



THE DUGOUT

Branch Patron: *The
Lord Lieutenant of
Dorset -
Angus Campbell*

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESSEX BRANCH OF THE WESTERN
FRONT ASSOCIATION

Your Local WW1 Historical Society

(Registered Charity : 1142787)

www.wessexwfa.org.uk

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MEETINGS 2016/2017

At
Pimperne Village Hall,
Newfield Road,
Pimperne Nr Blandford
Forum. DT11 8UZ- 2pm for
2.30pm start

3rd December -
Members Exhibits and
Social

7th January -
Lt Werner Voss - Ger-
man Fighter Ace - Nick
Saunders

4th February -
Myths & Legends
Offensive à outrance
French Doctrine &
Tactics 1914 - Simon
House

4th March -
Tannenberg 1914 &
Concurrent operation in
Galicia - Mike Shaw

8th April -
Hortonsee – British
Submarines in the
Baltic 1914/18 - Rod
Arnold

FIELD TRIPS:

IWM DUXFORD -
25th March

BATTLEFIELD TOURS:

ITALY -
17th May—23rd May
(7 DAY TOUR)

ISSUE 16

DEC 2016

Chairman's Chat

Welcome to Issue 16 of 'The Dugout'. Since the last issue the branch has continued to have a busy schedule of meetings and other events. The branch again had a presence at Tank Fest 2016. This event continues to grow and attendance was I am told the best ever. For us of course, this meant more enquiries and greater interaction with the general public.

Our programme of talks continued in August with a lively and very informative talk on the RFC in 1917 by Peter Hart who brought his inimitable style to a very enervating talk and discussion. As this year saw the 100th anniversary of the first use of Tanks at the battle of Flers – Courcellette in September, David Fletcher, until recently the historian at the Tank Museum gave a talk on particular tanks and personalities involved at Flers. Crosses of Remembrance were placed on the graves of Tank Corps men who lie in Wareham cemetery commemorating the 100th Anniversary. One wondered at the possible connection between the RMS Titanic and the Great War. These connections were made very clear by Andy Tonge in his talk given in October in which he discussed a wide range of fascinating connections between this famous ship, its sister ships and many other vessels and personalities.



Also at this meeting a donation from the branch was presented to Mike Richardson in support of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment Association's project to place a National Memorial to the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment at the National Memorial Arboretum which is due to be unveiled in September 2017.

The first of a series of three book sales also took place. Further sales will be held at our branch meetings in November and December donations still welcome which can be brought to the meetings please speak to David or Katherine. The proceeds from these sales will go to the Branch Education Fund to provide continuing support for awards made under the Branch Education Programme 2016 - 2021.

Our battlefield tour this year was a departure from our normal locations in France and Flanders.

Newsletter Editor: **SANDRA TWYFORD**
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Re-enactors dressed in period uniform



Chairman's Chat continued....

Of an extended duration the visit to the battlefield of Verdun provided a platform to visit a totally different arena and there were many 'firsts' on this complex but well organised tour. Indeed I have been told that it was 'probably' the best yet! To gain such an accolade involved much planning and organisation not just by me but there was much hard work: Judy in the administration and liaison with Mainline, our coach company and the Novotel Metz Hauconcourt, Rod also contributed to the handout as well as arranging to lay a wreath at the Meuse – Argonne American Cemetery on behalf of the family of Sampson Richards DSC (The Cornish Doughboy) who live in America and Idi and Nige producing the handout. A very successful team effort to produce a tour of many highlights which included the Verdun Citadel tour, visits to 'Villages Detruit', Douamont, Vaux and not least our excellent tour of the Butte de Vauquois ably guided by Guy Bigorne and family of the 'Amis de Butte de Vauquois'.

Re-enactors dressed in period uniform added a frisson of reality when scene setting in the French tunnels, their abilities as mannequins were faultless!! The branch made a donation in support of the efforts of the Vauquois friends in keeping this unique site accessible to all. Needless to say there is scope for further visits to those sites where time simply didn't allow.

As always I would appeal for any articles of interest for the Dugout, book reviews, local topics on WW1, Family History, etc. My thanks go to Roger Coleman (Portland)

for his continued support for the website and Dugout with his very well researched articles throughout the year. We now have our own branch lapel badge which you can collect at any branch meeting free of charge, my thanks go to Marc for his hard work in sourcing these very good quality products.

As we approach the year end we have one further talk, Barry Kitchener visits on the 5th of November to talk about Fallen Railwaymen of the Great War, the movement of all manner of supplies and men would not have happened so effectively without the railway and the men who made it all work both at home and in other theatres of the war. We end the year as usual with our Members Exhibits and Social meeting on the 3rd of December, please contact Judy as soon as possible if you would like a table for your exhibit's. We hope to have a short presentation by the Romsey School on their WW1 research project concerning the men of Romsey, however this awaits confirmation, but the exhibition and social aspects will continue regardless. As ever, work continues planning tours and trips for 2017 and beyond, which will hopefully include a visit to the newly refurbished National Army Museum which opens in the Spring of 2017 although no date has yet been set.

Battlefield tours to the Asiago in May and Chemin des Dames in September 2017 are in the planning process while (subject to travel conditions) Gallipoli in May

2018, with the branch tour for September 2018 visiting the St Mihiel Salient and the Vosges area (back to the future perhaps?) with a stop at Compiègne on either the outbound or inbound leg of the trip are on the drawing board. Meanwhile the search for quality speakers providing a broad range of topics is a constant activity to ensure our meeting programme remains filled with a diverse range of topics.

Remembrance Sunday is the 13th November this year I do hope that as many of you that can, attend a service in your local area. The Tank Museum at Bovington held their remembrance service on Sunday 13th November with free admission to the Museum for the rest of the day please see their website for times www.tankmuseum.org. As I write I have just heard on the radio that there are just 80 days left to that well known event which many view with a mixture of joy and/or trepidation! Whatever your circumstance on behalf of the trustees and members of Wessex Branch WFA I wish you all a **joyous festive season** and look forward to welcoming you to our 2017 meetings and events.



Martin Willoughby
Branch Chairman

BRITISH ARMY CAP BADGES

The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

An all brass badge showing a dragon above a scroll inscribed 'The Buffs'.

Some 16 battalions of the regiment served during the war and one soldier was awarded the Victoria Cross.

A total of 48 battle honours were granted to the regiment including Aisne 1914, Ypres 1915 '17, Loos, Arras, Somme 1916 '18, Amiens, Hindenburg Line, Struma, Jerusalem, Baghdad.

Estimated casualties (died): 6,000.



ARTHUR EXSHAW



Corporal French 49th Régiment d'Infanterie born 19th Nov 1894 died at Verdun 23rd May 1916.

For those of us who study the Great War and particularly the Battle of Verdun, one question comes up from time to time, "Were there any British Troops at Verdun". The answer is No, but".

During the latest branch tour to Verdun, we visited the stunning and moving Ossuary at Douaumont. As I climbed the stairs to the Cloisters and turned left I saw escribed on the wall the name of Arthur Exshaw, not I think a very French name. After some research the following information came to light.

Arthur Exshaw was born in Bordeaux in 1894; his family were an English speaking Irish family who moved from Ireland in 1814, though some sources say 1804. John Exshaw set up a Red wine and Brandy company selling to "the home market". The company was sold in 1970.

Though living in France the family children continued to be educated in England, and it seems some descendants still live there, as they do in Ireland and France.



A John Exshaw was twice Lord Mayor of Dublin, an uncle; Albert Exshaw served with the Grenadier Guard in South Africa. Another uncle William Exshaw was commissioned in the Bedfordshire Regiment and won a Gold Medal in sailing at the 1900 and 1904 Summer Olympic Games. The town of Exshaw Alberta Canada is named after an Aunt (or Uncle).

Although the Brandy company was sold in 1970, the name and brand still exist and if you fancy a tipple their best Brandy the "Tres Vielle Grande Champagne" will set you back only 500 Euro's a bottle!

Arthur died at Caillette Wood during the battle of Verdun on the 23 May 1916, during an attempt to retake Fort Douaumont.



Trevor Lindley

Cecil Reginald Noble Bournemouth's First VC Paving Stone

In Dugout 12, Roger G. Coleman reported on the unveiling of the commemorative paving stone for Private Jack Counter VC in Blandford. On Thursday 12th March 2015 the first of the two paving stones earmarked for Bournemouth was unveiled at the Town War Memorial.



CORPORAL C. R. NOBLE, V.C.

Cecil Reginald Noble was born on 4th June 1891 in Tower Road in the Springbourne area of Bournemouth. His parents were Frederick Noble and Hannah Smith. Frederick came from Yeovil and worked as a house painter. Hannah was born in Buxted, Sussex and was the daughter of a pork butcher. They married in 1888 and had four children; only Cecil Reginald and his elder sister Florence Gertrude survived to adulthood.

Noble attended St. Clement's School and followed his father's trade. He joined the Hampshire Regiment (Territorial Force) but had to leave when he was "unable to attend". In 1910 Noble enlisted as a regular in The Rifle Brigade at Winchester. After recruit training he was sent to join the regiment's current home service unit (the 1st Battalion) in Dublin. Here he was sentenced to 168 hours detention for "using obscene language to an NCO". Towards the end of 1911 he was posted to the 2nd Battalion, which had been based in India since 1905. In August 1914 they were at Kuldana in the Punjab.

Following the outbreak of war, 2nd Battalion sailed for the UK on the SS *Somali*, leaving Bombay on 20th September 1914. They arrived in Liverpool some four weeks later and entrained for Winchester, camping at Hursley Park. Embarking on SS *Victorian* at Southampton on, they landed at Le Havre as part of the 25th Brigade / 8th Division on 7th November 1914. Elements of the battalion were in the front line near Laventie by the 16th of the month.

On 10th March 1915 the 2nd Battalion took part in the attack at Neuve Chapelle incurring 116 casualties. Ordered to attack again on 12th March "regardless of loss", the battalion was held up by wire entanglements and heavy machine-gun fire. Company Sergeant Major Harry Daniels and Corporal Noble went forward and succeeded in cutting the wires to aid the advance. A further 377 men became casualties. Daniels and Noble were both wounded. Noble died the next day but Daniels survived and later rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Both were awarded the Victoria Cross.





Bournemouth's second VC paving stone is not due to appear until October 2018, when Sgt. Frederick Charles Riggs will be commemorated. Riggs' story is also covered in Roger's article.



Noble was buried at Longuenesse Souvenir Cemetery, St. Omer.

For a more detailed description of the exploits of Noble and Daniels, Dugout readers are recommended to refer to Roger W. Coleman's excellent article *The VCs of Capstone Road* on the Branch website.

The Noble paving stone was unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Angus Campbell – the Patron of our Branch – and the Mayor of Bournemouth Councillor Chris Mayne. Pupils from Noble's former school attended the ceremony.



Author's Footnote: A blue plaque is affixed at 175 Capstone Road, Bournemouth the "home" of Tommy Noble (his preferred name). In researching this item I came to the conclusion that although Tommy spent most of his life in the Springbourne area of the town, he may never have lived in Capstone Road. His parents and sister were living at 18 Tower Road in 1891, the year of Tommy's birth, but by 1901 the family had moved to 36 Lincoln Avenue. Tommy enlisted in 1910 and was certainly in Ireland by February 1911 and in India by the end of that year.

The 1911 Census (taken on 2nd April) shows his parents at 335 Holdenhurst Road. The earliest reference I have found so far linking the family to Capstone Road is in Mate's Directory of Bournemouth for 1915. The 1914 Edition shows them still at 335 Holdenhurst Road. Mate's and the probate index for his father who died in February 1916 both give the address as 172 Capstone Road and not 175.

According to Mate's, throughout the period 1911-1919, 175 Capstone Road was occupied by Mr. & Mrs. G. Brewer. An Army Form completed by Tommy's mother in 1919 also has the address 172 Capstone Road. It appears that the only opportunities Tommy might have had for visiting his parents in Capstone Road – 172 or 175 – would have been if he was granted home leave either during the short period in 1914 he was in the UK after his battalion returned from India before embarking for France or between arriving in France and the time he was wounded in March 1915. Of course this is all academic – what really matters is that both Bournemouth born VCs from the First World War had links with the same road in the town. – RAA.



Rod Arnold



Interesting Snippet

Remembering the Merchant Marine and Fishing Fleets'

Contribution During WWI

Have a look at this link on Youtube.

Hold down control, hover over link and double left click.

<http://www.charityfilmawards.com/videos/shipwecked-mariners-society>



A funny thing happened on the way to the Somme.....

BOULOGNE EASTERN CEMETERY

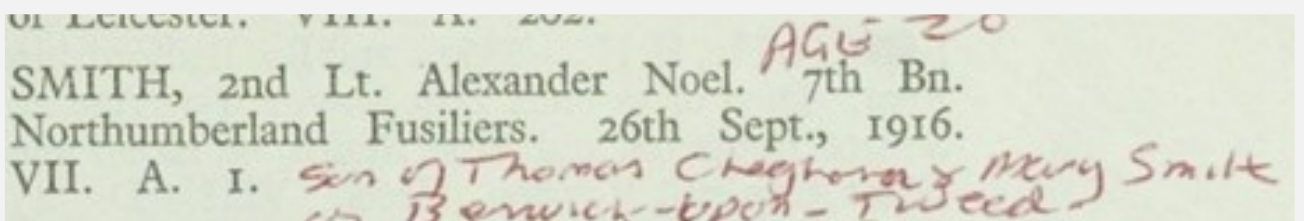


Having researched my grandfather and his brother's part in the Great War, my father and other family members soon became interested and a short family centenary battlefield tour was organised. My grandfather John Smith had been in the Royal Field Artillery surviving the war, whilst his brother Noel Smith, was with the 7th Northumberland Fusiliers and had died of wounds received at High Wood on the Somme.

As I was named after him, I'd been left lots of war memorabilia of Noel's over the years. With this and regimental war diaries, and my grandfather's war memoirs, letters home and photo album, I had

pieced together both Noel's and my Grandfather's movements both during military training in the UK, then their movements in France and Belgium at the front.

On day one of the tour, we went to Boulogne to visit Noel's grave. My father, uncle and cousin had never been to Noel's grave before, so day one ended on a sombre note, but glad that they had at last found him.



Day two of our tour took us to Albert, then the Somme. Noel had arrived in France as a young officer on 14th August 1916 and joined his fighting unit 1/7th Northumberland Fusiliers as they went into intensive training, to the west of Albert, in readiness for their first engagement of the Somme offensive. We had arrived on the Somme on 16th September 2016, narrowly missing the centenary remembrance 'shut down' the previous day at Delville Wood with Prince Charles and other dignitaries in attendance.

With trench maps in hand, we stood where Noel's regiment would have been standing 100 years earlier, before going over the top heading up the ridge in a North-Easterly direction, with High Wood on the horizon on the right. The ploughed field landscape of today, allowed us to see to the horizon all around and wonder what it was like a 100 years earlier. With photos taken, we headed some distance away to our accommodation for the night. My uncle apologised that he had booked somewhere so distant. Our accommodation was a gatehouse of a chateau, about an hour away, so not exactly 'en route' for tomorrow's first stop at Thiepval!

The following morning, as we tried to decide how to get a quick getaway to Thiepval, when our neighbour Peter, from the other gatehouse, ambled across and we got talking. It turned out he was researching his grandfather who had been injured, as a young officer, on the Somme on 15th September 1916 with 1/7th Northumberland Fusiliers! We couldn't believe it. With that, all notions of a quick getaway were abandoned. It turned out that Peter had been doing his research too, and he too had stood in the same spot, of the same ploughed field, as we had the day before. He had been there at 6am to watch the mist rise exactly as it had done 100 years before for his grandfather. Our ploughed field photos were almost identical! Not only that he produced a hazy photo of 18 officers of the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers in front of a wooden hut, in the UK at a training centre in Yorkshire – his grandfather being one of the 18 officers. Although hazy, the wooden huts looked remarkably similar, if wooden huts can, to a photo I had at home of Noel with 80 NCOs and officers of the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers, standing in front of wooden huts, in a Yorkshire training centre.

Over breakfast, it became apparent that my father, uncle and Peter had all grown up in Berwick upon Tweed in Northumberland, home territory of the Northumberland Fusiliers. Today some of our respective families still live there – and more co-incidences arose – yes both knew family members who had recently worked for the Berwick solicitors TC Smith, set up by great great grandfather, and so it went on.

Although my father, uncle and Peter now live in different parts of the UK, Peter lives within an hour of me in the south of England. Not only that, but he teaches music to a military band. Musicians from this military band also play in my home town brass band of Verwood, Dorset; my wife plays in the same brass band!! The co-incidences kept coming.

Peter produced his grandfather's diary over breakfast in the chateau and let me have a quick look. I looked for one thing – what had his grandfather been doing on 14th August 1916? Well by now you should have guessed it – yes he was landing in France, transferring from the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers to the 1/7th Northumberland Fusiliers.

I now knew for sure that Peter's grandfather and my great uncle Noel must have known each other very well indeed, as had been officers in the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers training battalion together at the same time; arrived in France on the same day from the same Training centre; joined the 1/7th Northumberland Fusiliers on the same day; had gone 'over the top' for the first time together on the same day, and had both been injured on 15th September 1916. What a co-incidence. It's amazing how much you can learn from a chance meeting and breakfast together!

Our battlefield tour certainly buzzed after that and proved to be very successful. On our return home, we got a copy of the photo of the 18 officers of the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers from Alnwick Castle, Northumberland, home of the Northumberland Fusiliers museum, and yes you guess it, both Noel and Peter's grandfather were both in it. The photo I had at home of 80 NCO's and officers of the 2/7th Northumberland Fusiliers also had both men in it.

The final co-incidence came from Peter. On his return home, he had re-read his grandfather's diary and found that his grandfather and Noel had had tea together in Berwick upon Tweed, during a few days leave, a couple of days before they both left for France in August 1916.

I am now in regular contact with Peter, sharing research information on the 7th Northumberland Fusiliers.

This was my first battlefield tour, but what an experience. I'm now looking forward to the next one!!

Noel Smith (Jnr)

Kenneth Foyster's War

Kenneth Basil Foyster was born in 1880; one of nine offspring of The Reverend George Foyster, Rector of All Saints' Church in Hastings, and his wife Adelaide. The children grew up in comfortable but disciplined surroundings and the boys were educated at prestigious public schools¹ where they boarded.

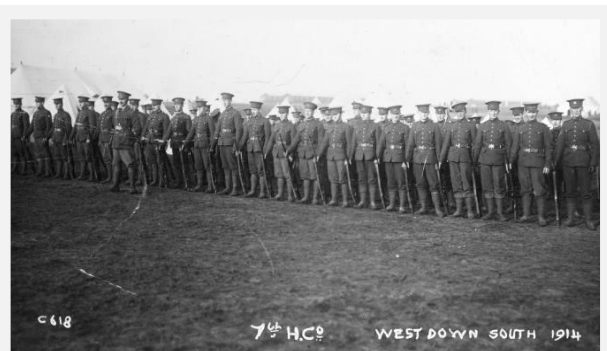
In 1894, Kenneth was dispatched to Marlborough College in Wiltshire. Although his brothers all excelled at school and thereafter set out on promising careers, Kenneth's academic progress was less spectacular and he left Marlborough at the age of 17, attending an agricultural college, working on a farm then changing direction to become a mining engineer, qualifying in 1908. By 1911, he was seeking engineering work in Canada, then part of the British Empire, ultimately at Victoria on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, which was then a large mining centre.



Kenneth Basil Foyster
(Family collection)

Unfortunately, there was no work to be had and by the middle of 1914, Kenneth was getting desperate. Fate then took a hand. A local miners' strike required the local militia to be called up to deal with it, and Kenneth saw a way of putting a roof over his head and a meal on the table. He joined the 88th Regiment (Victoria Fusiliers) and spent a while not on strike duty, but rather, in view of the impending outbreak of war, guarding a lonely settlement on Vancouver Island where the strategically-important undersea telegraph 'All Red Line' that linked the British Empire, surfaced from the Pacific Ocean.

Canada, having offered Great Britain wartime assistance, was required to raise a fighting division which its small peace-time army simply did not have. The government completed this task by creating out of virtually nothing a huge camp at Valcartier in the Quebec woods, where some 25,000 new soldiers were trained, becoming the 1st Canadian Division.



Among many others of his militia regiment, Kenneth volunteered for war duty and passed through Valcartier emerging as a private soldier in the 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion (1st British Columbia). A massive armada ferried the new division to England and Salisbury Plain, where additional training and preparation was conducted in appallingly wet weather.

Nevertheless, by February 1916 they

were inspected by the King, given their ammunition and departed for the Western Front.

Arriving in France, the Canadians made their way forwards and via a number of training and operational sites, found themselves in the Ypres Salient, a projection of territory to the east of Ypres which was being severely threatened on all sides by huge numbers of German troops.

The 7th
Canadian
Battalion at
West Down
Camp
(Courtesy of
The British
Colombia
Regiment)

These attacked the Salient in April 1916 in what became known as the Second Battle of Ypres, notable for the German use of chlorine gas against French forces, and the northern part of the line was being forced to withdraw. The Canadian Division was flung into the gap and conducted a ferocious defence against waves of infantry that were backed by masses of artillery, Kenneth's battalion fighting determinedly at St. Julien and on the Gravenstafel Ridge. Though severely depleted by casualties, the Canadians held the line and saved the day, but during the two days of fighting, they had taken over 6,000 casualties, one man in every three, of whom more than 2,000 died.

Eventually, Kenneth was shot through his arm and, weak from loss of blood, made his way to the nearby Boetleer's Farm, where he and other wounded men were captured by the advancing Germans on 26th April. The prisoners were moved by train via Roeselare to the east and, as he was wounded, Kenneth spent some time in a hospital at Hofgeismar near Cassel, but was then conveyed to a prisoner of war camp in Göttingen, Lower Saxony.

Göttingen Prisoner of War Camp
(Attribution unknown)



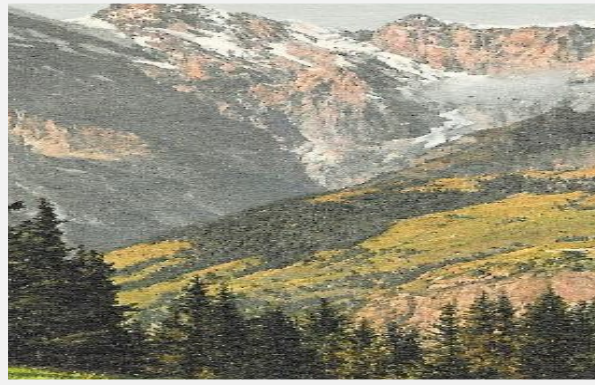
The camp was opposite a hospital for wounded Germans and consisted of 84 prisoners' huts that could accommodate 120 men each, cookhouses, bathhouses and a parade ground. By the time Kenneth arrived, there was also a YMCA hut where one could relax. Outside the camp there were a **Kommandantur**, or headquarters, offices and more huts for sentries. Conditions in the camp were severe, deprived and prisoners were obliged to join work 'Arbeit' parties under dangerous and arduous conditions, but matters improved somewhat when parcels from home started to arrive. It was a cosmopolitan place, housing British, French, Belgian, and Russian prisoners, the latter having been captured on the Eastern Front where Russia was fighting German and Austro-Hungarian forces. International rivalry sometimes provoked fights.

Kenneth's wound was only slowly healing and he was still weak, but it was a blessing in disguise. He was excused the dreaded Arbeit and it took him on another adventure with a more satisfactory outcome. At that time, an agreement had been reached between the Allies and Germany to exchange severely wounded prisoners of war. French and German casualties were being exchanged via transportation provided by the Swiss Red Cross. In late 1915, Britain and Belgium sought a similar arrangement and this was achieved, usually via neutral Holland, but only for the most severely sick and wounded. The Red Cross advised that the Swiss Government might offer to hold as internees those prisoners from either side that were less severely wounded or unwell. This proposal suited the Swiss as in addition to consolidating Switzerland's neutrality, the prospect of filling holiday hotels, emptied by the war and with persons whose governments would foot the bill, was an attractive one.

Kenneth heard of this in the spring of 1916 and shortly after, a number of inspections were held to select suitable candidates for the internment scheme. His wound still unhealed, Kenneth was short-listed early on, but delays and disappointments were to follow and he remained in Göttingen until, passing a final medical board, he left there in June. His party travelled by train to another holding camp at Mannheim. Here he was to wait until August when the party was allowed to go on to Switzerland. Cheering loudly, they crossed the border and headed to Berne, then Lauterbrunnen and, via a steep funicular railway, to the holiday resort of Mürren, one of many towns that hosted the Allied internees. Here, there were a number of hotels in which some 400 British and Canadian servicemen were billeted. Kenneth had been worried that his steadily improving arm might take him off the programme, but it had done its bit and now rapidly healed.

Murren

(From a
contemporary
Postcard)



Lying 15 miles south of Interlaken, the beautiful village of Murren sits some 1,650 metres above sea level, overlooking a precipice which drops about 3,000 feet to the valley below. The village had been a skiing resort, but in 1916 the hotels were empty. Though no longer prisoners, and now in receipt of pay, the new occupants were still internees, governed by Swiss and military law, and prevented by the agree-

ment between the combatants from leaving until the war's end. At least 11 hotels were used to accommodate the internees and Kenneth found himself first in The Regina Hotel and later in the Alpenruh.

Murren found itself populated by not only the internees, but a host of idiosyncratic characters who appeared to participate in the community's activities. The initial Senior British Officer was Colonel Francis Neish of The Gordon Highlanders, who had been captured in August 1914 during the German advance through Holland and France. He was assisted by Major Harold Charley of the Royal Irish Rifles, who started to instigate a host of classes and activities for the soldiers: training tailors; boot makers; carpenters; hairdressers; watch repairers and printers, and there were classes in motoring; blacksmithing; woodcarving; French; Spanish; German and Russian. By 1917, Charley was Officer-in-Charge for Technical Instruction for servicemen interned in Switzerland, then Commissioner British Red Cross Society Switzerland in 1918.

The *Commandant de Place*, was the Swiss Captain Llopart who was also the doctor. A number of churchmen came and went, serving both the Church of England and Roman Catholic internees, and Kenneth particularly lauded Canon Woodward of Southwark Cathedral who spent time at Murren. In June 1916, the eminent dentist Joseph Woods arrived to tend to the men's teeth. Also present were Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Lunn, a local skiing enthusiast who later became prominent in the skiing world, founding the Ski Club of Great Britain and the Alpine Ski Club, and held many exceptional international skiing appointments including Chairman of the International Downhill Ski Racing Committee. Another newcomer was a Mr. Hobday who was Secretary of the YMCA in Switzerland.

As this diverse band set about its business, the major challenge for these confined and wounded men was to fill the time with interesting, stimulating diversions, and the internees threw themselves into a host of these with gusto. As well as religious observance and the activities initiated by Major Charley, there was a thriving theatrical group, benefiting from a few internees who were professional actors, debating societies and the new YMCA building became a social hub. The internees started a newspaper, the 'British International Murren'. The daily routine was relatively undemanding. The men wore new uniforms, were paid 12 Francs a month by the Swiss Authorities and in addition, money was sent to the internees by their families. Several expeditions were mounted to nearby towns and beauty spots. Naturally, Christmas, Easter, Empire Day and the King's Birthday were celebrated with enthusiasm and as well as setting up suitable entertainments, the food and drink were of high quality.

In October 1916, Kenneth was in for an agreeable surprise. Relations were now allowed to visit the internees from Great Britain and one day he was astonished to behold his married sister Ada who had travelled by ship and train to visit him. He had no idea she was coming.

She had a pleasant 10-day stay and thereafter, visitors started to turn up in numbers, eventually including fiancées, and weddings became a recurrent activity.

Kenneth and his associates soldiered steadily on, the cast of colourful characters who found their way there ebbed and flowed, and the close confinement caused occasional rifts and conflict. Kenneth helped in setting up the frequent prisoners' concerts and also became a film projectionist in the newly instituted cinema. He also worked with a Sergeant Scott to electrify the two Mürren churches and a brass plaque was placed in each to record the event. The one in the Roman Catholic church is still there.

During the winter months, some traditional winter sports were established, but these do not seem to have been particularly prolific. Indeed, Kenneth and his friends were sometimes required to clear snow from the skating rink and toboggan run, which caused some dismay as they did not use them, though others, predominantly officers, did. A number of the men did learn to ski.

Around this time, the internees started to hear things about repatriation and, indeed, a large party left Mürren in August 1917. However, in 1918, the first cases of Spanish influenza, known as the grippe occurred; a world-wide pandemic that proved fatal in many cases. As the year drew on and the war ended, several of the internees succumbed to this illness; a rather pathetic end for those who had endured combat, wounding and years of confinement. Kenneth played a part in helping during this time by keeping facilities going and escorting the bodies who died of the grippe down the mountain for burial.

As the war ended, so the internees left for home. As he was helping out, Kenneth, who had been in the first party to arrive, was in the last to leave. He travelled by train to Le Havre, a ship for Southampton, and went by train to London. He re-joined his Canadian battalion, much changed after years of warfare, at Seaford Camp in Sussex and after much delay, the 400 men of the 7th Battalion marched out of camp in April 1919, entrained for Liverpool and crossed the Atlantic for home. Their train journey to Vancouver was swift and efficient, and the returnees were met by huge crowds, bands and speeches. They marched through the city and were demobilised, Kenneth returning once more to Victoria.

In late 1919, Kenneth married and also became a building company partner. In 1925, he established a small school for boys in Vancouver at which he was Headmaster and it seems he taught in some capacity until retirement. He remained fiercely proud of his time in uniform, attending military parades, dinners and reunions.

Kenneth Foyster died in May 1963 aged 82, his wife having predeceased him. They had no children.

Michael Foyster Richardson

Kenneth Foyster is great-uncle of the author, who is preparing Kenneth's comprehensive Great War memoirs for possible publication.

A version of this article is also on the website of St. Peter's Church, Château d'Oex, Switzerland.

The author would welcome comments and suggestions provoked by this article at: acknown@btinternet.com.

¹ In England, a 'public' school is in fact a private establishment for which fees are paid.

² Leo van Bergen (2009). *Before My Helpless Sight: Suffering, Dying and Military Medicine on the Western Front, 1914-1918*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. p. 66. ISBN 978-0-7546-5853-5.

³ Young Men's Christian Association.⁴

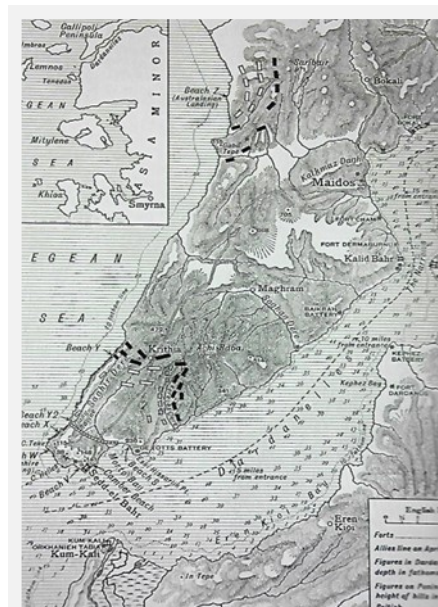
GALLIPOLI TOUR

20th-28th MAY 2016

Leaving Wareham on an overcast Friday afternoon, in a 14-seater Homeward Bound Travel Company coach, with Martin, Judy, Steve and Myself, we were driven by Neil to New Milton where Nick joined us and then onto Romsey for Marc who completed our tour party. Stopping for a break at Chieveley Services we arrived at the Novotel Hotel Heathrow at 1830 hours. After checking in, we enjoyed a drink and evening meal before retiring to bed for an early night.

Gathering in the foyer at 0400 hours the following morning we were taken by a Hoppa Bus to Heathrow airport and by 0530 hours we had passed through baggage handling, security and passport control. We all sat down to an early breakfast at the Giraffe Restaurant before we were taken from the departure gate lounge by an airport bus to our aircraft, a BA Air Bus 320 for the flight to Istanbul. Taking off at 0730 hours UK time we advanced our watches by two hours and landed at Ataturk airport at 1255 hours. The entry procedure into Turkey was efficient and we quickly collected our baggage. In the entrance hall we were greeted by our friends Ohannes (John) and Terri Karabeytan who act as our agents in Turkey. John introduced us to our driver Moussa who loaded the 14-seater coach with our bags and we left the airport at 1400 hours for Sedd-ul-Bahr. Driving out of the city is quite an adventure as the roads are congested with traffic although for a Saturday afternoon we made good progress through the outskirts of the city. Building construction and road infrastructure improvements continues in this region of Turkey. The weather was somewhat inclement but was ideal for travelling and a welcome break was taken at Tekirdağ for chai and cake. As we journey onwards Martin outlined the Dardanelles and Gallipoli campaign. Large sections of the E90 road down the peninsula to Ecebat is also being upgraded and improved. Passing along Martin drew our attention to the Gulf of Saros, the Line of Bulair and other features of notable interest. Whilst doing so he reminded us as to why Great Britain took the decision to launch a campaign against Turkey. The outcome of which in the Dardanelles and Gallipoli did not accord with political aspirations or military planning.

Improvements to the roads in recent years have made the 350-kilometre journey tolerable and we arrived at the Pansiyon Helles Panorama Sedd-ul-Bahr by 1900 hours to be welcomed as old friends by Erol Baycan and his wife Naile in their garden. Able to relax after the long journey, we had an excellent dinner and retired to our rooms.



Sunday dawned cloudy and overcast with a warm breeze. Collecting our packed lunches having enjoyed good breakfast we set off in the coach for V-Beach. The old fort at Sedd-ul-Bahr is being renovated and was encompassed with wooden scaffolding. Crumbling stonework has been stabilised and new stone blocks are filling gaps in the old walls. It was difficult to see due to the scaffolding but it appears that new curtain walls are being built between the old towers. Standing on V-Beach, Martin described the landing there and at S-Beach on the 25th April, 1915. The difficulties encountered during the landing and the gallantry of the inexperienced troops was vividly described. It was then with a sombre atmosphere and of remembrance that the graves in the cemetery were viewed. The cemetery contains 696 casualties, mostly of those who landed on the 25th April, 1915. 480 are unidentified and 196 special memorials commemorate those believed and known to be buried there. From V-Beach we drove up to the Helles Memorial and looked across to Hill 138 and Achi Baba, pondering whether the planned objectives for the first day of the landing were achievable. Time was spent looking in and around the memorial on which are inscribed over 20,000 casualties who have no known grave and personal tributes were laid beneath relevant panels.



A short drive from the Helles Memorial took us to Lancashire Landing Cemetery containing 1,237 casualties of the First World War of which 135 are unidentified. Some time was spent in the cemetery before we continued on to W Beach where Martin gave a talk about the landing and of the preparations made for its defence by the Turkish troops. A wreck on the beach, probably of a lighter or small vessel used during the campaign and partially uncovered by a storm was of keen interest and speculation. Members walked along the shoreline contemplatively and the relatively confined area of W Beach surprised Steve and Nick who had not been to Gallipoli before.

At X Beach, the 2nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers were the first to land there followed later by the remainder of the 87th Brigade. The sea and erosion of the cliffs are gradually changing the contours around this beach. We were able to see outline of the road which was built to connect the landing beaches clearly visible beneath the shallow crystal clear sea water. From X Beach we drove on to Pink Farm Cemetery where we consumed our packed lunches. Pink Farm takes its name from the red soil in the area and contains 602 burials of which 205 are unidentified but 219 known or believed to be buried there are marked by special memorials. After walking around the grave plots, areas of topographical interest outside the cemetery were viewed, including old trench lines. Moving on to Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery crosses were laid at selected graves which had a personal interest for members. There are 3,360 casualties buried in the cemetery, brought in from other smaller cemeteries after the Armistice. 2,260 of them are unidentified. Within Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery is a New Zealand Memorial on which are inscribed 180 casualties who have no known grave.

Although the weather was cool and cloudy the opportunity was taken to visit Gully Beach. It was necessary to make a recce for a safe access before we could walk along to the entrance to Gully Ravine.



Martin explained to us the salient features of the area and asked members to recall those photographs of the Gallipoli campaign which show the entrance crowded with troops, equipment and dug-outs cut into Gully Spur. Remnants of the stumps of the piers are still visible off shore. We stood by the well dug by Joe Murray and others of the RND and the inscription around the top edge is now practically illegible. From the well we began our ascent up the ravine and did not have to penetrate very far to experience the increase in humidity and a rise in temperature. We were thankful it was not a hot day. On reaching Artillery Road a welcoming committee of goats greeted us with clanging bells and curiosity. It was sensible to leave Gully Ravine via Artillery Road and although the goats followed us for a short distance they were most probably obeying the call of the goatherd. Emerging at the top of Artillery Road, we had a twenty minute walk across field boundaries and along the coastal road back to our coach. To complete a very interesting and absorbing first day it was time for a cool beer or two at the Mocamp on V Beach before returning to the Pansiyon.



We left the Pansiyon after breakfast on a sunny and bright Monday morning for the Turkish Memorial at Morto Bay. Since last year a new road traffic management system has been introduced for the safety of coaches and visitors. There were very few people in the memorial grounds when we arrived and it gave us sufficient time to walk round the complex to photograph and read information at our leisure. The views across the Dardanelles to the Asian side in the clear morning air were excellent. In the symbolic cemetery the inscribed back-to-back clear Perspex panels on each grave listing the Turkish names of the missing were in previous years difficult to read.



A thin red panel bearing the Turkish flag has now been inserted between the two panels making it much easier to read the names. Additional buildings have been erected for pilgrims/visitors in which to pray, one for women and one for men with all the facilities found at a traditional mosque.

Leaving the Turkish Memorial we drove to the French National Cemetery and Memorial at Morto Bay which is a stark cultural change from those to be found on Western Front and in the CWGC cemeteries on the peninsula. The 2,240 identified graves in the cemetery are marked with blackened

metal crosses in ground which is covered with gravel and stone chippings. The 15-metre lantern tower at the head of the cemetery, is an ossuary and has around it are four large tombs containing the remains of 15,000 French dead, mainly colonial troops. Attached to the front façade of the lantern tower are inscribed tablets commemorating losses of French ships and submarines in the Dardanelles.

From the main road which passes round the rear of the cemetery a new access road has been laid to a large parking area for vehicles. Access can then be gained through a side gate which makes it much easier for visitors especially those who find ascending the steep steps at the front of the cemetery difficult.

For exercise we walked from the rear of the French National Cemetery, crossed the road into the woodland opposite to the site of Zimmerman's Farm, named after Commandant Charles Zimmerman of the French 175th Regiment. The ruined farm building, much neglected is obscured by bushes and trees. Close by, and easily overlooked as simply a large rock in the ground is a memorial to a French officer. Practically demolished and long forgotten the French authorities should be ashamed to have neglected this monument to a brave soldier of France. We continued our walk through the forest until we reached the area where RNAS Armoured Rolls Royce Cars were parked below ground level in pits measuring approximately 10m x 5m. Returning to our coach, parked at the front of the French National Cemetery, we drove up to Chunuk Bair. On the way, and to give Steve and Nick a view from the top of Gully Ravine we briefly stopped at the Nuri Yamet Memorial commemorating 10,000 Turkish soldiers who died fighting in the Gully Ravine sector between 26th June and 12th July, 1915.



Arriving at Chunuk Bair at 1245 hours we walked to Chunuk Bair Cemetery and the New Zealand Memorial Wall. Situated on the forward steep slope of Chunuk Bair the cemetery contains 632 casualties of which only 10 are identified. The New Zealand Memorial Wall overlooking the cemetery is inscribed with the names of 850 casualties who have no known grave. Standing by the 20-metre high New Zealand National Memorial and Ataturk's Statue on Chunuk Bair gives outstanding views over the landscape below. Deciding to have lunch at The Farm Cemetery we descended 540-metres down the western slope of Chunuk Bair to the cemetery. There are 652 casualties buried in the cemetery of whom, only 7 have special memorials and are known to be buried among them.



The Farm, which was a shepherd's stone hutment, was occupied on the 8th August, 1915 by the 10th Battalion, Gurkhas Rifles, 9th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment and a Maori contingent in readiness for an attack to capture Chunuk Bair. The following day the 6th Battalion, East Lancashire Regiment, 10th Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment and the 6th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles arrived and the 5th Battalion, Connaught Rangers on the

10th August. During the same morning the Turks launched an attack from the top of Chunuk Bair. They cascaded down the slopes like a 'human tidal wave' and swept the Allies off Chunuk Bair.



In the peaceful and pleasant surroundings we ate a thoughtful lunch. Prior to leaving we laid a Wessex Branch WFA wreath and placed seven crosses at the graves. The oration was spoken by Martin and a two minutes silence observed. The descent was fairly easy but the ascent back to the top of Chunuk Bair requires stamina and a measured pace. Our reward was an ice cream of three different flavours eaten the shade of tall pine trees. We drove back to Sedd-ul-Bahr via Ecebat and Kilit Bahr for the benefit of Steve and Nick. Stopping at Kilit Bahr Fort and at Corporal Sey-it – the Man with the Shell – Memorial where the views across the Dardanelles at its narrowest point can be appreciated. Before dinner respects were paid at the grave of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Doughty-Wylie V.C., a short walk from the Pansiyon who was buried where he fell at the summit of Hill 141.



On Tuesday morning for the purpose of obtaining fuel for the coach we drove to Ecebat. It was noticeable that the infrastructure of the town has and is being upgraded. Large apartment blocks have been erected and others are under construction. Our first stop of the day was a visit to the Gaba Tepe Museum. Standing on a high observation walkway in the museum grounds Martin brought to our attention topographical features in the distance of Anzac sector. We left the museum and drove to the Beach Cemetery containing 391 casualties of which 22 are unknown. At the cemetery Martin outlined the Anzac landings on the 25th April 1915. The recognisable feature at Anzac, the Sphinx is slowly being eroded and its outline and shape have changed. Lunch was taken in Shrapnel Valley by the Cemetery. Shrapnel Valley was a main supply route from the beach up to the Anzac front line and took its name from the heavy Turkish shelling on the 26th April, 1915. 638 casualties are commemorated in the cemetery, 85 of them unknown and 23 known or believed to be buried there have special memorials.

Two thirds of our group ascended the 450-metre pathway to Plugges Plateau where the spectacular and panoramic views of Anzac area can be observed. Sitting beneath the shade of the trees in the cemetery we ate our lunch and later crosses were placed selected graves after which we drove on to Ari Burnu Cemetery. Situated at the northern end of Anzac Cove there are 252 casualties commemorated here, 42 of them unknown with 5 specials memorials and three Indian graves brought in from Kilit Bahr

Leaving Anzac we drove up to 400 Plateau for a visit to Lone Pine Cemetery and Memorial. The former contains 1,167 burials, 504 of them unknown, and 183 have special memorials. The latter has the names of 4,932 casualties inscribed on panels who have no known graves. Our next stop was a short distance away at the 4th Battalion Parade Ground Cemetery CWGC signpost. Access to the cemetery is down a 200-metre steep pathway with rough cut steps into the hillside which winter rains often wash away. There are 116 casualties buried here with 7 unknown.

Among the casualties lie Colonel H.N. MacLaurin, Commander of the 1st Australian Infantry Brigade and Lieutenant-Colonel A.O. Thompson, Commanding Officer of the 4th Battalion, AIF.

Returning to the coach we drove on and parked in the 57th Division Turkish Memorial coach park – which now has a new toilet block! Crossing the road, which was the width No Man's Land took us to Quinn's Post Cemetery which was established after the Armistice and contains 473 casualties of which 294 are unidentified. Special memorials commemorate 64 of them known or believed to be buried there. Looking over the cemetery boundary wall we were able to see Plugge's Plateau, Russell's Top, Popes Hill, the location of the Chess Board, and Bloody Angle.



Martin gave details about these features and the desperate struggles which took place at these positions. He also described the role of the RND who held the line for the Australians whilst they were rested and reorganised. Quinn's Post was named after Major Hugh Quinn, 15th Battalion, AIF who was killed on the 29th May, 1915 and lies buried in Shrapnel Valley Cemetery. Moving on to The Nek Cemetery, north of Quinn's Post the Nek is the narrow spur from Russell's Top to Baby 700. There are 326 casualties buried here with 316 unknown with 5 special memorials. The superb views from the cemetery across to the Suvla plain were magnificent. A short walk took us to a viewing-point down Mule Gully towards the beaches. The quite overwhelming panorama of the gully always brings into question how did men live and fight in such terrain overlooked by the enemy who were absolutely determined to drive them out of their positions and into Aegean Sea. On the way back to the coach we stopped at Walker's Ridge Cemetery, named after Brigadier-General H.B. Walker who commanded the New Zealand Infantry Brigade. Burials here were made during its occupation on either side of a trench system and these are reflected in the cemetery layout by the separation of the two plots. 92 casualties are buried in this cemetery, 16 of them are unknown and 26 special memorials commemorate those known or believed to have been buried among them. Crossing the muddy road from the cemetery we were able to look back over towards Quinn's Post which gave an entirely different perspective of the positions previously mentioned from there. Concluding another excellent day on the peninsula we left Anzac at 1615 hours looking forward to



With the prospects of another bright and sunny day before us we left the Pansiyon on Wednesday morning for Suvla. Stops were made at Embarkation Pier and 7th Field Ambulance Cemeteries. In August 1915 a pier was constructed for evacuating the wounded from Sari Bair but subjected to heavy Turkish shell fire it was abandoned after two days. There are 944 burials in Embarkation Pier Cemetery of which 5 are original graves the remainder being brought in from other cemeteries after the Armistice. 262 special memorials commemorate casualties known or

believed to have been buried here. The Australian 7th Field Ambulance landed in September 1915 from whom the cemetery takes its name. 640 casualties, mainly of the 54th (East Anglian) Division are buried in the cemetery of whom, 276 are unidentified. 207 of those are commemorated by



special memorials. Driving on towards Hill 60 Cemetery, Martin spoke about the Suvla landings and directed out attention to the high ground and ridges dominating the Suvla plain. At Hill 60 he also gave a detailed account of the actions fought in the area during August 1915.

Hill 60 Cemetery was constructed amongst the battlefield trench lines and was enlarged after the Armistice. Of the 788 burials here, 712 are unknown and only 34 are commemorated by special memorials. Within the cemetery is Hill 60 New Zealand Memorial on which are inscribed 183 casualties who have no known grave including the Reverend William Grant who was attached to the Wellington Mounted Rifles. Following a rough track round and behind the cemetery we observed the location of a mine crater, now difficult to find due to the undergrowth and trees which has reclaimed much of this former battle ground.

From Hill 60 we drove to 'C' and 'B' beaches where the 32nd and 33rd Brigades of the 11th Division landed unopposed. The 10th Division were to land at 'A' beach but confusion there led to part of the division landing at 'C' beach. Once ashore however the troops remained on the beaches instead of moving forward to capture and occupy the high ground beyond. A brief visit was made to Lala Baba Cemetery, situated on a hill to the south of Suvla Bay and the Salt Lake. The hill was captured by the 9th Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment and the 6th Battalion, Yorkshire on the 7th August, 1915. The cemetery was created after the Armistice and contains 216 casualties, of whom 53 are unknown and 16 special memorials commemorate those known or believed to have been buried there. Among them is Brigadier-General P.A. Kenna V.C., D.S.O., who was mortally wounded by shellfire on the 29th August, 1915.

We broke for lunch at Green Hill Cemetery where graves were brought in from other smaller cemeteries after the Armistice. The cemetery contains 2,971 casualties, of whom 2,472 are unidentified. Among those buried here is Brigadier-General Thomas Longford who commanded the 2nd (South Midland) Mounted Brigade and Private Harry Salter executed on the 11th December 1915 for desertion. At Hill 10 Cemetery Martin talked about the actions fought along Kireitch Tepe and the importance of the Teke Tepe high ground. Hill 10, a small hillock on the north side of the Salt Lake was captured by the 9th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers and the 11th Battalion, The Manchester Regiment. There are 699 burial, 150 of them unidentified. Time allowed for quiet reflection in the cemetery before driving on to Azmak Cemetery, the most northerly and possibly least visited cemetery, situated below the Teke Tepe ridge. There are 1,074 casualties buried in the cemetery, 684 unidentified among them 114 officers and men of the 1st/5th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment.

The approach road to Azmak Cemetery bears off to the right of the 'main road' which ascends to the Turkish Jandarma Cemetery and Memorial. A year ago the roadway was made of compacted hard core, since then the Turkish authorities have laid a brand new tarmac road, well signed to the top of the Kireitch Tepe Ridge. The road ends abruptly some hundred metres beyond the Jandarma car park. This new road makes the Jandarma Cemetery and Memorial easily accessible for motor vehicles. The Turkish authorities are also planning to build a road from Anzac to Azmak. Descending down from the ridge gives exceptionally fine views over the Suvla plain to the Salt Lake and Lala Baba. To complement a splendid day spent at Suvla ~ a beer at the Mocamp!

We returned early on Thursday morning to the Helles Memorial, firstly to look at a c.1898 150mm Krupp gun situated a few metres from the rear wall of the memorial. The gun has been placed across the remnants of an original emplacement structure and the securing bolt studs are still clearly visible around the base. Walking from the memorial we crossed the main road and followed field boundaries to the site of a French 240mm naval gun artillery battery positioned to fire across to the Asian side of the Dardanelles. After clearing away dense undergrowth it was possible to examine one the c.1880's guns mounted on a steel structure. The gun battery arrived in May 1915 and was operational by the 16th June. Prior to the evacuation the guns were disabled and left in situ. Walking back to re-join our coach parked at the Helles Memorial we then drove to Skew Bridge Cemetery, named after a bridge over the Kanli Dere. Begun in August 1915 and later enlarged, the cemetery contains 697 burials, of which 351 are unidentified. There are special memorials commemorating those believed to be buried among them and we placed crosses on personally chosen graves.



Martin described to us there the actions fought in the area and directed our attention to Achi Baba Nullah, Krithia Nullah and Observation Hill. At midday we arrived at Redoubt Cemetery. Before entering the cemetery a short walk took us to the area of Vineyard fought over at great cost in lives to both sides. The cemetery's name was taken from the Turkish Redoubt Line, a series of fortified positions constructed across the southern end of the peninsula. 2,027 casualties lie buried in the cemetery, 1,393 of whom are unidentified with 349 commemorated by special memorials.

To complete our May 2016 Tour we drove to the Kereves Dere sector and stopped by the Turkish Memorial erected in memory to Major Hüseyin Hilmi Bey, commander of the 6th Division's 17th Regiment who died on the 13th July, 1915. We walked from the memorial round field boundaries to the edge of the ravine to look down over and across Kereves Dere. By visiting the latter our tour had encompassed large areas of the southern sector of the peninsula and we had visited all the Gallipoli Campaign areas. We returned to the Pansiyon during the afternoon and had free time to walk around Sedd-ul-Bahr. Gathering later at the Mocamp we celebrated another splendid Wessex Branch Gallipoli Tour. During the dinner at the Pansiyon a unanimous expression of thanks was extended to Martin and Judy for making the tour of the peninsula a memorable one.



After breakfast on Friday morning we loaded our baggage on to the coach, bid farewell to Erol, Naile and their granddaughter Nurdan and left at 0930 hours in bright sunshine for Istanbul. The clouds, dull and threatening burst forth with heavy showers and rain as we left the peninsula and turned east on to the E84 towards Tekirdağ. We stopped briefly for chai at a service station and then continued our journey. Despite the showers lovely views of Tekirdağ and the Sea of Marmara could be seen travelling along the by-pass as it descends around Tekirdağ.



As we approached Istanbul we plunged into the inevitable heavy and slow moving traffic. Moussa in a valiant attempt to avoid the queues made a detour from the main route to go around the city. It gave us the opportunity to see areas of the city few tourists would ever visit. The rain became a torrent for a period and traffic ground to a halt due to flooding which delayed our progress. Eventually we emerged on to the Kennedy Caddesi, which runs along the Marmara sea front towards the ferry terminals. Extensive road works caused diversions before we passed through one of the old city gates into the Sultanahmet district and arrived at our hotel situated on the Akbiyik Caddesi. John, who had waited patiently for our arrival welcomed us all once again.

The Eternity Boutique Hotel opened in 2011 and offers excellent facilities. Adjacent to the hotel is the I Shak Pasha Turkish Bath built in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, but is no longer in use. To absorb some the cultural atmosphere of Istanbul, John suggested a walk to the Sultanahmet Park Square which has at one end the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia, now a museum at the other end. The opportunity was taken to visit the Basilica Cistern, built during the reign of the Emperor Justinian. The cathedral size underground chamber has a ceiling supported by 336 marble columns arranged in 12 rows, each with 28 columns. Emerging into the light of day we walked to the hippodrome where chariot races, athletics and other activities were held in the old city. Three notable monuments adorn the Hippodrome, a Serpentine Column, an Obelisk of Theodosius and the German Fountain of Kaiser Wilhelm II. The Blue Mosque was closed for prayers but we were able to walk through the forecourt – the same size as the mosque – which is surrounded by a vaulted arcade. The mosque famous for its blue Iznik tiles was built in the name of Sultan Ahmet and is unique with its six minarets. Facing the Blue Mosque is the Hagia Sophia – the Church of Divine Wisdom which was constructed as a basilica in the 6th century by Emperor Justinian. We walked back towards Akbiyik Caddesi through the old city streets and narrow passages.

John arranged for us on Saturday morning a tour of Istanbul which meant an early breakfast and departure from the hotel by 0900 hours. We had an enjoyable drive through the old part of the city and crossed over the Galata Bridge to the Asian side of Turkey. There we visited the Haidar Pasha Cemetery. Given by the Turkish Government in 1855 to Great Britain it contains approximately 6,000 mostly unmarked Crimean War graves. The obelisk was erected by the British Government to commemorate the British dead and in 1867 was made available for civilian burials in a separate section. Cared for by the CWGC all these headstones have been recently renovated and cleaned.

During the First World War Allied prisoners of war who died in captivity were buried by the Turks in a war grave plot. There are 407 casualties of the First World War buried in this plot, 60 of them unidentified and 39 Second World Graves, 14 of them unidentified. The Haidar Pasha Memorial is inscribed with 108 names of those who have no known grave and a Cremation Memorial commemorates 129 soldiers of the Continuing our tour we were driven up very steep roads to the Istanbul View Park which overlooks the city and has commanding panoramic views of the Golden Horn, Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus. Descending down to the sea front area we had chai at a waterside restaurant where in the grounds was a 800 year-old-tree, still healthy and providing shade for diners.

Leaving there we drove to the airport where we said good bye to John with grateful thanks for his time and knowledge of Istanbul. Our experience at the airport could have been more efficient. Having arrived at 1245 hours it was not until 1530 that we had completed security and passport checks.

Refreshing drinks were consumed in the airport concourse arcade before we made our way to the departure gate lounge.

A bus took us a BA Boeing 767 in which there were plenty of spare seats available. Although take off was delayed by twenty minutes due to air traffic restrictions, we left Istanbul at 1755 hours and landed at Heathrow at 1930 hours UK time. By 2015 hours we had cleared passport control, collected our baggage, rendezvoused with Neil again our coach driver at a collection bay so that by 2030 hours we were homeward bound. Stopping briefly at Winchester Services for refreshments, Mark was the first to leave us at Romsey, followed by Nick at New Milton. At 2315 hours we arrived at Wareham where after alighting at Martin and Judy's residence and thanking Neil for his services, Steve and myself, drove onward to our homes in Weymouth and Portland respectively.

The May 2016 Wessex Branch WFA Tour to Gallipoli, was excellent. Each member will be able to reflect and recall many satisfying experiences over the coming weeks and months of Gallipoli and the Dardanelles. This tour could not have taken place without the dedication and determination of our Chairman and Secretary, Martin and Judy Willoughby to ensure that the tour was a success. Thanks must also be expressed to John and Terri Karabeytan for making the arrangements in Istanbul and with Erol in Sedd-ul-Bahr. For Moussa, our driver it was his first experience on the Gallipoli peninsula and he warmed to the opportunity given to him and was friendly and good company. He took photographs at various locations so he must have enjoyed the trip and was probably for him a break from the horrendous driving conditions in Istanbul. Finally, a big thank you to Martin and Judy who made it possible for us to ensure that all those who lie in the beautifully cared for cemeteries and have their names inscribed on memorials in Gallipoli are not forgotten by the Wessex Branch WFA.

R.G. Coleman

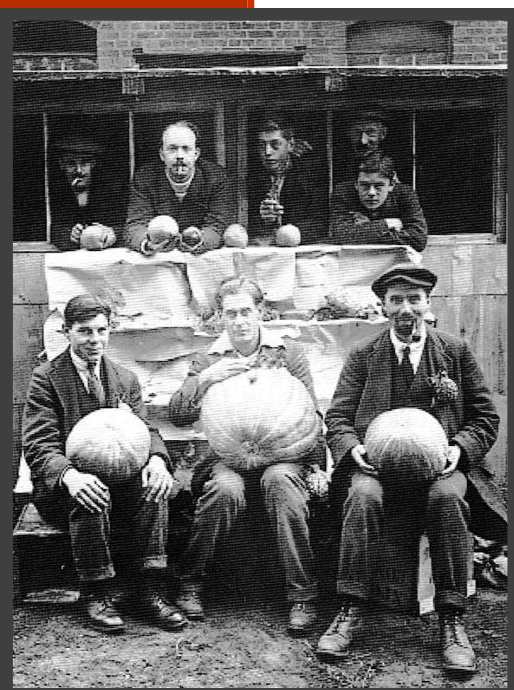
[Sources: Commonwealth War Graves Commission Web-Site ~ www.cwgc.org
Various Turkish Guide Books & Maps

Snippets from Varied Sources too Numerous To Mention & Photographs]



RUHLEBEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

On 25th September 1916, a letter from a Thomas Howat arrived at the Royal Horticultural Society's offices in Vincent Square, London. In formal language on notepaper stamped with a stern German script, it announced the creation of the Ruhleben Horticultural Society, and asked for affiliation to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). "Under the circumstance," Howat wrote, "we are unable to remit the usual fee but trust this will be no hindrance to our enjoying the privileges of affiliation." Above this passage, in tiny red pen, the RHS secretary confirmed there was no question of paying fees: "Absolutely not."



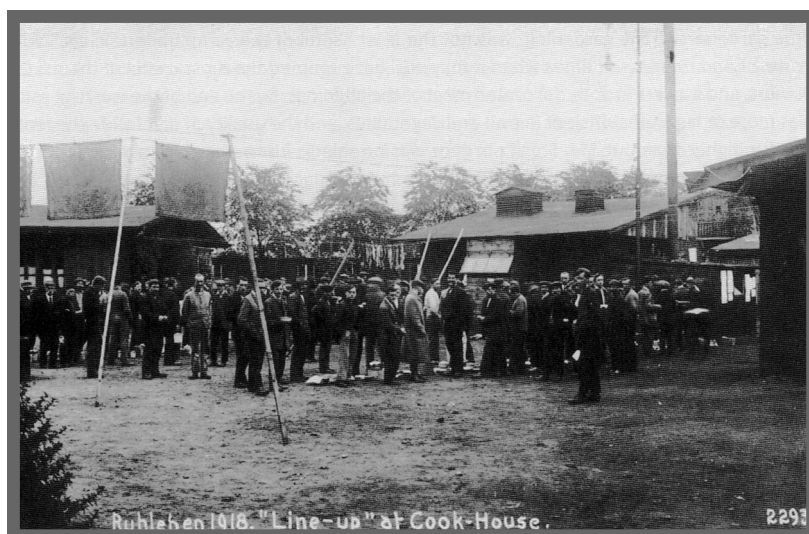
Prisoners
at
Ruhleben
with their
produce

The circumstances in question were certainly unusual. The letter had been sent from the Ruhleben internment camp near Berlin, where, since the outbreak of the war in 1914, a community of British men had set about creating a fully-functioning corner of home behind enemy lines. They already had amateur dramatics, an internal postal service, a casino and regular sporting fixtures. As any self-respecting British community would, they now wanted to move on to competition-level horticulture.

The 5,000 or so British men who found themselves in Germany when war broke out did not count themselves lucky at first. As potential enemy soldiers, they could not be allowed to go home. "What were four thousand Britishers doing in Germany when their country declared war? The answer – that none of them had the faintest idea of what was coming – is almost incomprehensible today," wrote J. Davidson Ketchum, a Canadian psychologist who was interned and wrote about the experience afterwards.

They were a motley crew, with a large middle-class contingent. "There were fishermen from Hull and Grimsby, black sailors from West Africa and the West Indies, Jewish tailors and music hall artists from the East End of London, professional footballers and golfers, jockeys, criminals, conmen and drifters," writes Matthew Stibbe, author of 'British Civilian Internees in Germany' (Manchester University Press, 2008), one of the few histories of the camp. There were even a few honeymooning couples who had arrived at just the wrong time, and some celebrities. Anthony Eden's older brother, Timothy, was there, as well as Carl Fuchs, a celebrated cellist. George Merritt, the actor who would go on to star in 'The Avengers' and 'The Prisoner', was among their number.

Although they could not be allowed to leave the country, neither were these men prisoners of war. The German government's compromise was the internment camp, a tool popularised by the British during the Boer War. An old racecourse six miles west of Berlin was selected, a site that now sits in the shadow of the 1936 Olympic Stadium.



On 6th November 1914, an order was issued for all British men aged between 17 and 55 to be arrested and taken to the camp. Some were taken on trains, others made their own way. A few even took taxis across the country to what would be their prison for the next four years.

A perimeter fence was erected, but when the first batch of internees arrived very little had been done about their accommodation. The old racing stables were to be used for sleeping. Eleven stables, each containing 27 horse-boxes measuring 11 feet square (roughly 3.5 sq.metres), were used as barracks. Six field beds, three on top of each other were installed on two sides of each box. A straw filled sack was to be provided as a mattress, together with a pillow and two blankets. It was all done in such haste that some of the boxes still had horse dung on the floor.



The number of prisoners arriving was so woefully underestimated that there was not enough bedding to go round.

Eventually 365 men were crammed into each so called "barrack" and the ones who couldn't secure a bed in one of the horse-boxes, had to sleep in the hayloft. There was no heating and very little lighting, washing facilities in each barrack consisted of two standpipes and fifteen bowls. Even so, every internee was expected to be washed and dressed and on parade by 6:30am. A tin bowl was provided for food, but no cutlery or mugs for drinking. Certain items could be bought at the canteen, but many of the prisoners had arrived with little or no money.

The first winter was tough, and several internees died of disease, or by falling from the precarious sleeping quarters. In 1915 there were food-ration riots. Yet the German authorities were not blind to the plight of their internees. The camp was close to Berlin and it was easy for neutrals to check on conditions. There were far more German nationals – around 26,000 – interned in Britain, and the Germans feared reprisals.

After a visit from the America Ambassador, James Gerard, in March 1915, conditions improved. New barracks were built and rations increased. Guards retreated to the perimeter fence. Each barracks appointed a captain, and committees were set up. Packages began to arrive from Britain.

Our perspective is so clouded by the horror of the Western Front that it is easy to forget that in much of Europe, life carried on almost as normal. Groceries were bought, children were clothed.

To stave off their boredom, the internees wanted activities. Gardening was not the first recreation considered. In January 1915, chess, rounders and debating societies were formed, followed by an orchestra, theatre, school and various cultural associations.



"Standard 'highbrow' plays by Galsworthy, Ibsen, Shakespeare, Shaw, Sheridan and Wilde were performed alongside more middlebrow thrillers and farces and Gilbert and Sullivan operettas like the Mikado," writes Stibbe. There were also workshops that taught bookbinding, watchmaking and engraving, a privately run lending library and a cinema. There was cricket, baseball and both league and cup football – several camp members had played professionally. The regular matches at Ruhleben allowed formation experimentations that were to become significant in the development of football.

From the summer of 1915 small gardens began to appear beneath the windows of some barracks. A gift of seeds from the Crown Prince of Sweden seems to have sparked the interest. The internees' first thoughts were decorative rather than productive, and it was individuals and not groups who were responsible. Indeed, some of the other internees suspected the gardens were a German ruse to make the camp look better to inspectors.

"The idea of having gardens originated with the gardeners interned in the camp," wrote Joseph Powell and Francis Henry Gribble, who published *'A History of Ruhleben'*. *"Some started to grow shrubs to hide the barbed wire. The sailors of Barrack VIII made a rose garden, and were very proud of it."*

From this, horticulture at Ruhleben steadily expanded. At first the interest remained ornamental. Internees grew chrysanthemums and dahlias which were sent back to Britain for sale to raise funds for their families. It was not until 1917 that they asked to use the central part of the racecourse as a large vegetable garden (the other half was the sports pitches).

That year, with help from the RHS, there was also a series of Wisley-standard horticultural lectures and two flower shows, with prizes for window boxes, vegetables and gardens, as well as 52 varieties of sweet pea grown. *"This wasn't pootling around, this was serious horticulture,"* explains Fiona Davison, the RHS Head of Libraries and Exhibitions. *"Almost as soon as they started, they did it properly. Pests were a big problem at first, as was sourcing good-quality manure – old tea leaves were used instead."* *"The soil was dry, loose, dirty sand which rain quickly transformed into mud,"* wrote Powell and Gribble.

Gradually the camp's gardeners worked around these issues. They built cold frames and, using a loan from the German authorities, a heated greenhouse, allowing them to grow melons and tomatoes. With proceeds from their other activities, they hired some internees to be full-time gardeners. *"[The gardening] was not the least useful of*

the camp undertakings,” adds Powell, “and there were times when it may well have seemed the most useful of them.”

Cut flowers, and flowers in pots, decorated most of the buildings. By the end of the war, the camp was more or less self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables, and the quality of the diet inside the fence was far higher than outside. Fresh produce was on sale to internees at nominal prices, at a time when there was almost no food left in Germany.

Towards the end, a German officer demanded fifteen red cabbages for his men, when there were no red cabbages available outside the camp. The British refused because they could not directly aid the German war effort, but agreed to supply the outer leaves as horse fodder.

It is tempting to see Ruhleben as an idyll compared with what was happening at Ypres or on the Somme, but camp life was far from perfect. There were plenty of divisions within its walls. The Germans placed Jewish men in a separate barracks, which baffled other internees, and yet the British were equally perplexed to find themselves sharing quarters with black internees.

As soon as packages started arriving from home, class strata reasserted themselves. The Etonians, and other public schoolboys, quickly set up exclusive clubs, and even paid other internees to wear white jackets and serve them drinks. Hanging around with merchant seamen for four years meant that the habit of swearing spread to the middle-class internees, to the extent that they worried about needing a period of quarantine before they were in female company again.

The internees were also suspicious of those thought to have German sympathies. British parentage alone wasn't enough. It was especially difficult for those married to German women and raising German children. They were offered a choice of staying in the camp as “Britishers”, where they were resented by other internees, or joining the German armed forces to fight and risking death in the trenches.

During the war Ruhleben was a famous cause in both Britain and Germany. Contributors to the Ruhleben fund included prominent Germans such as Albert Einstein, Max Warburg and Oscar Tietz. After the Armistice a flurry of books were published about the internees' experience, but as the full horror of the trenches became clearer the camp was quickly forgotten.

A crude survey by Ketchum, the Canadian psychologist, found that many of the men, particularly the young singles, saw their time in the camp as unusual but formative and even enjoyable.

After the war Ruhleben Camp returned to its former function as a racecourse, or to be more precise, a trotting course. However it was no longer as popular as it had been before 1914 and barely managed to survive through the 20's and early 30's. The racecourse was demolished in the early 1960's and the site redeveloped as a sewage disposal farm and refuse dump. It is still fulfilling this function today.

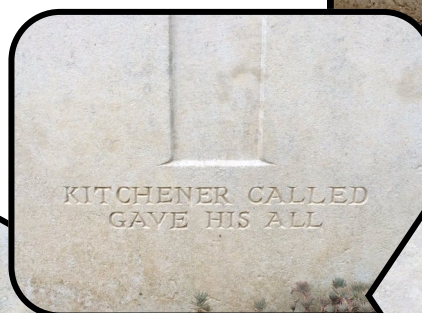
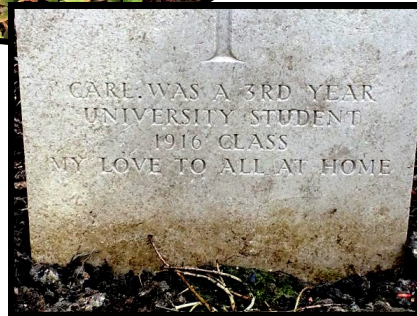
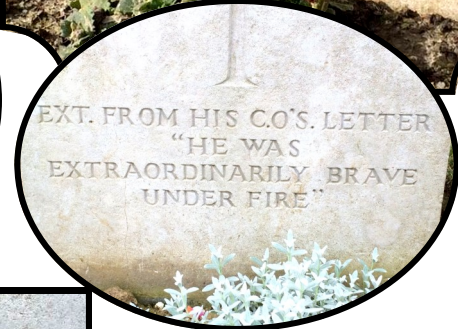


Rod Arnold

[This article originally appeared in the Autumn 2016 newsletter of the National Ex-Prisoner of War Association and appears by courtesy of the Editor of that publication]



**“Every
Headstone
Tells a
Story”**



Photos here and
Gallery Corner
courtesy of
Simon Bendry

The British West Indies Regiment



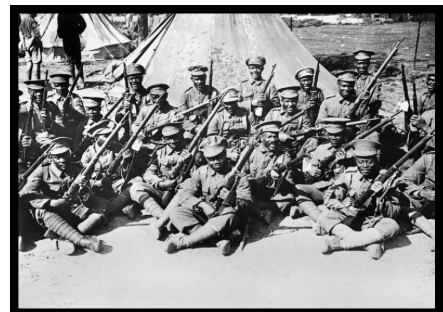
On a recent visit to the Museum Of London Docklands, ostensibly to see the "Sugar & Slavery Exhibition" (I can highly recommend this), I came across an excellent exhibition dedicated to "The British West Indies Regiment" in the Great War.

The West Indies Regiment had existed since 1795 and took part in a number of engagements during the War. However the Government were concerned by the number of West Indian

Men coming to the UK and joining British Regiments. In 1915 a new regiment, the British West Indies Regiment (BWIR) was formed. Eventually some 16,000 men volunteered making up 11 Battalions serving in France, Flanders, Egypt and Palestine.

Many the units served as labour battalions, constructing roads, railways and trenches; however other units were engaged in combat roles in Egypt and Palestine.

Things did not always go well for the BWIR. In March 1916 over 1000 men embarked for the UK on SS Verdala. Because of U Boat activity she was diverted to Halifax, Nova Scotia, arriving in terrible weather. 106 men suffered exposure and Frostbite, some troops lost toes and feet and five lost their lives.



The Taranto Mutiny

The BWIR were not always treated well especially by those who commanded them. After Armistice Day 1918, the 11 Battalions were sent to Taranto in Italy to prepare for demobilisation. As a result of sever labour shortages BWIR men were loading and unloading ships. This together with the attitude of their command led to much resentment and on 6th December 1918 men of the 9th Battalion revolted and attacked their officers. On 8th the 10th Battalion refused to work. A Machine Gun Company and a Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment were dispatched to restore order. Approximately 60 men were later tried for mutiny.



After the Taranto incident the BWIR were finally repatriated to the Caribbean in September 1919, accompanied by three cruisers.

By the end of the Great War, 185 men from the BWIR had been killed in action and 1,071 had died of sickness. The Regiment was awarded 2 MBE's, 5 DSO's, 9 MC's, 8 DCM's, 37 MM's and 49 MID's.

The Regiment was disbanded in 1921 and was largely forgotten, despite having fought in all the key theatres of the war.

Trevor Linley

VERDUN BATTLEFIELD TOUR

15th ~ 19th SEPTEMBER 2016

Departing from Pimperne at 0500 hours in a Main Line coach before the 'cock had crowed' and under a clear star filled sky we proceeded towards Salisbury, where another member joined us. We made a comfort stop at Fleet Services on the M3, where four more members were waiting and completed our tour party of 31. Our feeder driver was relieved by Derek who was to be our driver for the battlefield tour.

Leaving fleet Services at 0715 hours we drove to the ferry terminal at Dover and arrived there without any traffic problems at 0915 hours. We passed through French security and passport controls within fifteen minutes and well ahead of our schedule boarded the P & O Ferry Pride of Burgundy, which left Dover at 1015 hours.



Although misty, the crossing was calm to Calais and by 1235 hours (French time) we were motoring along the A26. At 1435 hours we stopped at the Aire de Urvillers Service Station for a break and refreshments for an hour. Despite the inclement weather it was noticeable as we passed through the countryside how the features of the landscape differed from that of the Somme and Flanders. The traffic on the auto-route was relatively light and we arrived at the Novotel Metz Hotel, Hauconourt by 1835 hours. Allocated to our rooms, which were spacious and comfortable we all enjoyed the first of our four evening meals and drinks before retiring to bed.

After a good breakfast we left the hotel at 0845 hours travelling towards Verdun. The countryside was shrouded in autumnal mists, occasionally pierced by rays of sunshine by the time we arrived at the 17th century high Citadel of Verdun. The city became part of the French kingdom in 1648 and the military engineer and architect Sébastien Vauban (1633-1707) began a programme of works to strengthen the cities defences, which took over twenty years to complete. In the wake of the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, nineteen forts were built around Verdun which became a fortified city. The underground or low citadel was constructed between 1886-1893 to accommodate 2,000 people for use as a command post, supply depot and shelter. Approximately 4-kilometres of tunnels and galleries were dug out the rock and earth. Incorporated into the design underground were barrack accommodation, six powder magazines, seven ammunition stores, a bakery, a mill, communication rooms, kitchens, equipment stores, a cistern and a system for pumping water into Verdun and to other forts. During the First World War the citadel's tunnels were extended by 3-kilometres to accommodate thousands of soldiers waiting to be sent to the front line.



Choosing the French Unknown Soldier

Outside the underground citadel Martin, our chairman gave an interesting talk before we walked a short distance to the entrance tunnel and into the citadel itself. We were divided into groups of nine, the seating capacity of a self-guided tour vehicle. Each vehicle sets off at timed intervals using computer guidance technology to navigate through and around the citadel's tunnel complex. There are six vehicles and all the technological guidance and safety systems were recently updated.

The vehicle slowly moves off at walking pace through automatic doors into the darkness of a tunnel which is suddenly lit and a commentary, available in six languages begins the fascinating tour. As the vehicle follows its programmed journey it stops at galleries where dioramas create sensory illusions and the dialogue of poilus to demonstrate to the visitor what the living and working conditions were like there during the First World War. The voiced dialogue used by the laser created soldiers has been extracted from personal diaries which help to create a special atmosphere and ambience. At the end of the vehicle tour we stepped off at a gallery where there is displayed a reconstruction of the ceremony for choosing the French Unknown Soldier.



Citadel Entrance

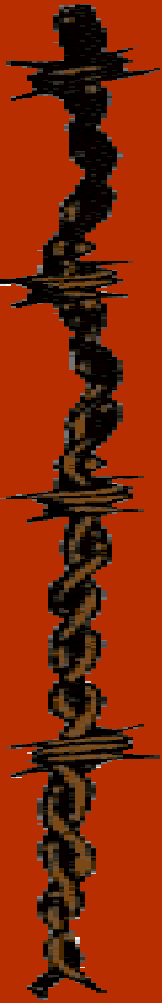
On the 9th November, 1920 coffins containing the remains of eight unknown soldiers from the battlefields of France were brought to the underground Citadel of Verdun. The following day Corporal Auguste Thin of the 132nd Regiment chose the sixth coffin which was taken to Paris and interred in the Arc de Triomphe. The remaining seven coffins were taken to the Nécropole Nationale Faubourg-Pavé French Cemetery and interred in 'The Square of the Unknown Seven' burial plot. The last gallery at the citadel contains a collection of battlefield artefacts and military uniforms.

There are not many facilities available at the citadel though this does not detract in any way from the superb underground excursion and was a wonderful beginning to our 2016 battlefield tour. Before re-joining our coach the available beverages at the citadel were eagerly consumed.

We drove on at 1115 hours to the Nécropole Nationale Faubourg-Pavé French Cemetery, situated in the eastern part of Verdun. The cemetery contains 4,906 French First World burials, 600 from the Second World War and graves of the other nationalities. Beyond the entrance gate are a group of First World field guns. Standing beside a stone statue sculpted by Leon Cuvelle, Rod Arnold gave a brief and informative talk about the cemetery. The statue was originally cast in bronze but was removed and destroyed by the Nazis in 1940. It commemorates French prisoners who were held by the Germans in special camps during the First World War. In the centre of the cemetery is a large cross around which are interred the seven unknown soldiers who were not selected in 1920 as the French Unknown Soldier.



Faubourg Pavé Cemetery



At midday we left the cemetery, joining the D964 northwards. Passing along by the River Meuse we gradually ascended up towards the high ground overlooking Verdun. During the Battle of Verdun the Left (West) bank of the Meuse formed the flanks of the German thrust towards Fort Vaux between March and June 1916. A significant part of the German plan was to concentrate their Armies advance along the Right (East) Bank on a front to capture Fort Douamont and Fort Souville. As their advance stalled on the east bank they realised they had to overcome the French forces on the Left (West) bank which was of primary importance if they were to achieve success. Crossing over the Meuse canal, we continued along the D38 in the direction of the Mort Homme Ridge, driving through the villages of Bras-sur-Meuse, Charny-sur-Meuse, Chattancourt and Esnes-en-Argonne. The Nécropole Nationale Petit Bras Cemetery, at Bras-sur-Meuse contains 6,386 French First World War casualties, including 2,000 in an Ossuary and 151 from the Second World War. Esnes-en-Argonne was pounded to rubble and dust in the First World War and was rebuilt retaining its pre-war profile and features as though it had never been destroyed. A kilometre beyond the village is the Esnes-Malancourt Nécropole Nationale Cemetery which has an Ossuary containing 3,000 unknown soldiers and 3,661 burials of the First World War.

We arrived at the Cote 304 Memorial, where Michael Adams gave an account of the resilient defence by the French to prevent the Germans from penetrating and occupying the position between March 1916 and August 1917. It was during this period that the village of Esne-en-Argonne was obliterated. The survivors from the 2nd French Division erected the memorial in June 1934 to commemorate 10,000 of their comrades who died on Mort Homme. Although overgrown the woodland around the memorial is still littered with shell holes, craters and the debris of war. What appeared to be a 'sink-hole' had recently appeared by a pathway, which was an apt reminder to us of what may lie beneath the ground over which we were walking. Just behind the memorial is the grave of Sous Lieutenant Georges Fabre, Legion D'Honneur, Croix de Guerre of the 3rd Regiment Zouave Tirailleurs, who was killed in action on Cote 304 in May 1916 aged 40 years. The inscribed memorial was later erected over his grave by his wife and daughter. Another headstone was inscribed 'Joseph Girard, Tue le 14 Juin 1940, Recrutement Danger' would be worthy of further research to find more about him and why he was buried on Cote 304.



Cote 304 Memorial

Leaving Cote 304 we drove along the D18/D38b and passed by a cross mounted on the remnants of a pill-box commemorating the 69th Regiment of French Infantry who were virtually annihilated in defending the villages of d'Haucourt and Malancourt. d'Haucourt was not rebuilt and is one of the 'Village Detruits' – destroyed villages. A similar fate befell the villages of Bethincourt and Forges-sur-Meuse, where we stopped. Michael outlined to us, standing by the large wooden cross where the village church had once stood, what had happened to Forges-sur-Meuse and about the 'Zone Rouge' or Red Zone. The widespread destruction of villages and battle damaged areas across north-eastern France was isolated after the war by the French Government as 'Zone Rouge'. It covered an area of 1,200 square kilometres (460 square miles) and such was the environmental contamination that it was uninhabitable. 'Zone Rouge' was defined as 'completely devastated with damage to property and agriculture 100%, impossible to clean and human life impossible'. Forestry, farming and housing were either temporarily or permanently forbidden in the 'Zone Rouge' and some of the villages, were never rebuilt. These restrictions have been reduced over the passing of the years but still apply today in designated controlled areas. The land on which these destroyed villages stood has been preserved as a testament to their memory. The villages that 'Died for France' in the Meuse region were Beaumont-

en-Verdunois, Bezonvaux, Cumières-le-Mort-Homme, Douamont (partially rebuilt), Fleury-devant-Douamont (location of the Verdun Memorial and Museum), Haumont-près-Samogneux, Louvemont-Côte-du-Poivre, Ornes (partially rebuilt) and Vaux-devant-Damloup (rebuilt).

Members spent some time walking around Forges-sur-Meuse and the marshy areas by the river. Where there was once a building or house a marker post records the former owners name and/or the purpose for which it had been used. The remnants of this silent and shattered village, is gradually being reclaimed by nature with trees, shrubbery and lichens.

Returning to the coach we drove up to the Mort Homme Memorial, a few kilometres east of Cote 304. This imposing memorial commemorating the officers and of the 69th Infantry Division who died on Mort Homme during April and May 1916, has the figure of death, draped in a shroud with one arm outstretched and the other clutching a flag. Carved into the plinth on which it stands are the famous words of General Nivelle, 'Ils n'ont pas passé – They did not pass. The battle that unfolded along the Mort Homme ridge was horrific for both sides and was vividly described by Michael in his graphic talk. Continuous artillery bombardments, attacks and counter-attacks claimed the lives of thousands of French and German soldiers eventually exhausting both sides. On the grassed verge leading up to the Mort Homme Memorial are two stone crosses, one dedicated to German soldiers and the other to Franco-German reconciliation, erected in 1984. There is also a memorial to the French 40th Division who fought on Mort Homme in April and June 1916.

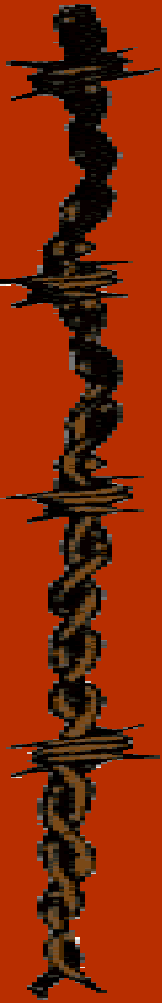


Mort Homme Memorial men



Having completed our itinerary for the day it was decided at 1450 hours to return to the hotel. In so doing we drove along part of the 57-kilometre Bar-le-Duc to Verdun road, the Voie Sacrée, (the Sacred Road) marked at one kilometre intervals by red-capped stones with a French poilus helmet on top. Originally in the bronze the helmets were pilfered by souvenir hunters and are now made of fibre glass. The sacred road was the only highway into Verdun from February to December 1916 and part of it was also used in much the same way by the Allies in the Second World War which is similarly remembered by memorial stones along the route. We alighted from the coach at the hyper-market opposite the hotel to purchase snacks for the weekend and members were free to pursue their own interests until meeting for dinner after a superb and absorbing day.

Our battlefield itinerary for Saturday was to be a busy one and we left the hotel at 0830 hours. Travelling along the auto-routes and cross country roads we passed by several pill-boxes, clearly visible from the coach as the crops had been harvested. The light drizzle which had been falling stopped by the time we arrived at the Verdun Memorial and Museum at Fleury-devant-Douamont. Before leaving the coach Michal gave a vivid account of the fighting here during the Battle of Verdun in 1916. Fleury-devant-Douamont was captured and re-captured sixteen times and completely demolished and within the boundaries of 'Zone Rouge' was uninhabitable and not rebuilt. was built to commemorate French and German combatants as well as civilians who died during the Battle of Verdun.



Built on the site of the former railway station it was opened in 1967. After recent extensive refurbishment the museum re-opened in 2016. It has an excellent collection of French and German militaria, thoughtfully displayed with information in three languages. Today the museum's main focus is on education to appraise the younger generation of the sacrifices during the war and cultural awareness. The French have a flair for museum design and this one ticks all the boxes. Sadly our itinerary did not allow us to spend more time there as members wanted to explore the old village, which prior to the war had a population of 422 whose main employment was agriculture and forestry. On display outside the museum are field guns and motor vehicles. There is also a grave containing an artillery officer, two sappers and a padre who were killed by a shell on the 25th October, 1916. By the side of the pathway leading down to the old village is a memorial unveiled in November 2009 to Lieutenants Henry Herduin and Pierre Millant who were executed without trial on the 11th June, 1916. They had withdrawn their men to save further loss of lives disobeying General Nivelle's orders of the 4th June that, '... we should not take so much as one step back ... we die where we stand'. On the 10th Nivelle ordered that the act of retreating, '... would be a crime'. Walking down the pathway through the village information signs advise the visitor of the street names, houses and where the shops used to be – today their memorial is a grass covered shell crater. There is a small chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Europe which was closed. A 'Dove of Peace' sculpture by Robert Schuman is a silhouette symbolically representing the original village layout, embedded with stones marking the location of the houses.



Verdun Memorial and Museum

In 2013 a group of German visitors discovered human remains in a crater a few hundred metres from the chapel. A farm had once stood there and was used as a dressing station by the French. Subsequently the skeletons of 26 French soldiers were recovered from the site. They had died from their wounds and were placed in the basement of the farmhouse, which was struck by a German shell. Seven were identified but only three descendants were traced. They were contacted and two took their grandfathers back to their home towns for burial. The other descendant requested to have their relative interred at Douamont. On the 5th December, 2013 a service of remembrance took place at the Douamont Ossuary to commemorate the 26 soldiers and 24 were interred in the cemetery. In the crater there now stands a French poilu carved from a tree trunk guarding the sacred site. It is fair to say that walking through these destroyed villages there is a muffled silence perhaps cast by the departed souls in respect of the thousands who perished in the Battle of Verdun and for the villages that died for France.



Returning to the coach we drove on to the Tranchée des Bayonettes with its monumental entrance gateway. Michael explained to us the history and the circumstances surrounding the Tranchée des Bayonettes. At the top of a slight inclined pathway is a concrete structure erected over the Tranchée des Bayonettes. The construction work was financed by an American who donated 500,000 francs and was officially opened in December 1920.

In June of that year the trench had been thoroughly searched and the remains of 47 French soldiers were discovered, only 14 of whom could be identified.

A section of the trench was found with rifles and bayonets fixed, protruding through the earth at regular intervals. Beneath each rifle was the skeleton of a soldier. It was concluded that these soldiers of the 137th Infantry Regiment, who had been standing in the trench were buried alive by the earth thrown up during a bombardment on the 11th June, 1916. When this became public knowledge the Tranchée des Bayonettes and the heroes buried in it assumed a legendary significance. Veterans later suggested a more plausible explanation. They had placed their dead comrades in a mass grave and then inserted rifles with bayonets fixed into the ground to indicate that corpses were buried beneath. Today there are no bayonets to be seen. Seventeen soldiers who are known only to God still lie in the trench and are commemorated by seven wooden crosses.

Driving on from the Tranchée des Bayonettes, Michael gave an interesting talk about Fort Douamont before we arrived there at 1150 hours. By the pathway leading up to the fort there is an information panel and memorial to Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccans who fought for France in the Regiments de Tirailleurs. Paying an entrance fee of 3 Euros, members spent time walking through the underground tunnels and galleries.



Tranchée des Bayonettes

Fort Douamont was the largest of the nineteen forts protecting Verdun. There are two underground levels protected by 12-metres of sand, reinforced concrete and earth. The two main tunnels run east-west above each other with side galleries. In 1915 the garrison was reduced and all except one 150mm rotating retractable gun and one 75mm gun were removed for use elsewhere.

On the 21st February, 1916 the Germans launched the offensive against Verdun and four days later Fort Douamont fell to the 24th Brandenburg Regiment virtually without a fight. The French 2nd Army made an attempt to recapture the fort in May 1916 and managed to regain briefly the western end of the fort but were forced to withdraw. The Germans were determined to hold the fort which was subjected to intense artillery bombardments – the earthworks covering the fort are still scarred by it. On the 8th May, 1916 an improvised cooking fire ignited flame-thrower fuel. The eruption of flames and smoke caused chaos and confusion. Some of the German soldiers, blackened by the smoke were mistakenly shot down as French colonial troops. Grenades were also thrown which detonated at stack of stored ammunition. The ensuing explosion and fire killed 679 Germans and injured 1,800. The bodies and remains of the dead were recovered and placed in a side gallery which was walled off and is now an official German War Grave. A cross, commemorative plaque and floral tributes can be seen in front of the sealed wall.



Fort Douamont

The offensive launched by the French against the fort in October 1916 was preceded by an unprecedented bombardment by heavy guns including two 400mm railway howitzers. In addition millions of lighter shells rained down on the fort. Fear of internal explosions forced the Germans to evacuate the fort leaving behind a very small garrison as a rear-guard. Within a few hours the French had captured the enemy rear-guard and Fort Douamont. There is much to see underground and visitors are directed by arrows to all the relevant places of interest including the well preserved 150mm gun turret.



Access to the earthworks covering the fort is by a stone stairway. Walking across the cratered and tortured uneven ground gives the visitor an inkling of the maelstrom of shells inflicted upon it which those in the bowels of the fort endured in 1916. The cupola of the 155mm gun, a machine-gun turret and their associated bell-shaped observation posts are well preserved and in good condition. With much to think about we left Fort Douamont for the Douamont Ossuary and the French National Cemetery.



Observation Post—Fort Douamont

On the initiative of the Bishop of Verdun, Charles Ginisty, work on the building the Ossuary began in August 1920. It was erected within the battlefield area and has been designated as a “Nécropolis Nationale.” Designed in the form of an ambulatory by Léon Azéma, Max Edrie and Jacques Hardy the Ossuary is 137-metres long, with a 46-metre high central tower. The latter known as the ‘Lantern of the Dead Tower’ has panoramic views of the battlefield and within the tower is a 2-ton bronze death bell, donated by Anne Thorburn van Buren, an American citizen in 1927. The bell is only rung at official ceremonies. Situated on the top of the tower is a rotating red and white lantern which shines a beam of light out across the battlefield at night. Within the interior space or cloister are forty-six alcoves, with an apse at each end, a chapel beneath the Lantern Tower and stained glass windows designed by George Desvallières. Eighteen of the alcoves along the north wall each contain two tombs and in each apse are five tombs. These represent forty-six of the main battle sectors of the Battle of Verdun. Below the tombs are vaults in which were placed bones of unknown soldiers recovered from each of the battle sectors. The walls and vaulted ceiling stones are engraved with the names of those who died during the Battle of Verdun. Some of the engraved stones bear the names of those who were killed in Second World War, in Indo-China and Algeria. The Battle of Verdun (21st February-19th December 1916) claimed the lives of over 200,000, many of whom were never found and still lie in the earth of the battlefield. Below the Ossuary floor are the skeletal remains of 130,000 unidentified French and German soldiers placed in alcoves. They can be viewed from the outside through small windows at ground level. On the 7th August, 1932 the Ossuary was inaugurated by the French President Albert Lebrun.

A ceremony of reconciliation was held at the Ossuary on September 1984 attended by President Francois Mitterand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl. President Nicolas Sarkozy attended the first Armistice ceremony to be held there on the 11th November, 2008. On the 9th February, 2014 the name of Peter Freundl, a German soldier who was killed in action on the 28th May, 1916 had his name engraved on a stone in the vaulted ceiling. A programme to refurbish the Ossuary began in 2011 as part of the preparations for the centenary of the Battle of Verdun.



Douamont Ossuary and Cemetery

There is an intense, quiet and reverential atmosphere within the Ossuary which was clearly felt by members as they walked through and around this magnificent memorial to the dead of France and Germany.

Sloping down and away from the front façade of the Ossuary is the largest First World War French Cemetery containing the graves of 16,142 soldiers who died during the Battle of Verdun. One section, orientated towards Mecca contains the graves of Muslim soldiers of the French Colonial Forces. Nearby is the Wall of the Israelites dedicated to Jewish soldiers who died for France. The cemetery was inaugurated in June 1929 and attended by President Gaston Doumergue.

Across the road from the cemetery is a memorial to Muslim soldiers designed as an open air mosque which was officially opened by President Chirac in 2006. At the junction of the D913/D913D also opposite the cemetery is a large tomb with the recumbent figure of André Thome, Chevalier de la Legion D'Honneur, Croix de Guerre, a French politician

who as a Second Lieutenant in the 6th Dragoons was killed in action on the 10th March, 1916. A memorial by the roadside of the D913 commemorates the 44th Regiment d'Infanterie Territoriale. At the conclusion of our visit to the Ossuary and the French National Cemetery, members gathered in a café situated by Douamont village war memorial for refreshments.



Tomb of Andre Thome

A short ten minute drive took us to Fort Souville and the Pamart Casemates. From the roadside one of the three casemate pillboxes can be seen and members followed the pathway to it and beyond into the forest woodland. Designed by Commandant Pamart, three pillboxes of this type were built on the slopes of Fort Souville to provide close defence. The pillbox is fixed, but its size and weight made it easier to build and took twenty workers forty-five days to install. They were more reliable than the disappearing turret which was often jammed by stones caused by the explosions of shells.



Pamart Casement

The Pamart pillbox has two crenellations' almost at ground level which could be closed off by metal plates. Inside two Hotchkiss machine guns, one above the other, fired alternatively. One of them was set in one of the two crenellations when firing while the other waited underneath. The gunner rotated them firing one after the other. Although the morning had been overcast members enjoyed walking around the location in the afternoon sunshine and found there was much to occupy their interest.

We continued along the D913 passing recently reconstructed trenches and shortly afterwards paused for a few minutes at a memorial dedicated to those executed by the Nazis in the Second World War. At Fort Vaux Michael gave another splendid talk to members who gathered on the ramparts of the fort. Fort Vaux, situated to the north-east of Verdun was built during the 1880's and later reinforced and strengthened with concrete.

Stripped of most of its weaponry prior to the war, the Germans attacked the fort on the 1st June, 1916. Major Sylvain Eugène Raynal, who had been wounded on three previous occasions had been classed as not fit for duty, was recalled and given command of Fort Vaux. He, with his men heroically endured the artillery bombardment, poison gas, flame-throwers and fought with grim determination in the chaos of the



Fort Vaux



Major Raynal

under-ground passageways.

With his telephone and visual means of communication out of action, Raynal had to rely on homing pigeons. He sent his final message to HQ using a pigeon named Vaillant, not knowing if the bird would survive the hailstorm of enemy fire across the battlefield. Vaillant reached the HQ but died on arrival. A memorial plaque to the pigeon was later erected on the outside wall of the fort. There is also a defender's plaque close by listing the units that defended the fort. Raynal's exhausted garrison lacking rations, water, ammunition and with no prospect of relief, surrendered to the Germans on the 7th June. In recognition of his courage Crown Prince Wilhelm presented Raynal with a French officer's sword before he and his men were taken as prisoners of war to Germany. The

French recaptured Fort Vaux on the 2nd November, 1918. Inside Fort Vaux there is a small museum containing a collection of artefacts and memorabilia. Following passageways through the fort the visitor passes by galleries, some of which are furnished to demonstrate how they had been used during the war. Other underground features include two gun casemates, a chapel, pigeon loft, telephone exchange, latrines and showers.

With time running out and after a very full and superlative day we left Fort Vaux at 1645 hours. As we drove along the D603 in the pleasant early evening sunshine we passed by Hautecourt German Cemetery which contains 7,885 burials. After stopping for fuel and a quick comfort break we were back at our hotel by 1830 hours. Once refreshed, members gathered for an atmospheric and convivial evening.

It was another early breakfast to enable us to leave the hotel at 0730 hours on the Sunday morning for an outstanding day's tour. A brother of one of our members who lives in France, had joined us at the hotel left, to return to his home. It was a wet and misty morning but the old adage 'rain before seven fine after eleven' proved to be true. Martin gave a short preparatory talk on the coach before we arrived at our destination the Butte de Vauquois at 0845 hours. There we were greeted by members of the 'Friends of the Vauquois and its Area Association' who protect, to pass on the memory and to promote the heritage – which they do without question. We assembled in the car park and introduced to our guide who afterwards gave us an informative presentation. Issued with a safety helmet and torch we were led up a steep pathway to the top of the mist shrouded Butte de Vauquois. On the 24th September, 1914 the Germans occupied the village on the top of the hill after the French 82nd Regiment of Infantry had withdrawn. The occupying enemy forces fortified the hill and were supported on the flanks by artillery.

Costly attacks by the French between October 1914 and mid-February 1915 failed to regain the hill. Subsequently attacks by the 10th Division in late February and early March led to a stabilisation of the opposing trench lines. The French held the southern part of the village towards the bottom of the hill overlooked by the Germans. Before the war Vauquois had 168 inhabitants who were evacuated, never to return as their village became a cratered and uninhabitable moonscape.

Les Combattants de Vauquois Memorial

There was little chance of any significant advances by the French or Germans above ground, despite further futile attacks so combat engineers – pioneers and sappers – began to excavate tunnels and galleries underground turning the Butte in the words of Friends Association ‘one huge termite nest’. Eventually 17-kilometres of tunnels and galleries were dug out of the Argonne rock, to depths of 10 to 50 metres. Inevitably an underground war began, using mines, the Germans exploding 199 and the French 320. In May 1916 the



Germans detonated 60-tons of explosive which formed a huge deep ditch which separated the opposing trench front lines. The old village landscape then and now is hollowed out and scarred with mine craters. American forces ended the nightmare which engulfed the Butte de Vauquois on the 26th September, 1918.

On reaching the summit of the hill our guide led us to the ‘Les Combattants de Vauquois’ memorial, commemorating the French soldiers who died in the Battle of Vauquois. During his engaging talk a group of French First World War re-

enactment volunteers dressed as poilu's and a nurse emerged through the mist and marched past the memorial. Shortly after their arrival, Martin presented a cheque donation from the Wessex Branch WFA to the ‘Friends Association’ in front the memorial to a round of applause and cheers. We followed the guide over hillocks and the uneven ground before entering the maze of underground tunnels. They were damp, very cramped in places, dark and not particularly easy to traverse without the use of a torch and safety helmet. Stopping at intervals our guide explained in great detail how the French and German troops lived this gloomy subterranean world. The underground tour lasted some two-and-a-half hours and was a fantastic and privileged experience for us. To be able walk through an unspoilt complex of passageways where soldiers of the First World War had trod 100 years ago is something very special indeed. Emerging into the daylight and fresh air we continued our walk above ground viewing the clearly visible old trench lines. A minenwerfer recently recovered from a collapsed section of tunnel is on display near to where it was found. The remains of eight German soldiers were also discovered. Two were later identified and their descendants made a pilgrimage to the Butte de Vauquois to lay floral tributes. There is also a poignant memorial to six ‘Sapeurs-Pompiers du Regiment de Paris’ (Paris firemen) who died on the 6th June, 1915 in a horrific incident when fuel from flamethrowers, was ignited by grenades. The ‘French Brigade des Sapeurs-Pompiers de Paris, is an engineering unit of the French Army and serves as the primary fire service in Paris. Our tour of the Butte de Vauquois ended at the car park

where we enthusiastically thanked our French guide and hosts. Before leaving we visited the small museum which has a large collection of battlefield artefacts and other militaria. With no facilities at the Butte we drove the short distance to the rebuilt village at the foot of the hill for a comfort stop.



Montfaucon American Memorial



Leaving there at 1230 hours we stopped at Avocourt for welcome refreshments at the La Terrasse Café-Restaurant. Continuing our Sunday tour we drove along the D18, passing Malancourt and arrived at the Montfaucon American Memorial, where Michael gave an account of the American offensive in 1918. The memorial commemorates the American victory in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive of the 26th September-11th November, 1918. The large Doric-style granite column was erected on the high dominating ground close to the destroyed village. Panels inserted into the walls of the entrance foyer give an account of the battle. Two hundred and thirty-four steps lead up to an observation balcony which gives superb views of the battlefield. The monument was inaugurated on the 1st August, 1937 in the presence of the French President Albert Lebrun. President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke at the ceremony via a radio broadcast from Washington. An enjoyable hour was spent by members walking around the old village and ruined monastery. The Germans had fortified the area in 1914 and remnants of concrete bunkers and strongpoints are still visible for the interested visitor.

From the Montfaucon Memorial we drove to the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery near Romagne-sous-Montfaucon. Rod gave a short introduction to members about the cemetery and its history. The 130-acre cemetery contains the largest number of American casualties in Europe, 14,246 (486 of whom are unknown) who died during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive fought by General Pershing's AEF. In front of the steps which lead the visitor up to the grassed central avenue is a large reflection pond. At the top end of this avenue is a chapel decorated with stained glass windows depicting American military insignias. Behind the altar are arrayed flags of the Allied nations. The walls of the chapel loggias are inscribed with the names of the missing, including those who fought in North Russia in 1918-19 and have no known grave. Bodies since recovered and identified are marked by rosettes.

The first burials in the cemetery, laid out in eight sections began in October 1918. Casualties from temporary graves in France and Germany were re-interred here in 1922. Originally the cemetery contained over 27,000 burials but 60% of them were repatriated to America. There are nine recipients of America's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honour buried in the cemetery: Lieutenant-Colonel F.E. Smith, Major O.F. Miller, Captain M.H. Chiles, 2nd Lieutenant E.R. Bleckley, 2nd Lieutenant F. Luke Jr., Sergeant M. Kocak, Sergeant W. Sawelson, Corporal H.W. Roberts and Corporal F. Stowers. The first American pilot to be killed in the First World War, Sergeant V. Chapman is also buried here.

The Branch held a short service of remembrance at the grave of Corporal Sampson Richards D.S.C., of the 167th Infantry, 43rd Division who died on the 14th October, 1918.



Grave of Corporal Sampson Richards

Rod read out a short personal history of the 'Cornish Dough Boy' – (See Issue 7, June 2011 and Issue 10, April 2012 of the Dugout). With members gathered around the grave Rod laid a wreath on behalf of the Wessex Branch WFA. Nigel Plumb gave the exhortation followed by a two minutes silence. Members were then free to walk around this impressive cemetery and the chapel which was a fitting culmination to our excellent 2016 Battlefield Tour. Departing from the cemetery at 1545 hours, we drove through the French countryside taking the scenic route. We paused briefly near the village of Cunel by a memorial to the American 5th Division. It was one of 28 identical memorials erected by the Division at places where they fought or stayed on the Western Front. A ten minute break was made at a service station on the A4/A15 and we arrived at our hotel at 1745 hours.

Our Monday morning schedule demanded another early breakfast and after loading our luggage we left the hotel at 0800 hours. Travelling via the A4/E50 we made good progress and stopped for twenty minutes at the Aire de Reims Champagne-Nord service station. During the journey, Nigel our Inquisitor General announced the winner of the tour quiz which was based on questions in the Battlefield Tour Guide. The winner Chris and runner-up Pippa each received a book. Traffic on the auto-route was light and being ahead of our timetable it was decided to stop for an hour at Arras. For many of our members it rekindled memories of previous battlefield tours. In the lovely autumn sunshine we were able to enjoy a pleasant stroll around the squares and partake of suitable refreshments. We left Arras at 1330 hours and drove straight to the Calais ferry terminal, arriving there at 1445 hours. Efficiently passing through security and passport controls we boarded the P & O Ferry Spirit of France, which sailed at 1520 hours. At 1625 hours (UK time) we disembarked at Dover greeted by a heavy shower which later turned to almost continuous rain. Stopping at Fleet Services, Derek was relieved by a colleague from Main Line. Thanks must be extended to Main Line Coaches and to Derek who coped exceedingly well with our itinerary. Always friendly, cheerful and amenable we also enjoyed his convivial conversation at dinner. He had been our driver on previous battlefield tours and would be most welcome to drive us again in the future. Four members left us at Fleet and one at Salisbury. Despite the awful weather we arrived in Pimperne at 2100 hours from where members dispersed to their homes.

Of all the Wessex Branch Battlefield Tours the 2016 tour was arguably the best. It was refreshing to visit a Western Front battlefield area where the topography is so different from that further north. There was no question that the highlight of this tour was the Butte de Vauquois with its subterranean world of tunnels and will remain in the memory for not having been sanitised for visitors. This was a remarkable tour and most probably members would like to return there not only to revisit some of the venues but to see new ones both French and German in and around the battlefield areas of Verdun.

Grateful thanks must be extended to Nigel for the production of the Battlefield Tour Guide and to Michael for his knowledgeable and instructive talks. Also thanks to Rod for his invaluable contribution and as our 'casualty' bore his injury with stoicism and good humour. All members must be aware that our successful tours emanate from the determination and enthusiasm of our chairman and secretary, Martin and Judy Willoughby to ensure they are unique and always have a surprise element in them for us. Hence our battlefield tours are second to none. Their patience must be worn thin at times in organising these annual events but the outcome is an excellent tour appreciated by all who support them. Thanks Martin for the briefings as well and skilful navigation of the French countryside. As ever Martin and Judy, thank you for your time, energy and for a tour "MAGNIFIQUE".



R.G. Coleman



Great War Quiz

1. Which French general was known as "The Butcher"?
2. What percentage of the gas tonnage employed by all sides in the Great War was used in the final year – 27% / 38% / 52%?
3. Who were the Linseed Lancers?
4. Was bread rationed in Britain during the Great War?
5. Which song was composed "on the spot" to win a five shilling (25p) bet in the New Market Inn, Stalybridge near Manchester in 1912?
6. Who became the field commander of the RFC in France during August 1915?
7. What was the average daily death rate for the BEF at the Battle of the Somme in 1916?
8. Name the German heavy armoured cruiser sunk at the Dogger Bank in 1915.
9. Which novel, published in England in 1929, was reprinted fifteen times in the next four months?
10. Noel Chavasse was the second person to be awarded the Victoria Cross twice. Who was the first and where and when did he earn his second award?




(Answers on back cover)

GALLERY



Sunset in the trenches -Ypres
Caterpillar Valley Cemetery the Somme





YPRES 2016

International Blacksmithing Event




From 1- 6 September 2016, a striking new World War 1 Cenotaph will be created at the Grote Markt, in Ypres, in front of the In Flanders Fields Museum. The Cenotaph will be placed here, adjacent to the German War Cemetery at Langemark Poelkapelle. The inauguration will be on 5th of November 2016.

Standing 7m tall and weighing 12 tons, the metal Cenotaph for the 21st century will feature the evocative image of a single Flanders poppy surrounded by a field of 2016 steel poppies handcrafted by blacksmiths and farriers worldwide.

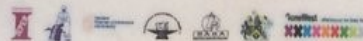
Hundreds of blacksmiths and farriers from around the world will come together in Ypres to create the Cenotaph in the week-long event. They will create poppies and panels based on their own interpretation on of the First World War and the Fields of Flanders.

Donations towards the creation of the Cenotaph will be gratefully received. You can buy a beautifully handcrafted metal poppy or sponsor one of the 2016 to be placed at the Cenotaph for 30 British Pound or 38 euro and a certificate of support will be offered to the donor. All proceeds go to the funding of the Cenotaph.

For more information visit www.ypres2016.com

 @Ypres2016

 www.facebook.com/poppycenotaph/





A new memorial recently installed next to Langemark Cemetery. Inaugurated in November 2016.

Late winter sunshine falling on a memorial panel at Langemark Cemetery





At the going down of the sun

The recently installed 'Ring of Remembrance' at Notre Dame de Lorette - more than 500,000 names remembered



E. • BOLES HASTINGS FORTESCUE • BOLES MARTIN • BOLES PATRICK • BOLES R S • BOLES WILLIAM • BOLESSEN
 I • BOLEY MATHIAS • BOLEY W S • BOLEY WILLIAM MARK • BOLEYN ERNEST • BOLEZ LOUIS • BOLFS HEINRICH •
 BOLGER T • BOLGER VICTOR EDMOND JOHN • BOLIAS BELUIRE ALPHONSE • BOLIFRAUD HIPPOLYTE HYACINTHE • BOL
 ARD ALPHONSE • BOLIN WALTER • BOLINGBROKE HERBERT • BOLINGBROKE REGINALD OSBORNE • BOLINGBROKE W
 K • BOLITHO GEOFFREY RICHARD • BOLITHO VICTOR AYLING • BOLITHO WILLIAM HARRY • BOLITZELIM SERJEI • B
 EINHARD • BÖLK HANS • BÖLK JOHANN • BOLKART JAKOB • BOLKART LUDWIG • BÖLKE EDUARD • BÖLKE FRIEDRICH •
 KE OTTO • BÖLKE RICHARD • BÖLKER ALOIS • BÖLKO RICHARD • BOLL ADOLF • BOLL AUGUST • BOLL EMIL • BOLL FE
 OLL HEINRICH • BOLL HEINRICH MARTIN • BOLL HERMANN • BOLL HERMANN • BOLL JOHANNES • BOLL JOSEF • BOLL JO
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 BOLLAND JOHN WULSTAN CHARLES • BOLLAND JOSEPH • BOLLAND KARL • BOLLAND MARTIN • BOLLAND THEODORE JU
 WILLIAM GEORGE HENRY • BOLLANDANZ EMIL • BOLLARD ERNEST ALFRED • BOLLARD J • BOLLARD PAUL • BOLLART V
 BOLLE HEINRICH • BOLLE MAX • BOLLE PIERRE LUCIEN • BOLLE RICHARD • BOLLÉ GEORGES • BOLLEN J • BOLLEN MAR
 BACH WILHELM • BOLLENBECK JOHANN • BOLLENDONCK IBO • BOLLENGIER ÉDOUARD HENRI ERNEST • BOLLENGIER
 • BOLLENKAMP FRIEDRICH • BOLLENS ADOLPHE JULES • BOLLENS ALPHONSE RAYMOND • BOLLENSEN FRIEDRICH • BOL
 BOLLER HEINRICH • BOLLER J • BOLLER JAKOB • BOLLER KARL • BOLLER LOUIS • BOLLER W • BOLLER WILHELM • B
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 ILHELM • BOLLIER RAPHAËL HENRI GUSTAVE • BOLLINET CÉSAR JACQUES MAURICE • BOLLINET PAUL-JOSEPH • BÖLLIG FRITZ •
 • BÖLLING KARL • BÖLLING WILHELM • BOLLINGER BERNHARD • BOLLINGER EBERHARD • BOLLINGER GEORGE WALLACE
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 LM • BOLSCHAKOW STEPHAN • BÖLSCHKE WILLI • BOLSHAW WILLIAM FREDERICK • BOLSINGER ALFONS • BOLSNER • BOL
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 BOLT FRANK • BOLT FREDERICK GEORGE • BOLT GEORGE STANLEY • BOLT H O • BOLT HENRY • BOLT HENRY WILLIAM • BOLT HERB
 ORMAN FREDERICK • BOLT RALPH • BOLT T • BOLT W • BOLT W H • BOLT W J • BOLTE ALBRECHT • BOLTE BERNHARD • BOLTE C
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 N FRANK ROLAND • BOLTON FRED • BOLTON FREDERICK • BOLTON G • BOLTON G A • BOLTON G H • BOLTON GEOFFREY CHARLES • BO
 TON GEORGE ERNEST • BOLTON GEORGE ROBERT • BOLTON GEORGE SPENCER • BOLTON H • BOLTON H • BOLTON HAROLD ALBERT • BOL
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 ES • BOLTON JAMES • BOLTON JAMES • BOLTON JAMES HOGG • BOLTON JAMES ISHERWOOD • BOLTON JAMES THOMAS • BOLTON JOH
 • BOLTON JOHN RITSO NELSON • BOLTON JOHN WILLIAM • BOLTON JOSEPH • BOLTON JOSEPH • BOLTON JOSEPH CLAUDE • BOLTON JO

Important Information

Meetings are held at:

**Pimperne Village
Hall,
Newfield Road,
Pimperne
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8UZ**



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And finally.... (Quiz Answers)

[1] General Charles Marie Emmanuel Mangin; [2] 52%; [3] Royal Army Medical Corps; [4] No, but it was adulterated; [5] It's A Long Way to Tipperary; [6] General Hugh Trenchard; [7] 893 per day; [8] SMS Blucher; [9] All Quiet on the Western Front; [10] Surgeon Capt. Arthur Martin-Leake for his conduct near Zonnebke 29th October - 8th November 1914 (First VC awarded in 1902 for valour during the Boer War).

Illustrations courtesy of Tim Fox-Godden

