

# Loddon & Chedgrave's Wartime History



## Step Back in Time to Celebrate VE Day!



**The Methodist Hall, George Lane** - In WW1 this was a Red Cross Hospital with 20 beds. Sadly, Dr McClintock, who cared for the injured soldiers, passed away shortly after a fire here in 1918. There's a memorial to him in Heckingham Churchyard.

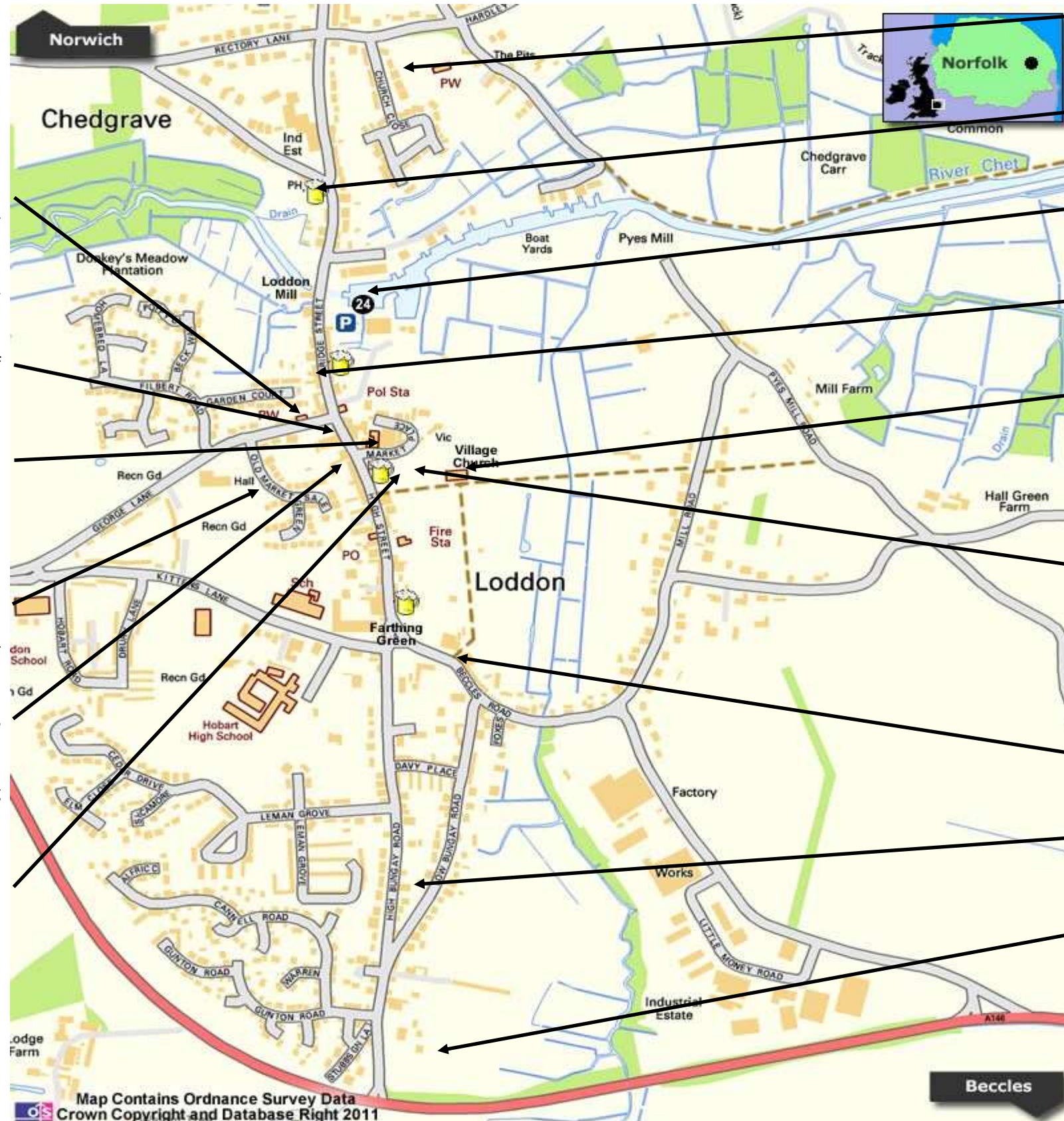
**Bugdon House, Bridge Street** - See the remains of a WW2 blockade on George Lane, designed to prevent enemy troops from crossing the river.

**The Old School, Church Plain** - During WW2, the school here doubled in size to welcome evacuees from East London. The Council (now housed in this building) had to count gas masks for residents. Some locals were trained as 'Fitters of Respirators'.

**Old Market Green/Playing Field Hedge** - Spot the base for the Spigot Mortar Thimble. A powerful anti-tank weapon could be placed on here for WW2 defence.

**Loddon Town Hall** - A 'Welcome Home' dinner was held here in 1919 for WW1 soldiers. In WW2, this building became the Civil Defence HQ. Windows were taped up to prevent glass from shattering due to bomb blasts. Even boxing matches were held here!

**Church Plain** - The photograph overleaf from WW1 shows the Cheshire Yeomanry, who were billeted at Langley Hall.



**Chedgrave Lychgate** - formally dedicated on 30 September 2018 to remember those that fell in WW1 and WW2.

**Chedgrave White Horse** - During WW2, the Women's Voluntary Service ran a canteen here, where soldiers played games and relaxed.

**Loddon Staithe** - During WW1, recuperating soldiers enjoyed occasional wherry trips to Chedgrave Common.

**Local Food Office (next to Youngs)** - Food was rationed in WW2. Bananas were unknown! Check out the wartime history display in Youngs window.

**Holy Trinity Church** - In WW2, ringing the church bells would have signalled an invasion. The bell tower also served as a lookout post. Lucy Esther Seely's gravestone is located in the Churchyard. Tragically she died when a WW2 bomb fell near her home on Stubbs Green.

**Loddon War Memorial** - We do not have an exact figure, but absent voter records suggest that approximately 184 men from Loddon & Chedgrave went to war in WW1. The memorial was unveiled in 1921 to honour those who fell in WW1. It also records those who fell in WW2. Residents gather here on Remembrance Sunday to remember them.

**3 Beccles Road (Rodwell House)** - The garden still houses a WW2 Air Raid Shelter, built to accommodate around 20 people.

**Drill Hall (Cadet Hall)** - Built in 1936, this Drill Hall had an armoury to store guns. The ammunition and explosives would have been stored outside.

**Pillboxes** - Three defensive WW2 pillboxes once stood in Loddon. These structures allowed soldiers to defend the area from invasion. One is situated adjacent to High Bungay Road/A146 (face East into the field).

Another pillbox is located at The Mill House, 43 Bridge Street. This pillbox was strategically placed to defend the river crossing.

Compiled by Loddon Town Council for the VE Day Celebrations - 8 May 2025.

With thanks to Loddon & District Local History Group for the historical information & Chedgrave Parish Council for their financial contribution.



# Photos of Loddon & Chedgrave's Wartime History



**Church Plain** - This photograph from WW1 shows the Cheshire Yeomanry, who were billeted at Langley Hall.



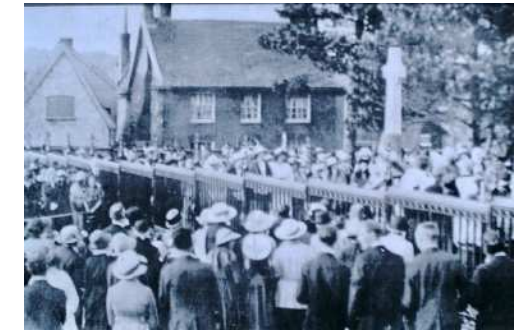
**Old Market Green/Playing Field** - Find the base for the Spigot Mortar Thimble. A powerful anti-tank weapon could be placed on here for WW2 defence.



**Loddon Staithe** - During WW1, recuperating soldiers enjoyed occasional wherry trips to Chedgrave Common.



**Local Food Office** - Food was rationed in WW2. Check out the display in Youngs window, showing ration books and groceries from the time.



**Loddon War Memorial** - This photo was taken during the Dedication Service on 25 May 1921.



**The Old School, Church Plain** - During WW2, the school here doubled in size to welcome evacuees from East London. All children had to carry a gas mask for use if there was an attack.



**The Methodist Hall, George Lane** - In WW1 this was a Red Cross Hospital with 20 beds. Sadly, Dr McClintock, who cared for the injured soldiers, passed away shortly after a fire here in 1918.



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**3 Beccles Road (Rodwell House)** - The garden still houses a WW2 Air Raid shelter built to accommodate around 20 people.



**Loddon Town Hall** - A 'Welcome Home' dinner was held here in 1919 for WW1 soldiers. In WW2, this building became the Civil Defence HQ. Even boxing matches were held here!



**WW1 Red Cross Hospital Nurses** - This is a photograph of the nurses on wash day.



**Chedgrave White Horse** - During WW2, the Women's Voluntary Service ran a canteen here, where soldiers played games and relaxed. *Photo dated 1936.*



**Holy Trinity Church** - Lucy Esther Seely, a local resident, tragically died when a WW2 bomb fell near her home near Stubbs Green. Can you find her gravestone? It is located rear left, near the footpath to Mill Road.



**Pillboxes** - Three WW2 pillboxes once stood in Loddon. These structures allowed soldiers to defend the area from invasion. The photograph shows the one that is adjacent to High Bungay Road/A146 if you face East into the field.