

**Cottingley First World War Memorial – Context**  
**By A. Brook (War Memorials Trust Regional Volunteer)**

The original church of St Michael and All Angels (consecrated 1886) stood on Bradford Old Road in Cottingley. In 1968, it was found to have dry rot and was closed, being replaced by a new church built nearer the centre of what was now the main area of housing for the village. The old church caught fire in 1969 and had to be demolished. The site is now occupied by flats, St Michael's Close. The new church, in Littlelands, was consecrated in 1968 with the same dedication. Its roof became unsafe and the building was demolished in 2003. In November 2008, the Cottingley Cornerstone Centre opened. The Centre incorporates a new St Michael's, a doctor's surgery, social services facilities and other community space, in a complex which also has various forms of new housing. The Centre is run by a trust which has 50:50 church/community membership.

Cottingley's war memorial, a calvary with a plaque of names of the dead at its foot, was dedicated, in 1919, in a paddock next door to the original church. (A Roll of Honour, for those who had served and returned, was also created and is now in Cottingley Town Hall chapel.) In 1969, the memorial was moved to the grounds of the new church in Littlelands and roses planted around it. In 2002, the memorial was vandalised and the figure of Christ damaged beyond repair. The restored memorial, with a new Christ figure, was re-dedicated by the Archdeacon of Bradford at a service on 30 September 2002, with the Prince of Wales performing the unveiling. In 2003, the Christ figure was once again damaged, one arm being broken off. (The repaired figure was given an additional pair of metal fixings to the timber frame through each hand, disguised as the crucifixion nails.) Soon after, the church building was condemned as unsafe (see above). For a period, the memorial was in storage. When the Cornerstone Centre was completed, the memorial was initially placed at the front of the complex but is now more securely placed within the small gated entrance garden to the church entrance within the complex.

**Sources:**

[www.cottingley.net](http://www.cottingley.net)

[www.cottingleyconnect.org.uk](http://www.cottingleyconnect.org.uk)

[www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/archive](http://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/archive)

[www.yorkshirepost.co.uk](http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk)

[www.cottingleycornerstone.org.uk](http://www.cottingleycornerstone.org.uk)

A. Brook conversation with Church Warden (June 2010)