



Historic England

# Education

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## Heritage School Case Study

Subtitle: Wythenshawe in World War One

Summary: Year 9 students at Manchester Health Academy investigated the significance of their local FWW memorial and the experience of one soldier remembered on it.

**Where:** Manchester Health Academy, a Secondary School in Wythenshawe, Manchester

**Who:** Year 9 students

This scheme of work was first introduced on Remembrance Day 2014. The Lead Teacher held a whole school assembly, in which she introduced students to Northenden Cenotaph, located very close to the school and told the story of one soldier remembered on it; Thomas Allman. She showed students an image of the battlefields at Passchendaele, where Allman died, and another image of his home, a house which still stands and is in walking distance from the school. Displaying the figure 8, 528, 531 on a Powerpoint, she revealed the link between the two photos and explained *“I can’t help you comprehend the deaths of over 8 million people in the First World War, but I can tell you the story of one local soldier and try to bring home the reality of the war in that way”*

In class, year 9 students were introduced to when, where and how the FWW started. Once students had gained some understanding of the war, they visited Northenden Cenotaph. They found the name of the soldier they had been told about and considered the significance of the memorial to the war and to the local area.

On returning to class students used “soldier information packs”, containing primary and secondary sources about Allman’s life before and during the war. They considered source reliability and utility and developed understanding of the war, by considering their local soldier’s motivations to enlist, experience of trenches and his ultimate death whilst fighting.

Two students took part in the government funded initiative to allow representatives from every state school to visit the battlefields and cemeteries of France and Belgium. They found the grave of Thomas Allman and placed a poppy from the school.



### Intended Outcomes:

- Encourage students to gain deeper empathy and understanding of the FWW by considering its local impact.
- Encourage students to take part in local and national remembrance of the FWW.
- Develop primary and secondary source analysis skills.

### What we did:

- Held a school assembly where students were introduced to a local soldier who fought and died in the FWW,
- Visited Northenden Cenotaph and discussed its national and local significance. Then visited Allman’s grave in France to pay tribute to our soldier
- Used primary and secondary sources to investigate the life and experience of a local soldier in the FWW
- Considered the reliability and utility of a range of primary and secondary sources relating to the FWW.

### Challenges:

- The students wanted to know more about the other soldiers listed on the memorial, but research, though interesting, took time.

- The Lead Teacher would have liked to have taken a bigger group to the Battlefields of Northern France but this would have posed financial problems for some of the children.

#### Successes:

- *“From the outset of this project the students were engaged. The assembly really captured their interest and then the fact that there was real life primary evidence about Thomas Allman available, really brought his story to life. Finding the grave of Thomas Allman in Belgium was a great experience. It was very humbling - myself and the students involved in the project felt it.”* (Stephanie Morris, Lead Teacher)
- *“I used the CWWG website and other sites to research Thomas Allman. I’m not usually that interested in history but the assembly gave me goosebumps and then I wanted to find out more detail. I found out how to research about people from the past.”* (Year 9 student)

#### Resources and web links:

- [War memorials](#) in Greater Manchester
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission - [Find War Dead](#)
- Genealogy websites such as [Find My Past](#) and [Ancestry](#)
- [Information](#) about government funding for pupils from all state funded secondary schools in England to visit the battlefields of Northern France

#### Next steps/extension activities:

- The History Department is repeating this project with year 9’s and they hope to add at least one other story of a soldier remembered on the Northenden Cenotaph each year.
- The school is also getting involved with the War Memorials Trust Project, [War Memorials Online](#), by carrying out a condition survey of the cenotaph, and is working with Historic England to try to get it listed as part of the [War Memorials Listing Project](#).