



The Dugout

Newsletter of the Dorset and South Wiltshire Branch of the
Western Front Association

Parish Notes

Chairman:

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Diary Dates 2010:

Meetings

Saturday, 9 January

Andy Robertshaw - *Ghosts on the Somme*

Saturday, 13 February

Victoria Burbidge - *Aubers Ridge 1915*

Saturday, 13 March

Joanna Legg - *Battle of the Somme - A Study of the German Defence 1 July 1916*

Saturday, 10 April

Dale Hjort - *Italy and the Great War*

Saturday, 8 May

David Cohen - *A Subaltern's Odyssey*

Saturday, 12 June

Branch Seminar - Tank Museum

Saturday, 19 June

Diane Atkinson - *Elsie and Mairi go to War*

Monthly meetings held at Pimperne Village Hall, Blandford - 2pm for 2.30pm start.

Field Trip:

Saturday, 6 March

Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) and Army Medical Services (AMS) Museums - **Names to Judy Willoughby as a matter of urgency please ****

Further details from the Secretary, Judy Willoughby, or the Chairman

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Newsletter Editor: Helen Kerridge  
[baytnaa@btinternet.com](mailto:baytnaa@btinternet.com)

## Chairman's Chat

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Issue 4 of our branch newsletter which continues to develop in both magnitude and quality. I congratulate our editor Helen for her dedication in getting to grips with the technicalities of MS Publisher and also for the format and content of the newsletter. Its continued success is also reliant on the support of the readership and the articles that you provide which contribute so much to the interest and variety within. In order to ensure as wide a distribution as possible and overcome a technical constraint regarding file size The Dugout will in future be lodged on our forthcoming branch website which has a target date of January 2010 to become operational and the WFA website. Those readers with a sufficient server capacity will continue to receive it electronically in the meantime. Those who do not have personal access to a computer can access the WFA website and our branch website (when operational) from your local library.

The year continues to be very busy for the branch. Our battlefield tour in September was fully subscribed with thirty five members travelling. This tour was particularly notable for the 'out of the way' places visited and Helen Kerridge has written a splendid 'travelogue' on the tour. Looking ahead to September 2010, this will be an equally interesting tour covering little known aspects of the Yser Front and the Northern Ypres Salient.

The branch continues to grow both in the scope and number of

activities and a welcome increase in attendance at our monthly meetings. We now have a well established reputation for our friendliness, effective organisation and level of activity. This success brings a need to change in other ways and the branch will be seeking Registered Charity status in the very near future. This will enable the branch to take advantage of schemes such as Gift Aid to enhance revenue and be of benefit in seeking a variety of grants, but we will be obliged to meet certain statutory requirements in the way we manage and conduct our affairs. There is of course a certain irony in the fact that modest success begets an increase in administration, but it is considered that the benefits supported by a strong management and finance plan will outweigh any perceived disadvantages. It is of course important to continue with and maintain the standards of our core activities such as our monthly meetings, School Prize Award Scheme, Regional Seminars and Memorial Projects which enable us to meet our existing and future constitutional obligations. I think you will all agree that we have a strong speaker programme for 2010, a bigger School Prize Award scheme is in the offing, our 2010 battlefield tour will be exceptional (but I would say that wouldn't it!) and preparations for the 2010 Seminar in association with the Tank Museum are gathering momentum. None of this would be possible without the support of the committee and our membership, so thanks to you all and please keep it up.

## Battlefield Tour 2009 Friday, 4 to Monday, 7 September

### "The 1915 Battles"

What an incredible and full few days!□

Our journey from a dark and drizzly Pimperne to a bright and sunny Folkestone was amazingly easy and quick, as was the trip through the Tunnel and the drive south to Vimy Ridge. Here we were given a guided tour of the reconstructed trench system and some of the tunnels used by the Canadians. These tours were carried out by French Canadian students who had applied to spend four months acting as guides as part of a programme run by their Government to advance the awareness of Canadian involvement in the First World War.□

After this and before heading into Arras, our base for the weekend, we drove to the top of the ridge near to the monument and looked down over flatness of the Loos battlefield; this was the area that we would explore in greater depth over the coming days.□

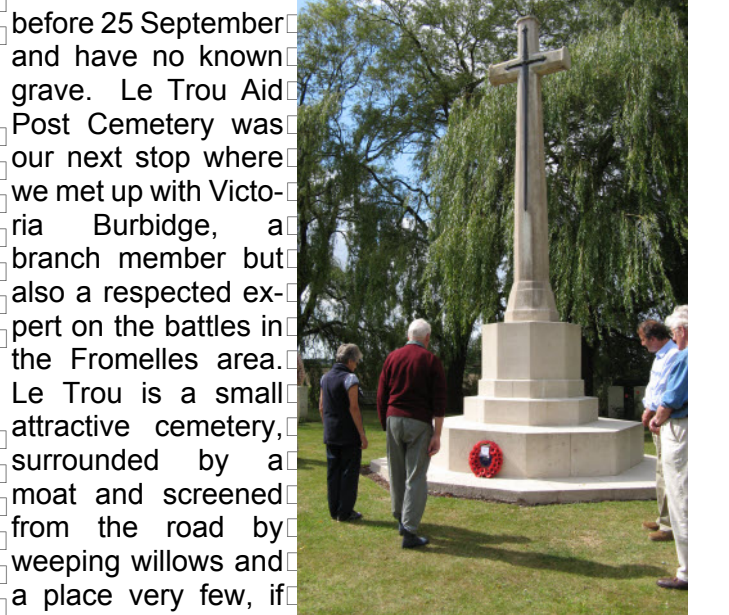
Saturday dawned bright and sunny and our first stop for the day was the Neuve Chapelle Indian Memorial at the Port Arthur Crossroads; a circular enclosure, on which are inscribed the names of some 4,700 soldiers of the Indian Army. Also commemorated are Indian soldiers from other cemeteries in Europe as well as the Second World War; the outside walls still show the scars of that conflict.□

From there we progressed to Rue du Bacquerot No. 1 Cemetery at Laventie, negotiating a farmer's yard to reach the cemetery, which had been built on either side of a paved farm track. Here we found further Muslim, Hindu and Sikh graves lying close by their Christian comrades. Our Chairman, Martin Willoughby, a former tank man, stood in admirably for our branch artillery expert, Will Townend, who unfortunately

had been unable to join us, and spoke about Artillery actions in the surrounding area.□

A drive around the outskirts of Neuve Chapelle village took us past the Moated Grange (Ferme Vanbesien), the site of The Orchard to Layes Brook, Layes Bridge and Signpost Lane. Here our other two military 'experts' for the trip, Mike 'Iddy' Adams and Nigel Plumb, described the fighting in and around the village.□

On the way up to visit Aubers Ridge British Cemetery we were able to identify a number of the remaining bunkers built in the area by the Germans as a defence line. Following this it was back into La Basse for a picnic lunch eaten sitting in the warm sunshine on the canal bank. The afternoon started by looking at the Battle of Festubert and a visit to the Post Office Rifles Cemetery on the edge of the village followed by the impressive Le Touret Cemetery and Monument to the Missing, which lists over 13,000 names of men who fell in the area before 25 September and have no known grave. Le Trou Aid Post Cemetery was our next stop where we met up with Victoria Burbidge, a branch member but also a respected expert on the battles in the Fromelles area. Le Trou is a small attractive cemetery, surrounded by a moat and screened from the road by weeping willows and a place very few, if any of our group, had visited before; here we held a short service of remembrance and laid a wreath.□



Then it was off to Fromelles, VC Corner and the Australian Memorial where Victoria described the actions of 1915 illustrating the horrors experienced with photographs showing the Australian trenches, which because of the high water table could not be dug into the ground but had to be built up. On leaving the memorial we took a slight detour passed Pheasant Wood to see the location of the current archaeological dig which is recovering the bodies of Australian and British soldiers from the mass burial pits only recently discovered and a short distance along the road the site of the new Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery where these men will be laid to rest.□





Our next destination was to have been Ypres and the In Loos village we were met by the curator of the evening ceremony at the Menin Gate, however, we small Loos War Museum. He took us to the top of arrived to find the town celebrating its liberation and what now stands as the Double Crassier; an interest-crammed with people which meant we were unableing journey in a 54 seater coach. This, I believe for to park our longer than normal coach in a suitablemany of us was possibly the highlight, literally and location. Taking into consideration plans A, B, C andmetaphorically speaking, of the tour and a first all possibly D, it was decided to abort the mission, maketwo swift calls at Bard Cottage andDunhallow ADScemeteries in order for one of the group to pay hispersonal respects before heading back to Arras anda very welcome cold beer.

Sunday was spent looking at the Battle of Loos. We started at the Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner at Cuinchy followed by Dud Corner Cemetery and the Loos Memorial. From the high point at the top of the memorial we looked out at the flat, virtually featureless landscape that had been fought over at such a cost in lives in September and October 1915. Contemporary trench maps and modern maps allowed us to identify the German redoubts, including the virtually impregnable Hohenzollen Redoubt, a visit to which proved fascinating.



The Redoubt appears to be a rarely visited location and one that was almost lost in recent times. Thanks to the WFA a memorial now stands to remember the regiments of the 46<sup>th</sup> (North Midland) Division who attacked the Redoubt on 13 October 1915 at an incredibly high cost. As we stood on the track by the redoubt and looked across the



round. As we stood on the large flat slagheap, admittedly higher than it would have been in 1915, we looked over the whole battlefield; we were able to identify trench systems, the redoubts, the numerous cemeteries and up behind us Vimy Ridge with its memorial and 'The Lantern' of Notre Dame de Lorette. It was an incredible view. Back at the tiny but fascinating museum, located in the town hall, we spent time examining numerous items found by the local population over the years, from the tiniest shrapnel ball and button through to entrenching tools, machine guns and rifles; this was given a touch of realism by the sound of firecrackers going off immediately outside the building where a wedding was being celebrated. The intensity of the fighting was further illustrated by us on the way back to Calais the following morning to amount of rusted metal work located along the edges of the field, including four grenades; these were left in a safe location for collection and disposal by the authorities. Even walking back to coach two buttons were found just lying on the edge of the track; one from a German uniform and the second a British officer's. There was also plenty of evidence in the fields in the form of broken floor tiles and bricks of the miners' cottages that had once stood behind the redoubt at Cite Madagascar. These had been obliterated during the battle but were rebuilt after the war on the same foundations.

This visit concluded the planned itinerary but allowed us on the way back to Calais the following morning to detour to La Cupole, a World War Two Nazi V1 / V2 site; a vast undertaking dug and constructed into side of a hill. An added bonus was a striking and captivating display of photographs of the First World War including four grenades; these were left in a safe location for collection and disposal by the authorities. Even walking back to coach two buttons were found just lying on the edge of the track; one from a German uniform and the second a British officer's. There was also plenty of evidence in the fields in the form of broken floor tiles and bricks of the miners' cottages that had once stood behind the redoubt at Cite Madagascar. These had been obliterated during the battle but were rebuilt after the war on the same foundations.

Special thanks though are due to Paul, our □  
marvelous driver, whose professionalism and skill □  
at manoeuvring such a large vehicle around the □  
narrow lanes and tight locations visited was □  
outstanding. His good humour, acerbic south Walian □  
wit and one-liners had us in fits of laughter on many □  
occasions. □

**Helen Kerridge**



## It's a long way from Kidderminster...

The Loos battlefield was far from my mind as I en- □  
tered Kidderminster Town Cemetery one morning in □  
April 2007. I had come to the Worcestershire town □  
looking for the graves of some of my ancestors. □

Walking up the steep path of the part of the cemetery □  
that was originally the nonconformist burial ground, I □  
tried to orientate the sketch map provided by the □  
cemetery office staff. They had kindly marked the □  
approximate positions of some of the family graves □  
on the map for me. □

A key feature of the map was the cenotaph to the □  
memory of a nonconformist minister, the Rev. Rich- □  
ard Fry, who had died in 1842. □

Up to then the interring of nonconformists in St. □  
Mary's Anglican churchyard was an accepted prac- □  
tice. However when Fry died, the vicar was absent □  
and the curate left in charge refused to allow a □  
“dissenter” to be buried in the churchyard. The out- □  
come was the opening of the nonconformist burial □  
ground. Adjacent land was eventually purchased □  
when the town required more burial space for towns- □  
people regardless of their beliefs. □

Using the cenotaph as a marker I tracked down □  
several of the graves I was seeking. The last on my □  
list was the burial plot of my great-great-aunt Maria □  
Arnold. □

Maria was born in 1848 and had married twice. She □  
had three children by her first husband James Pugh. □  
He had died in 1887 and Maria later married Henry □  
Boutcher. Widowed for a second time, Maria herself □  
died in 1920 and was buried in the same grave as her □  
first husband. □

The wording on the headstone opened - “In affection- □  
ate remembrance of James Pugh...”, but then I read □  
“also of Private Thomas Cyril Perry, 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion □  
Scottish Rifles, son of Edward and Emma Perry and □  
grandson of the above, killed in action in France May □

14, 1916, aged 21 years. He answered his Country's □  
call and nobly did his duty.” The inscription then went □  
on to commemorate “Maria, relict of James Pugh.” □  
The Boutcher name was not mentioned. □

My cousin and I □  
had been re- □  
searching our □  
family history for □  
a number of □  
years, but we had □  
not come across □  
any mention of □  
Thomas Cyril □  
Perry. We did □  
know that James □  
and Maria had □  
had a daughter □  
Emma. We now □  
knew that she □  
had married a □  
man named Ed- □  
ward Perry. □

It was easy then □  
to trace their mar- □  
riage in 1891 and □  
Thomas Cyril's □  
birth in Kidder- □  
minster three □

years later. By 1901 the Perry family had moved to □  
Chilvers Coton near Nuneaton in Warwickshire. The □  
family was still living at Chilvers Coton in 1911 when □  
the 16-year-old Thomas Cyril was apprenticed to a □  
printer. □

Thomas Cyril Perry's army service record was □  
amongst the documents destroyed in World War □  
Two, so we have no idea how he came to join the 10<sup>th</sup> □  
Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). His medal □  
card suggests that he was with the unit from its □  
formation at Hamilton (southeast of Glasgow) in Sep- □  
tember 1914. Certainly he went to France with the □  
battalion in July 1915. □

Perhaps the Perry family (or maybe just Thomas) □  
moved to Scotland for some reason between 1911 □  
and 1914. We know that another branch of the □  
Arnold family moved from Kidderminster to Glasgow □  
around 1903 and was still there as late as 1916. □

Later in the Great War local geographical affiliation □  
played little part in the assignment of men to infantry □  
units - they were posted to replace battle casualties □  
“where required”. My view of the situation in 1914 is □  
that, for the most part, men enlisted in “local” units - □  
Regular, Territorial or Kitchener. I would welcome □  
readers' comments on this. □





The 10<sup>th</sup> Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) were part of the Cameronians listed 12 officers and 68 other ranks killed, 7 K2 - Kitchener's Second New Army. The battalion officers and 318 other ranks wounded and 4 officers formed part of 46 Brigade / 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division and 239 other ranks missing. The battalion was at Winchester in February 1915, moving to Salisbury Plain in April. They landed at the 15<sup>th</sup> Division spent the 1915-16 winter in the Loos Boulogne on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1915, the 15<sup>th</sup> Division concentrated area holding the line at the Quarries, the Hohen-zollern Redoubt and Hulluch.

Under the command of Major General F.W.N. McCracken, the Division entered its first major action on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915 at Loos. The Division was in IV Corps. On seeing the ground, Rawlinson, the Corps commander, commented, "My new front at Loos is as flat as the palm of my hand. Hardly any cover anywhere. Easy enough to hold defensively but very difficult to attack. It will cost us dearly and we shall not get very far."



An approach to the Cameronians Regimental Museum produced a transcript of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion War Diary for May 1916 and extracts from the Regimental History and the history of 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion for that period. These revealed that on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1916, the Germans launched an attack in the Quarries sector supported by "one of the heaviest concentrations of artillery fire on a small area in the war." The main assault fell on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1916, when the Royal Scots to the left of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cameronians. Over the

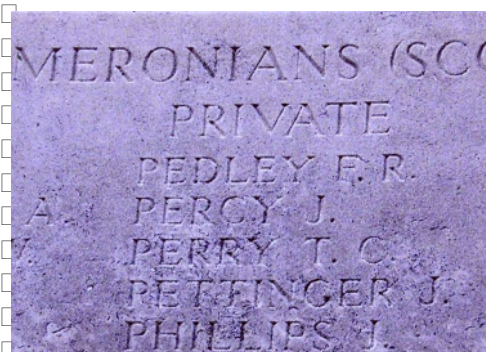
next few days the latter were called upon to mount a series of counterattacks which failed to dislodge the Germans. Eventually a new British line was dug further back and this was heavily mined to facilitate a response to further such attacks by the Germans in this area.

46 Brigade (Brigadier-General Torquil Matheson) was on the left of 15<sup>th</sup> Division's assault. They had 12<sup>th</sup> Highland Light Infantry on the left, 7<sup>th</sup> Kings Own Scottish Borderers in the centre and 10<sup>th</sup> Cameronians on the right. This placed the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner Cemetery.

The latter roughly in the middle of the area between the Bethune-Lens Road and the Vermelles-Loos Road. The 2009 Branch Field

The 15<sup>th</sup> Division captured the village of Loos and rushed on to seize the vital Hill 70 - the deepest advance of the day. Thomas Perry's battalion participated in both of these successes and the hand-to-hand fighting they involved. Later in the day a German counterattack pushed the Scots off Hill 70 and back to the eastern edge of Loos village.

The casualties suffered by the two Scottish divisions - the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division also took part in the battle - were the highest of the twelve British divisions that eventually were involved in the fighting around Loos. The 15<sup>th</sup> Division alone reported 6,389 casualties for the period 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> September 1915. The 10<sup>th</sup> Cam-



Cameronians buried at Dud Corner who were serving missions or to advise on memorials and cemeteries with the battalion at the same time as Thomas - did at home or abroad. he know any of them? I had completed the journey that began in Kidderminster Town Cemetery almost two-and-a-half years before. In order to overcome his shyness on public occasions, and perhaps as a defence against his unhappy marriage, Lutyens created for himself a talkative and ceaselessly joking persona. This became a habit he was unable to break and others could at times find it tiresome but architectural historian Gavin Stamp's view is that "Behind that mask and all the jokes, there was an artist of profound seriousness and absolute integrity." As he lay dying of lung cancer in the closing days of 1943 Lutyens asked for his final drawings to be placed around his room. In the event his design for a magnificent new cathedral for the Roman Catholic community of Liverpool was never built but, as in the case of Sir Christopher Wren, if we want Lutyens's memorial we have only to look around us. On hearing the news of his death Lutyens's daughter, Mary, wrote "Going up Whitehall, almost deserted, I quite unexpectedly found we were passing the Cenotaph. I was shattered. The aloof, lonely perfection of its beauty pierced me. [...] I can never pass it now without feeling he is there - it is his soul, the quintessence of his genius - as much a memorial to him as to the dead of two wars".

**Rod Arnold**



### **'Times Digital Archive' access through Dorset County Libraries**

For those who live in Dorset and have membership of the County Library - did you know you can access the 'Times Digital Archive' from the comfort of your own computer?

Just go to the Library page on the County Council website, 'Dorset for You', scroll down look for the 'online information resources' and log in as directed using the number on your library card. There are a number of other good reference links as well.

### **Book review**



### **Recent Books Examining the Life and Work of Edwin Lutyens**

The tenth of thirteen children of an artist who had served for nine years in the army, Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) began to study architecture before setting up an architectural practice at only nineteen years old on the strength of a commission from a family friend to design a house near Farnborough. Lutyens's early work, influenced by the buildings of his native Surrey and by his collaboration with Gertrude Jekyll, was in the Arts and Crafts style. His hero was Sir Christopher Wren and he termed the mixture of classical sources from which his later designs were derived his "Wrennaissance" in honour of his idol.

In 1897 Lutyens married Lady Emily Lytton. They had five children but their relationship was a difficult one, their problems exacerbated by financial concerns. However, they wrote letters constantly to each other when apart and a good many of these have survived and are useful in tracing Lutyens's thoughts and the influences on him as he travelled in pursuit of com-

In recent years a number of books have been published about the life and work of Edwin Lutyens. In 2002 his great-granddaughter, Jane Ridley, completed "The Architect and his Wife: A Life of Edwin Lutyens" (published by Chatto and Windus) and also included in the list of new studies are two which focus on his designs for memorials and cemeteries.

Gavin Stamp's "The Memorial to the Missing of the Somme" (published by Profile Books Ltd in 2006) is described somewhat enthusiastically by reviewer A. N. Wilson as "Far more than a work of pure architectural history [...] beautifully poignant [...] a tragic chorus on the Somme". A detailed, yet compact, study of Lutyens's monument this book examines the site and design of the memorial in depth as well as describing Lutyens's career and setting the monument at Thiepval into the context of the development of war memorials in general and the work of the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission in particular. Here the author, as an architectural historian, is on familiar territory. Lutyens's guiding principle was that "Everything should have an air of inevitability" and Stamp helps the reader to understand the complexity which lies behind the deceptive simplicity of Lutyens's design for the Thiepval memorial arch - although at times an architectural glossary would have been useful, as would photos of some of the other buildings and monuments by Lutyens which are referred to in the text, such as the Rand Regiments Memorial.



In his acknowledgments Stamp refers to his “long-□ something about which he cared with a very deep standing obsession with the tragedy of the Great□ passion” Another chapter focuses on what are termed War”. The titles he refers to in his suggestions for “the unbuilt” and consideration is also given to me-□ further reading confirm his passionately held stance□ morials which have been lost or damaged and to the on the war. “It will be evident” he admits “that I am□ evolving nature of sites such as Thiepval.□ more sympathetic to accounts of the war that ques-□ tion its motives and conduct rather than those that□ Numerous beautiful photographs help us to appreci-□ merely catalogue and vaunt feats of arms.” The□ ate the grand as well as the lesser-known of chapter which he feels he must include about the□ Lutyens’s designs. Indeed, if it is possible to have the Battle of the Somme itself, even though “no more□ two books side by side, Gavin Stamp’s detailed ex-□ than a summary of events” is therefore heavily□ planation of Lutyens’s Monument to the Missing at weighted towards an interpretation of the battle as□ Thiepval is often complemented and illuminated by “sheer stupidity” pursued by callous leaders under the□ the superb photographs in Skelton and Gliddon’s “repellent figure of Douglas Haig”.□ volume.□

However, criticisms of omissions or of the author’s, at□ With the one minor adverse criticism that the proof-□ times, rather biased interpretations of history should□ reading of this important study has been rather care-□ not dissuade from a reading of this well-researched,□ less “Lutyens and the Great War” is amply rewarding well-organized and largely accessible book in which□ to read and it merits a place on the bookshelf as a Stamp is convincing in his central argument that the□ reference work by virtue of its three appendices which Memorial to the Missing of the Somme “does not□ contain lists, brief descriptions and photographs of all glorify war, but dignifies the wasteful sacrifice of□ of Lutyens’s cemetery and memorial design work, young men by remembering them in a stupendous,□ both public and private, throughout the world.□ breathtaking architectural gesture.”□

#### Note on the Southampton War Memorial

The most recent of the studies of Lutyens’s work,□ published by Francis Lincoln Ltd., in 2008, is entitled□ “Lutyens and the Great War” and is co-authored by□ Tim Skelton and Gerald Gliddon. In his introduction□ Skelton informs us that there are “700 or so built□ objects around the world to which Lutyens’s name□ can be ascribed as designer”. Lutyens has, however,□ until now been most widely known for his designs for□ large country houses in the years just before World□ War One. A member of the Lutyens Trust, Skelton’s□ aim, following over twenty years research, is to cata-□ logue and set in context Lutyens’s lesser-known, and□ yet much more prolific, cemetery and memorial de-□ sign work. The result is a thorough and fascinating□ account which takes us from Lutyens’s early work□ and his collaboration with artist and gardener Ger-□ trude Jekyll through his appointment as architect to□ the New Delhi Planning Commission in India to his□ work for the Imperial War Graves commission and for□ a large number of towns, cities and villages as well as□ individuals wishing to commemorate the fallen of the□ Great War.□



Appreciation of Lutyens’ work and concern for its□ preservation has become pressing in Southampton□ as erosion caused by weathering becomes obvious.□

We follow the stages in the design process which led□ Southampton memorial Lutyens chose a number of□ to such familiar memorials as the two cenotaphs,□ elements and one feature of the design is that the Southampton and London. We learn of the some-□ names of the fallen are carved on the cenotaph itself.□ times lengthy - and even acrimonious - deliberations□ Over the years these names have become difficult to□ of war memorial committees which preceded the□ read. Remembering those lost in a fitting and effec-□ construction of other memorials, particularly in Spald-□ tive way has become a topic of debate in the city.□ ing where the monument versus utilitarian scheme□ There has been argument about altering the historic debate became especially heated. One chapter is□ fabric of the stone by re-carving the names as well as□ devoted to a study in depth of Lutyens’s successful□ concern that this may not provide a long-term solu-□ campaign for the inclusion of his War Stone in Impe-□ tion. In a debate which Lutyens would have recog-□ rial War Graves Commission cemeteries “clearly□ nized well the issue of cost has been much

discussed. Southampton City Council has decided that it cannot afford the estimated £300,000 needed

to fully restore the memorial. The current proposal would leave the Lutyns Cenotaph in its weathered state and would add free-standing glass "walls" to the memorial area on which the First World War

names, as well as those lost in subsequent conflicts up to the present day, would be engraved. Public opinion is being consulted and an appeal for £75,000 has been launched. In addition the council has pledged £50,000 in order to complete the project.

More details can be found on the Southern Daily Echo website at: [http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/campaigns/southampton\\_cenotaph/](http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/campaigns/southampton_cenotaph/)

**Katherine Seymour**



### Can you help?

The photograph shows the button found on the track at the Hohenzollen Redoubt; first impressions were



that it was East Yorks but now Royal Fusiliers has been suggested. Both are similar - can anyone give a definitive answer?

Comments to the Editor please.



## "Bravest street in the land" - At last a tribute for 161 heroes of First World War

Article by Chris Irvine of the Daily Telegraph dated 13 September

The terraces and cobbles are long gone, but the wartime efforts of "the bravest little street in England" have finally been honoured after more than 90 years. In all, 161 men from Chapel Street left its 60 houses to fight in the First World War, more than from any other street in Britain; twenty nine of them never came home.

George V, writing to thank the families in a telegram in 1919, dubbed the street in Altrincham, Cheshire, 'as the bravest in England'. On a visit to the area he is said to have asked to be driven to the street so he could salute its fiercely patriotic residents.

Their sacrifice - losing nearly one in every five men who went to war - was marked yesterday by the unveiling of a blue plaque where the street once stood. The two-up, two-down terraces were demolished in the 1960s.

Peter Hennerley, 11, whose great-great-grandfather Hugh was one of those who did return, helped Trafford's mayor David Higgins unveil the memorial at the Portofino Restaurant on Regent Road. The simple plaque reads:

"Chapel Street Altrincham. From just 60 houses 161 men volunteered in the Great War 1914-18. 29 were killed. Recognised and praised by King George V."

Peter's 73-year-old grandfather, also called Peter, said: "This plaque will be there for all to see now as a reminder of the sacrifice and bravery of the men and their families who lived on this street. I think there is very rarely a more deserving place for such a plaque as Chapel Street. So many people from one street volunteering to go to war would not happen today."

Hugh Hennerley was almost 36 and a veteran of the Boer War, when he enlisted. He served with the Cheshire Regiment. He won a medal for bravery and was injured in a gas bomb attack on the Western Front. He returned home to his wife Mary and worked in the building trade, but never regained his health and died aged 59.

Gillian Davies, 39, said her grandfather David Norton was one of seven brothers who left to fight, one of whom was killed. "They were very patriotic," she said. "Everyone was signing up so it was the done thing. I am very pleased they have unveiled this tribute. I think the soldiers deserved that."



The plaque was dedicated by Army padre Rev Jerry Sutton, vicar of St Margaret's Church. He asked people to so remember the British soldiers now dying in Afghanistan. More than 100 people attended, many relatives of the Chapel Street veterans, and Graham Brady, the local Tory MP.

Mayor Higgins, said: "Can you imagine? 161 men from 60 homes going to war. I do not think anyone cannot be moved by the tremendous sacrifices made."

At the outbreak of the First World War, Chapel Street was a bustling cul-de-sac, mostly home to Irish immigrants who came to England looking for work; they were crammed, as many as 10 to a room in its terraces. When war was declared in 1914, there was a rush to sign up. Within 11 days the first Chapel Street volunteer had died; Joseph Hollingsworth, who had lived at No 6, was buried where he fell in India.

*Our Chairman comments:*

*Amazing how quickly Joseph Hollingsworth made it from volunteering as a result of the outbreak of war, through training and out to India to be buried where he fell on 14 August!!!*

*Joseph Hollingsworth was clearly a regular serving with 2nd Cheshires, who were at Jubbulpore on 4 August. His medal index card shows that he "died". Clearly Joseph Hollingsworth was a volunteer - like all regulars - but he must have joined sometime before 4 August and the rush to volunteer!!*



[www.roll-of-honour.com](http://www.roll-of-honour.com)

I am sure that most WFA members are aware of the website 'www.roll-of-honour.com'. I certainly have found it useful, saving fruitless journeys to check a name; it even enabled us to make contact with a new found distant cousin and share information.

I have recently submitted details of our village war memorial and Roll of Honour for publication and would encourage others who have carried out research on memorials to do the same. Details of how to can be found on the website.

For me, it is yet another way to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice.



## Personalities of the Hampshire Regiment

### Lieutenant Francis Lambert 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment

Although Lieutenant Francis Henry Lambert served in two theatres of war with two different battalions he only saw a total of thirty-five days active service prior to his death in action.



2nd Lieut. F. H. Lambert.

Francis was the only child of FitzGerald Gage Lambert (a retired civil engineer) and Nina Marie Lambert, of The Cottage, Rockbourne, Salisbury, Wiltshire and was grandson of the Honourable Mrs FitzGerald Foley, of Packham, Fordingbridge, Hampshire.

Born in Bahramghat, India on 17th October 1895, Francis was educated at Charterhouse, Godalming and at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He obtained his commission in October 1914, and served with the 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment in Flanders joining the Battalion at Ploegsteert on 7th January, 1915 having embarked for France with a reinforcement draft on the 27th December.

Two weeks later on 22nd January, whilst out of the trenches at Nieppe, Francis was wounded when he accidentally discharged his revolver, which he did not know was loaded, and shattered the index finger on his left hand. Following amputation of the top of the finger, Francis being invalided had to return to England.

A fellow 1st Battalion officer wrote in a letter home:

*"I am always coming across someone new belonging to the Regiment of whose existence I had no notion. One called Lambert was wounded three days ago, and has departed without my ever having seen him."*

Upon recovery, Francis was posted on 16th March, 1915 to the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment who were stationed in barracks at Fort Gomer, Gosport. He was subsequently transferred to the 2nd Battalion, and sailed for the Dardenelles with a reinforcement draft on 29th April, 1915. He left Alexandria on 16th May and a day later with 46 men joined the 2nd Battalion, who were in trenches at Cape Helles, in a position North West of Fir Tree Wood.

June 4th saw a general attack on the Turkish hospital ship Somali, en route for Malta. He was trenches and it was here that the young nineteen year old subaltern fell, mortally wounded.

A letter published in the Hampshire Regimental Journal in August 1915 records the action:

Notification of his retrospective promotion to Lieutenant effective from 27th May, 1915 appeared in the London Gazette of 9th November, 1915.



Francis Lambert line fishing on the Isle of Wight December 1914

*"On the 4th, a general attack along the whole line was ordered. An artillery bombardment was to finish at 12 noon exactly; we then had to leave our trenches and capture the first line of Turkish trenches and intermediate works.*

*At 12:15 p.m. we had to push on our second line and capture the second line of Turkish trenches. X and Y Companies, commanded by [Capt] Wymer and [2/Lieut. C.] Harland, were first line, and at 12 noon they leapt out of their*

*trenches and dashed straight away, capturing the advanced trenches and Turkish first line by 12.20 p.m., and capturing therein some half a dozen officers and five and twenty men; both Wymer and Harland were hit.*

*Poor young [Lieut.] White was to have led W Company, but was shot through the head just before they started. [Capt] Rosser, Adjutant, therefore took command. At 12.14 exactly, W and Z [companies] went forward and passed through X and Y.*

*Before reaching this point Rosser was knocked over, and [2/Lieut] Lambert took command. They went on under heavy fire, and gradually fought forward to a wall just short of the Turkish 2nd line; we then found that we were rather isolated, as neither Regiment to our right or left had kept pace with us, so we dug in and made good....."*

Referring to Second Lieutenant Lambert the letter goes on:

*"...in Lambert and Moor [2/Lieut G.R.D. Moor V.C.] the 3rd Battalion must have given us of their very best."*

Mortally wounded, Francis was evacuated from the peninsula and died three days later on board the

Francis Henry Lambert is one of 1,035 officers and men from the Hampshire Regiment whose names are inscribed on the Helles Memorial, located on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

**Marc Thompson**



The following article by John Lichfield appeared in the Independent in May this year:

### The unseen photographs that throw new light on the First World War

A treasure trove of First World War photographs was discovered recently in France. Published here for the first time, they show British soldiers on their way to the Somme. But who took them? And who were these Tommies marching off to die?

The place, according to a jokingly chalked board, is



"somewhere in France". The time is the winter of 1915 and the spring and summer of 1916. Hundreds of thousands of British and Empire soldiers, are preparing for The Big Push, the biggest British offensive of the 1914-18 war to date.

A local French photographer, almost cer-

tainly an amateur, possibly a farmer, has offered to take pictures for a few francs. Soldiers have queued to have a photograph taken to send back to their anxious but proud families in Britain or Australia or New Zealand.



Sometimes, the Tommies are snapped individually in a collection, including a few images of French civilians front of the same battered door or in a pear and apple orchard. Sometimes they are photographed on horseback or in groups of comrades. A pretty six-year-old girl – the photographer's daughter? – occasionally stands with the soldiers. The Northumberland Fusiliers, the Tramways' Battalion of the Glasgow Highlanders, the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, the Royal Army Service Corps, the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Engineers, a few Australians, a South African, a lone New Zealander. When there was no war.



Who are these British and British Empire soldiers? Who was the photographer? Who was the little girl? From internal evidence in the pictures it is possible to identify the period and some of the military units – with the soldiers. The Northumberland Fusiliers, the Tramways' Battalion of the Glasgow Highlanders, the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, the Royal Army Service Corps, the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Engineers, a few Australians, a South African, a lone New Zealander. The identity of the soldiers is, and may always remain, a mystery. They are, in a sense, a photographic parallel to the 400 unknown British and Australian soldiers now being excavated from eight mass graves near Fromelles, 50 miles to the north. Including the rough figures in the group photos, well over 400 unknown Tommy faces come back to us through the mists of time and battle. A tell-tale sign of the great overcoat shortage of the soldiers before leaving home for the front or exhausted soldiers during or just after combat. Here we see the clear and often modern-looking features of soldiers at rest, either before – or in some cases, it seems – just after fighting in the trenches to the east.

Within a few months – or days, most probably – many of the soldiers were dead. The "somewhere in France" where these pictures were taken was a village called Warloy-Baillon in the département of the Somme. Ten miles to the east was the front line from which the British Army launched the most murderous battle of that, or any, war, which lasted from 1 July to late November 1916 and killed an estimated 1,000,000 British empire, French and German soldiers.

Many of the images show medical orderlies. Warloy-Baillon was the site of a large hospital, taken over by the British Army. Other soldiers were evidently photographed while in reserve, or engaged in behind-the-line tasks, or after recovering from minor wounds.

More than 90 years later, at least 400 glass photographic plates preserving the images were found in the loft of a barn at Warloy-Baillon and cast out as rubbish. In recent months, the plates, some in perfect condition, some badly damaged, have been lovingly assembled and their images printed, scanned and digitally restored by two Frenchmen.

Together, they form a poignant record of the British army on the eve of, or during, the battle of the Somme: the smiling, the scared, the scruffy, the smart, the formal, the jokey, the short, the tall, the young and the old. There is even an image of a 1914-18 war phenomenon which was rarely photographed and scarcely ever mentioned: a black Tommy in artillery uniform, with two white comrades.



The Independent Magazine publishes a large selection of the images here for the first time. More of the photographs of them exist.

Who, also, is the giant of a British soldier, possibly as a uniform, it's quite easy," he said. "Faces, and especially much as seven feet tall, sitting in front of two standard-sized comrades? Who was the Tommy who asked the photographer to take a picture of his back, Prints of more than 100 of the unknown soldiers have which has been elaborately tattooed with the faces of now been framed and exhibited in M. Zanardi's café the British royal family? Why is one group of soldiers in Pozières. Others will join them when they are holding a large rag doll? ready."

The survival of the images is owed to two local men: Bernard Gardin, aged 60, a photography enthusiast; and Dominique Zanardi, 49, proprietor of the "Tommy" café at Pozières, a village in the heart of the Somme battlefields.

M. Gardin was given a batch of about 270 glass plates by someone who knew of his hobby. He approached M. Zanardi, who has a collection of Great War memorabilia, including a football dug up 12 years ago inside a British soldier's rucksack. M. Zanardi, it turned out, already had 130 similar plates which he had gathered from other local people.



"About three years ago, someone bought a barn near Warloy-Baillon," M. Zanardi said. "They found the glass plates in the loft and just threw them out as rubbish. Many of them were picked up and taken away by passers-by. I started collecting them and had reached over 100 when M. Gardin turned up with this great batch of 270. They must also, originally, have come from the same source. There may be many more out there which we have not yet been found." M. Zanardi's attempts to identify the photographer and the images of French civilians, and a handful of French soldiers, have got nowhere. "My belief is that he lived close to the barn where the plates were found," he said. "He may have been a farmer. The plates were just stacked up after he printed photographs from them and then forgotten for more than 90 years."

M. Gardin and M. Zanardi have had prints made, at their own expense, from the original plates. M. Gardin describes these as "9 x 12 centimetre glass plates, of the kind used at the time by amateur photographers. A professional would have used a camera with bigger plates, 18 centimetres x 24."



Identical copies of these images must have been sent home to mothers and wives and sweethearts in late 1915 and the first half of 1916. Will someone out there recognise their Great Grandad or their Great Uncle Bill? to be excellent.

Some plates, Although some research has been conducted into the however, had photographs, much hard work is yet to be done. Such been damaged. compelling images must have a story attached; and M. Gardin with your help we hope to uncover as much of their scanned the fascinating history as possible.

prints into a computer and To see the photographs, go to following website: set about digit-

ally restoring <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/exclusive-the-unseen-photographs-that-throw-new-light-on-the-first-world-war-1688443.html> the images. "If it's just a question of filling in a wall or part of a





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