

# 'His loss is deeply felt'

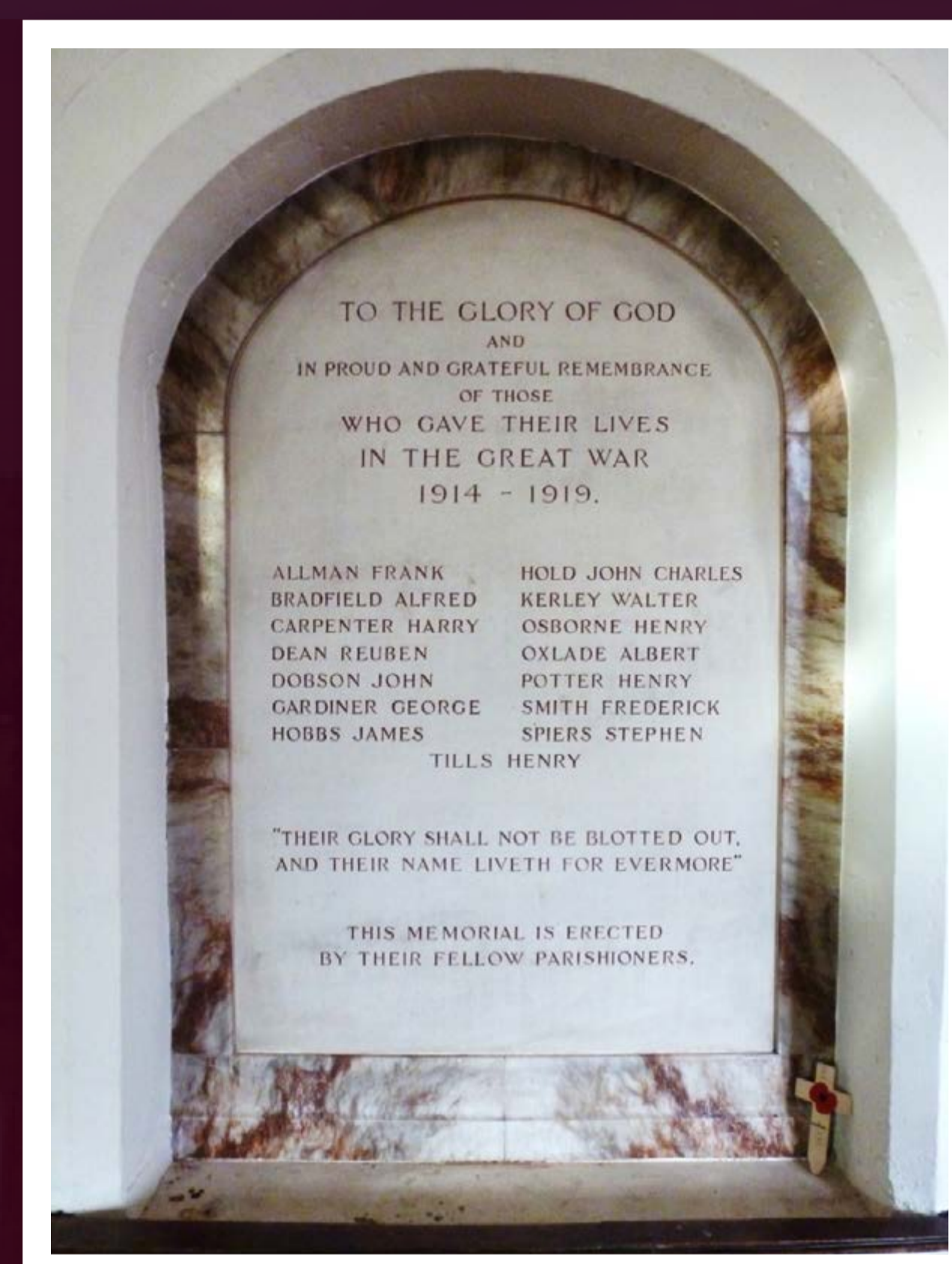
At the end of November 1917, the 5th Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry was relieved of front line duty and withdrawn to Winnizele (France). On 24th November, in what was to be his last letter home, Charlie reassured his mother that he was away from the fighting.

However, on 6th December, the battalion supplied 4 Lewis-gun teams for the front line to protect 18-pounder batteries against the German artillery. Charlie was amongst these men. On 11th December, 3 of the 4 Lewis-gun teams returned to the battalion. In the intervening period, they had lost 4 men killed and one wounded. One of those killed was Charlie Hold.

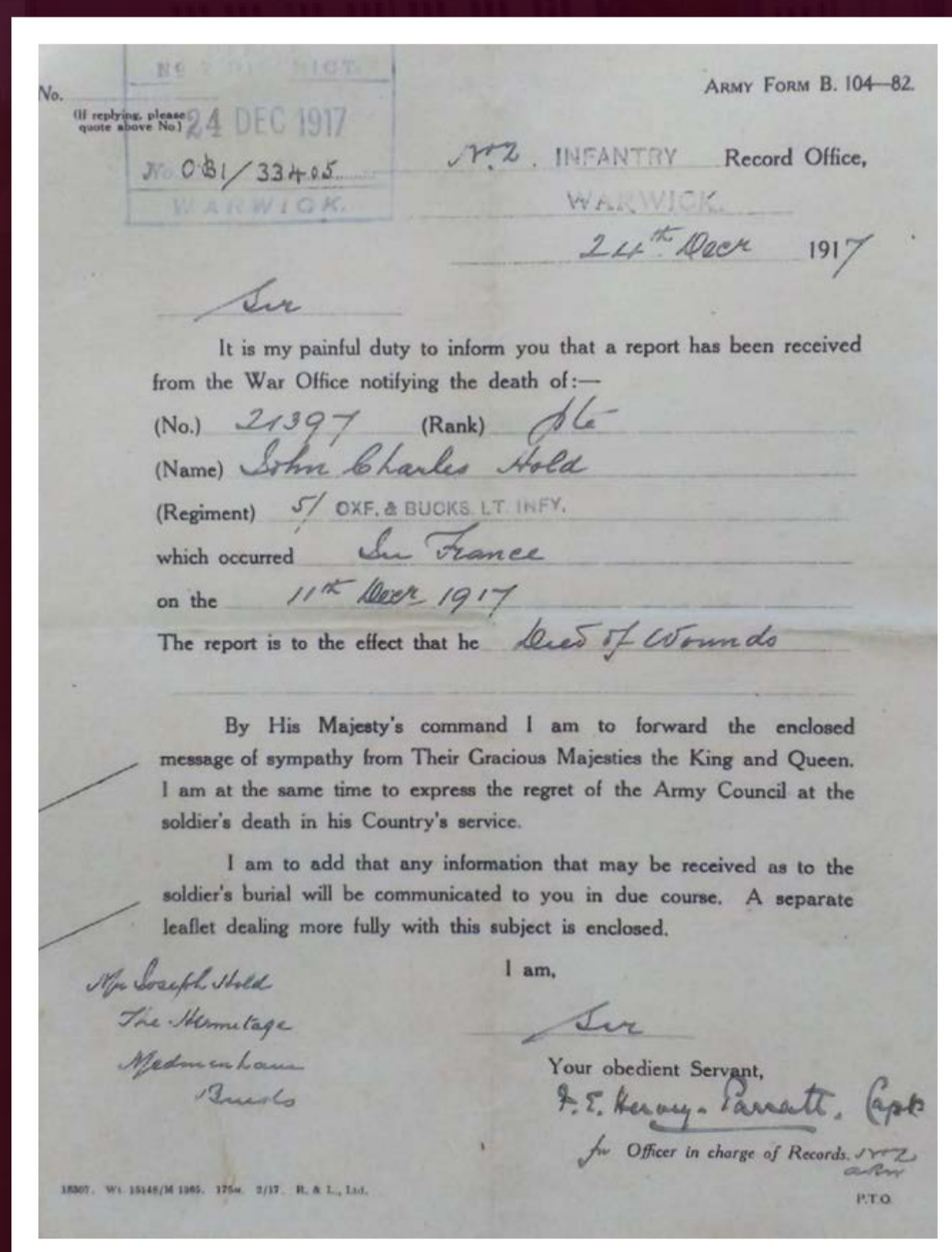
Details of his death emerged in letters to his family from his commanding officer Captain Boardman and the chaplain Rev. W. Stewart. Charlie's party of Lewis-gunners was hit by a shell on 11th December, three being killed instantly. Charlie was badly wounded and died at the advanced dressing station about four hours later. In a letter to the family, Captain Boardman, wrote 'I should like to tell you that your son was one of the very best men in my company, being always so keen and cheerful. He was one of my best Lewis Gunners, and his loss is deeply felt right through the company.'

It is likely that Charlie's family were informed of his death just after Christmas 1917.

There is no known grave for Charlie. He is instead commemorated, with 35,000 other men, on the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium. He is also commemorated on the memorial in the parish church at Medmenham.



The war memorial in St Peter and St Paul Church, Medmenham where Charlie Hold is commemorated along with others from the village who died during the First World War.



Copy of the notification from the Army to Charlie's family of his death, dated 24 December 1917. Photo courtesy of Special Collections, Leeds University.



Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium, where Charlie Hold is commemorated. Photo courtesy of Commonwealth War Graves Commission.