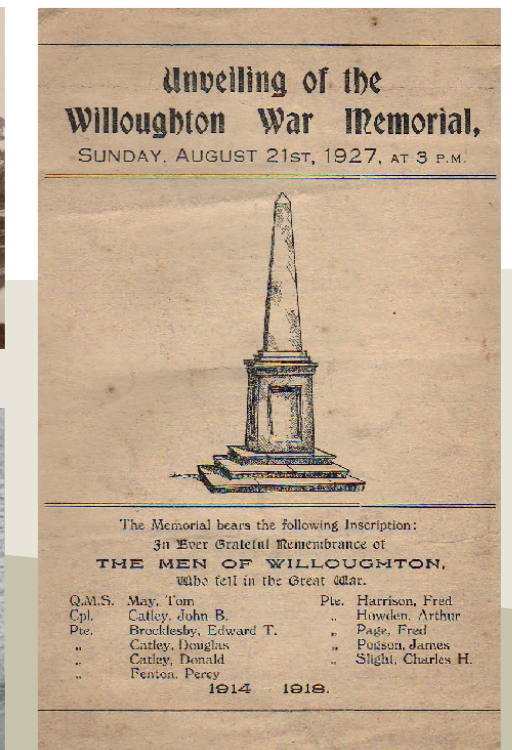
### A step back in time to Willoughton in 1914



▲ Pond corner



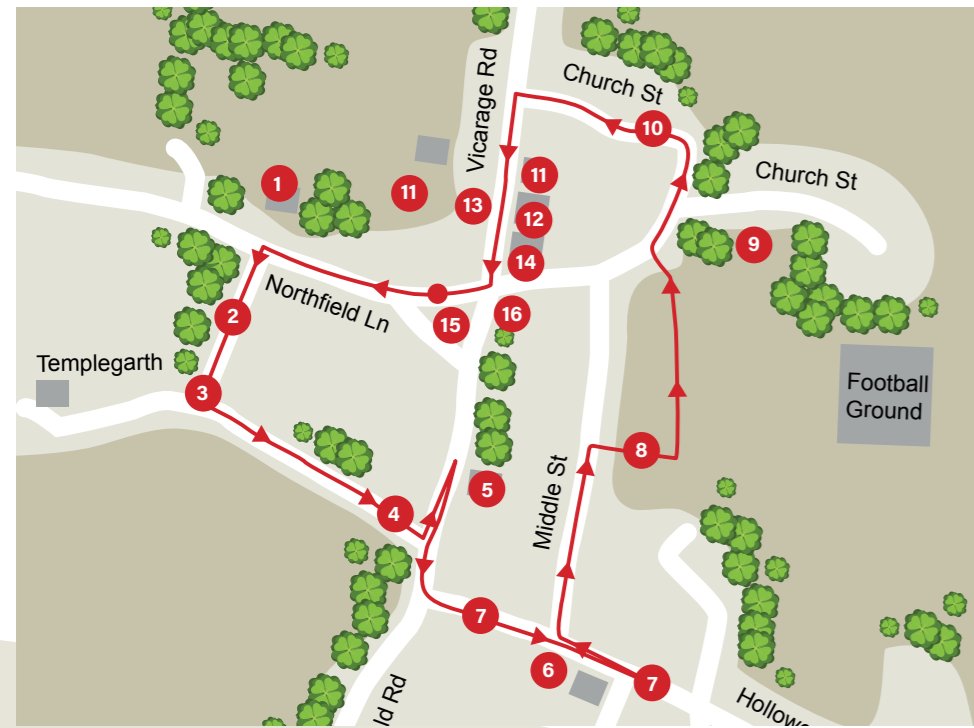
▲ T. Andrews Shop



A circular village heritage trail of approximately 1 mile



## Route Map



▲ The Old School 1845-1929



▲ St Andrew's Church

## Route Instructions

- 1 Willoughton Primary School is on Northfield Lane, this is where our route starts – outside the school.
- 2 The school is on the right hand side of the lane from the village centre, carry on past the school and past the racing stables. We are not sure where Charles Slight lived but we think it may have been one of the old stone cottages on this lane or one of the houses in the lane that you are about to walk down.
- 3 Turn left and walk down the narrow lane (caution there are no pavements!). To your right across the paddock you will glimpse Templegarth which was a girls' boarding school when Charles Slight lived in the village.
- 4 Carry on walking down the lane which turns to the left. At the end of the lane pause for a moment at the bench. This area was a pond in Charles Slight's time and caused lots of problems with flooding. It is still known locally as 'Pond Corner'!
- 5 Carefully cross the road and walk left for a few yards to the Stirrup Inn. This is one of the oldest buildings in the village and has been a pub since 1774. The landlord in Charles Slight's time was George Wainwright. George Wainwright was the Landlord for 65 years from 1880. It was called the Commercial Inn at that time. He brewed his own beer and before the First World War it cost 2d a pint. His son John Wainwright joined the Royal Flying Corps and survived the war.
- 6 Turn around and retrace your steps to the road junction. Turn left into Hollowgate Hill. Walk along here to find the Old Methodist Chapel (on the opposite side of the road). Before the First World War there were two Methodist chapels in Willoughton – A Wesleyan one and this Primitive Methodist Chapel which was built in 1837.
- 7 To the left of the chapel there are two cottages which were once shops- at the beginning of the 20th Century they belonged to the Weatherhogg family and were a saddlers and bicycle shop. To the right of the chapel was another shop - a general store run by Mary Bull from 1912-1945.
- 8 Now turn into Middle Street, about half way along the street on the right is a small grass lane that leads to the park 'Go on – we'll wait while you play!' From the park you might be able to see through a gap in the hedge to where the football field and cricket pavilion are at the base of the hill.
- 9 From the park walk up towards the church. We think Charles Slight and his family attended St Andrew's church as it was where his memorial service was held in 1915.
- 10 From the church walk along the lane to the right (Be careful as there is no pavement) Charles Slight worked as a farm labourer and some of the fields you see would have been the same then.
- 11 When you reach the end of the lane, the white cottage in front of you was where Miss Annie Hill the piano teacher lived until 1919. Turn left here The second house along was T Andrews shop between 1888 and 1920. Across the road the old cottage with one window larger than the other was Barratt's shoe and boot makers until 1900.
- 12 The village hall and the house attached to it was the school and the Head master's house until 1929. Charles Slight went to school here.
- 13 Opposite the school are some cottages where Edward Brocklesby lived, his father was a tailor. Edward joined the Cyclist's Battalion and was killed 25th August 1918. His name is also on the memorial.
- 14 The building on the corner which was once a shop replaced a stone building which was knocked down in the 1960s. This was where Fieldson's Bakery was. There are still people in the village today who can remember the delicious smells of baking bread that wafted out of the door.
- 15 We are now back in the centre of the village, the old building in the centre was the village blacksmiths.
- 16 Please stop by the War memorial and see if you can find Charles Slight and Edward Brocklesby among the names written there.



▲ Weatherhogg shops and the Primitive Methodist Chapel



◀ Edward Brocklesby



▲ Miss Annie Hill

## Extracts from the letters of Charles Slight

(as imagined by Willoughton school children)

The children of Willoughton primary school have combined local history research with their knowledge of conditions during the First World War to recreate Charles Slight's life through a series of imagined letters home.

- Our farm horses were strong, but here they are used for really difficult jobs like pulling guns.
- Yesterday, I saw a big brown horse stuck in the mud, to see him struggling was heart-breaking.
- I wish I was back in the village playing cricket, I think all that time playing cricket has helped me to dodge the bullets and be good at throwing grenades.
- I miss the peace and quiet in Willoughton, hearing the birds sing and the horses clip clopping along the road. The noise of gunfire here is constant and so loud.
- I miss sitting in the pub next to the fire, chatting with friends over a pint of Mr Wainwright's beer. We have a regular rum ration here which helps keep out the cold and gives you a better chance of some sleep.
- Yes. Mother we do get enough food, but it is always the same- tinned corned beef and hard biscuits. If I was at home I would love one of Mr Andrew's juicy pork chops.
- I wish I had my good pair of boots that old Mr Barratt made, these army ones are wet through and ruined.
- These biscuits are so hard, what wouldn't I swap for some freshly baked bread from Fieldson's shop. I can smell it now... delicious!