



# The Spire Sentinel



**The Newsletter & Magazine of The  
Chesterfield Branch of The Western Front  
Association**



**ISSUE 94 - December 2023**

Our aims are 'Remembrance and Sharing the History of the  
Great War'.



## Western Front Association Chesterfield Branch – Meetings 2023

Meetings start at 7.30pm and take place at the Labour Club, Unity House, Saltergate, Chesterfield S40 1NF

January	4th	. <b>AGM + `British League of Help`</b> by Dudley Giles. Nearly 90 towns, cities, and organisations in the UK, Australia, Canada and Mauritius signed up in the period 1920-1922 to 'adopt' a village, town or city in the Devastated Zone of France.
February	7th	` <b>The First AIR War`</b> ` by Grant Cullen. Based on a collection of rare photographs acquired over 20 years ago at a yard sale in Hazelwood, Missouri, US, this will look at the various protagonists in WW1 - people and Planes
March	7th	` <b>Voie Sacree`</b> by Roy Larkin. The story of the road that connects Bar-le-Duc to Verdun It was given its name because of the vital role it played during the Battle of Verdun in World War I.
April	4th	" <b>For Home and Honour`</b> by Yvonne Ridgeway and James Kay. A bit of a history of our local community in North Sheffield during WW1, from their own research, looking at recruitment, the 1st Sheffield blitz, the tribunals for those wishing to avoid military service and some of the local soldiers' stories.
May	2nd	<b>The First World War contribution of Dulmial Village, in present day Pakistan</b> by Dr Irfan Malik. His Gt. Grandfathers experiences in WW1, and the wider role of muslim soldiers during that conflict
June	6th	<b>Stepbrothers in Arms: the Conscript Experience in 1918</b> By Tim Lynch who will examine the myths and realities of the army of 1918 and what the evidence actually tells us about ideas of cohesion, morale and professionalism in the BEF.
July	4th	Dr Rebecca Ball ' <b>Daddy, what did you do in the great War?</b> ' Drawing upon fifty working-class autobiographies, this talk examines the impact of the Great War on fifty English families with a particular focus on fathers.
August	1st	Dr. Adam Prime - a newly appointed WFA Trustee who will talk about ' <b>India's Great War</b> ' This talk looks at India's contribution to the First World War in every sense of the word.
September	5th	" <b>Dark Satanic Mills - How Britain's Industry Went to War</b> ". By <b>Andy Rawson</b> This is an insight into the wide range of factories across the country, which worked around the clock to keep up with the expanding requirements of the armed services.
October	3rd	Hedley Malloch ' <b>Left Behind</b> ' - the fate of British soldiers trapped behind German lines in Belgium and France after the Retreat of 1914
November	7th	Peter Hart - <b>Trench Humour -a look at how soldiers use humour to get through the horrors of trench warfare.</b>
December	5th	<b>David Blanchard - The Casualty Evacuation Chain from Hill 60, Ypres, in early 1915</b>

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*Any opinions expressed in this Newsletter /Magazine are not necessarily those of the Western Front Association, Chesterfield Branch, in particular, or the Western Front Association in general*

### ***Speaker - December 5<sup>th</sup> David Blanchard***



#### **The Casualty Evacuation Chain from Hill 60, Ypres, in early 1915**

This talk is the story of Field Ambulances of the 28th and 5th Division and the medical facilities they founded to cope with the growing numbers of wounded from February 1915 until the gas attack of early May. The origin of this talk was an investigation into the construction and development of Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm) during the Great War. David quickly realised that to tell the full story of the cemetery, it was necessary to explain the casualty evacuation chain from Hill 60. The majority of the men buried at Railway Dugouts died of wounds in the Advanced Dressing Station. This was set up in dugouts under the adjacent railway line near to Transport Farm. He will then look at the zone of evacuation east of Ypres and how it developed in early 1915 as the trench line in the salient solidified during this period. It is also the story of some of the most visited cemeteries near Ypres: Larch Wood, Bedford House and Ramparts Cemetery, Ypres.

David is a published author- 'The Aisne Battle, 1918' Pen & Sword (2015) and retired history teacher and school Battlefield guide. Originally from Peterlee, County Durham he now lives near Haworth, West Yorkshire.



## *Secretary's Scribbles*

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the issue 94 of our Branch Newsletter for December 2023

This coming Tuesday, we have a first time visitor to the Branch as speaker - David Blanchard will talk about The Casualty Evacuation Chain from Hill 60, Ypres, in early 1915. More details about David and his talk are on page 3

Your committee would like to thank everyone for their support during 2023, with some excellent attendances helping to keep the Branch in good health. There will be a free buffet for all attendees with the added bonus of a free drink at the bar courtesy of the Branch. The usual raffle will also have a different format next Tuesday. Every attendee will be given a free raffle ticket upon entry...match that ticket number with a book on the table...and that book is yours. There will be a variety of books...not all on WW1 topics.

You will see in this newsletter an excellent `travelog` by member Yvonne Ridgeway on her recent trip to Gallipoli under the watchful eye of Peter Hart and Gary Bain. Thanks for this Yvonne, as you say the battlefields of Gallipoli are very much as they were in 1915 indeed the Turkish government has designated the whole peninsula as a National Park and there is very little new building or infrastructure allowed. I`m always happy to print reports of members trips to sites of WW1 interest...great to be able to share them for the benefit of others.

Some of you may remember...in the distant past before the dreaded lockdowns were forced upon us, we were organising a visit to the Cannock area in Staffordshire where there are many sites of WW1 historical interest. Now that is behind us Jane has been active in seeking to resurrect this trip. This what she is suggesting....

"I have been talking to Mike Price in the hopes of resurrecting our aborted visit to the Cannock Chase exhibits and Commonwealth and German cemeteries. We have agreed that spring would be an ideal time to visit. The Labour Club have been generous in allowing us to meet and park on their premises on our last trip. Very useful as only 2 members actually live in Chesterfield. However, as their car parking spaces are rented out with the exception of Sundays, I'd like to suggest Sunday 17 March as a possible date. Leaving the Labour Club around 8am (travel time is around 1.5 hours though traffic would be much lighter on a Sunday) to have private access to the Hut before the public are allowed in. Alternatively we could organise a weekday visit, though depending on numbers, parking may be an issue and may disadvantage those who work. The Committee previously voted to fund the cost of hiring suitable transport and with perhaps a small donation to the project." We will continue to update you and be seeking numbers for this trip early in the New Year.

It is that time of the year when I`m making up the speaker`s list for next year...suggestions from members would be most welcome. I still have several months where we still need a speaker. Come on guys...who would you like to see and hear....??

Our January meeting will be held a week later than usual, January 9<sup>th</sup> to avoid any clash with the New Year holiday. This of course is our Branch AGM meeting and once the business is out of the way, Jon-Paul Harding will be talking about his researches

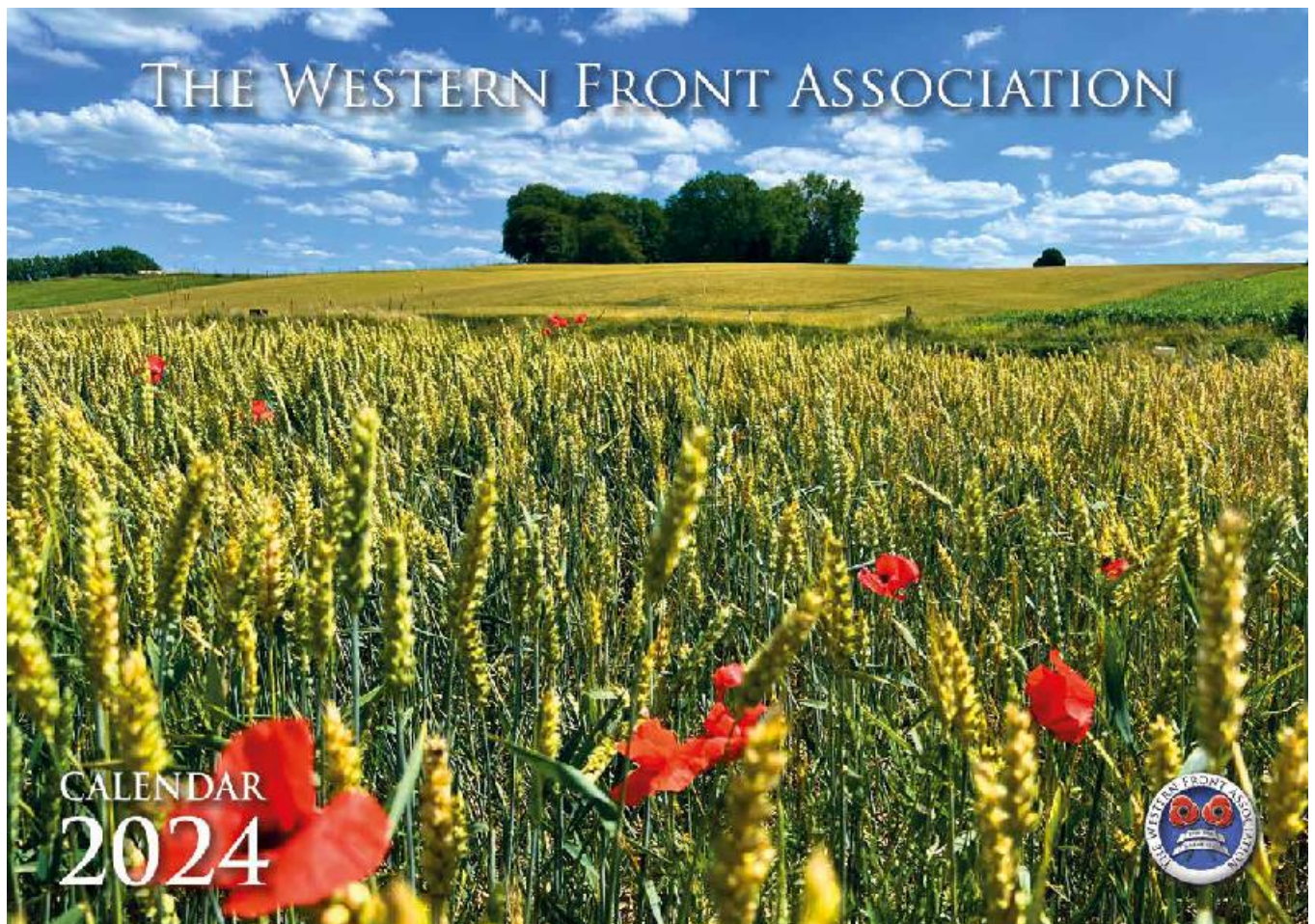
and visits to places where his great-grandfathers fought and died on the Western Front.

Best regards,  
Grant  
Grant Cullen  
Branch Secretary WFA Chesterfield Branch 07824628638

## Armistice Day Ceremony at the Cenotaph , Whitehall, London

Chesterfield Branch was well represented at this special annual event, Branch Chair, Tony Bolton, who is of course National Chairman of the Western Front Association, led the ceremony along with Gary Sheffield WFA President. Rob Nash, is Parade Marshall, this being his first year going `solo` since taking over from John Chester. Yvonne Ridgway kindly sent us the undernoted photos. She, James Kay and Branch Committee Member Jon-Paul Harding all attended, Jon-Paul laying a wreath on behalf of the Branch. Here we see them altogether.

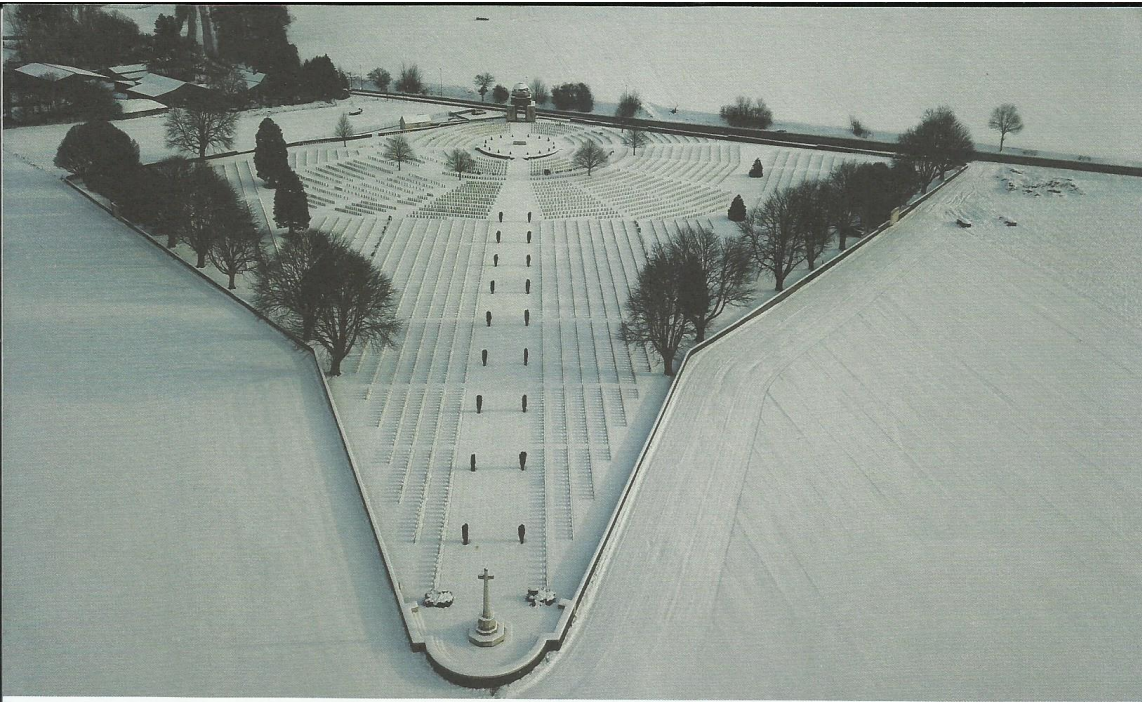




**The Western Front Association Calendar for 2024 is now available - 28 pages of photographs and calendar pages. Our branch will be having a supply...hopefully available on Tuesday.....remember if you the buy through the Branch...the Branch gets 50% of the selling price £10**

The Calendar includes high quality, modern images of scenes from the Western Front. The images are specially selected from the work of a number of committed and talented Western Front photographers. A4 size when folded, opens out to A3 when hung on your wall. £10 (Inc p&tp) This price has been held since the 2015 Calendar. Order online or by phone on 0207 118 1914 Link to buy on the Eshop<https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/shop/wfa-branded-items/wfa-calendar-2024/> To Order by phone (0207 118 1914) please have your credit Card details to hand

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**PLEASE NOTE: orders to be despatched by mid-November 2023**

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**THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION**

Featured photos: David Tattersfield, John White, Andrew Holmes, Lucy Betteridge-Dyson and Carl Liversage.

## November Meeting

Usually when I report on the previous months meeting, it is detailed, liberally interspersed with illustrations from the speaker`s presentation. Well, this month it`s got to be different - for a start our guest speaker Peter Hart had no slides and his performance - educative as it was , was more akin to a comedy show.. as the saying goes, Peter had us rocking in the aisles as he `discussed` Trench Humour` ....how soldiers coped with the ongoing horrors and stresses of trench warfare. Peter based this upon his many years as Oral Historian for the Imperial War Museum, a role from which he retired a few years ago. His knack of humorous delivery...often - at least attempting...to replicate the accents of soldiers from different parts of the UK and across the Empire.



You had to be there to appreciate Peter`s performance and to try and replicate it here in a report would no way do it justice. A good night was had by all.

Peter`s talk is taken from his interviews with the then surviving veterans of 1914-18 and much of those recollections are put together in Peter`s latest book (in conjunction with Gary Bain) `Laugh or Cry - the British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918`

Peter brought along a selection of his most recent books and went home having sold them all....he even - in keeping with the times - had a card reader so no one could say they hadn`t brought any cash along.



# LAUGH OR CRY

THE BRITISH SOLDIER ON THE  
WESTERN FRONT 1914-1918



D 5  
PETER HART and GARY BAIN

## Gallipoli with Peter Hart Battlefield Tours (PHBT), September 2023

In August 2022, Peter Hart visited Chesterfield branch and gave a very entertaining and informative talk on “Rupert Brooke and the 'Glitterati' at Gallipoli.” He handed out some business cards for PHBT. I could not think of anyone better to visit Gallipoli with. As you will know, Peter has extensive knowledge of the campaign, first-hand experience of interviewing its veterans, and a very engaging and entertaining way of presenting history!

This being my first ever visit to Gallipoli, I opted for the recommended flight from Heathrow to Istanbul. After staying overnight at one of the Heathrow hotels, I duly turned up at the airport around 3:30am on the Monday morning. Once through airport security, I met up with some of the tour group. Peter Hart was there with his friend and co-author / podcast presenter Gary Bain, James (who co-ordinates the travel arrangements) and others. David Bremner and his friend Theo, who together rebuilt from scratch David’s grandfather’s aeroplane, Bristol Scout 1264, were amongst our group. If you haven’t yet seen their documentary, “Bristol Scout: Rebuilding History”, I would highly recommend it, available for only £1.99 + p&p from ASA Productions (UK) Ltd. On arrival at Istanbul, a few more joined us, including Kim and Trevor from the Suffolk branch of the WFA, Tony from Australia and Steve, a British man who lives and works in Berlin. We also met our Turkish guide, Bulent. I later discovered that Bulent had been film director Peter Jackson’s personal tour guide, when he visited Gallipoli!

It took several hours to travel from Istanbul to the Gallipoli Peninsular. The weather was not as hot as I feared (indeed, on the very next day we would experience a Turkish thunder storm!). Our journey was broken up by quick stop at Fort Merkez. Peter gave us a geographical orientation and explained that this old fort would still have been operational in 1915. We took some photographs and explored inside one of the abandoned fort buildings.



Visit to Fort Merkez

It was dark by the time we arrived at Hotel Kum. We went straight in for tea, which was a buffet-style affair, and consistently good throughout our stay. There was a bar located centrally within the hotel complex, and inside it was a display of 1915-era battlefield relics. The drinks were reasonably priced, and the Wi-Fi free. There was also an unheated swimming pool (which I didn't try out) and a beach bar. Between the hotel and the beach, there was a small creek, and if you looked down into the water here, there were lots of terrapins. The hotel staff were friendly and helpful, and there was even a litter of four half-grown kittens, who entertained us.

Our daily battlefield visits comprised of two days exploring the Helles sector, two days around ANZAC, a daytrip to Imbros (by ferry) and one day looking at the Suvla battlefields. We were driven around in a small "Crowded House Tours" coach. Each day started with us singing "Istanbul (not Constantinople)" on the bus, which woke you up if nothing else. All refreshments were taken care of. We had a seemingly endless supply of bottled water, and a taxi met us each day (except in Imbros) to provide a lunch of sandwiches, cakes, fruit, fruit juice and even a small pot of ice-cream!

Our first day started by visiting Turkish forts in the vicinity of the Helles landings, including Mecidiye Fort. Here, Turkish hero, Corporal Seyit, famously lifted heavy artillery shells on several occasions, single-handedly, to keep his gun firing after its crane lifting mechanism was damaged. We discussed the preliminary naval operations at Gallipoli before making our way to some of the British landing beaches. We started off at V Beach, where the S.S. River Clyde was grounded on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915 to land soldiers from the Royal Munster Fusiliers, Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Hampshire Regiment. Still visible are the remains of the pier, and the shallow bank at the top of the beach, where some of the soldiers found cover. Peter brought the scene to life by handing out slips of paper containing quotes from a variety of eye witnesses, both British and Turkish. As Peter recounted the events, at the appropriate time, we would read out the quote handed to us. This was cleverly done, to integrate into the unfolding story. There were some other tourists around on V Beach, including a couple from Sheffield!



### The Helles Memorial

A short distance away was the Helles Memorial, commemorating the British and Indian missing of the Gallipoli campaign. This includes the names of soldiers lost on board troopships, for example “the Royal Edward”, sunk on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1915. I had long wanted to visit this memorial, and I had a number of names that I wanted to find. It is sad to see so many names on a memorial to the missing, but inevitable with the Gallipoli campaign ending by the Allies’ evacuation in January 1916, and access to the graves being lost for several crucial years.



An unknown Turkish family at the statue of the oldest Turkish Veteran and his Granddaughter. Hüseyin Kaçmaz died in 1994 at the age of 108.

We walked from the Helles Memorial to a former lighthouse. It is now a small museum, documenting the underwater exploration of the Gallipoli campaign's wrecks. There was a considerable amount of walking on the tour, but this does allow you to appreciate the landscape. It is apparent how small an area the Allies captured during the fighting in 1915. I would say, in general, that much of the Gallipoli battlefields have been left in their original condition - more so than the areas of the Western Front I have visited, around Ieper and the Somme. Gallipoli is also less 'touristy'. There are areas where trenches have been reinforced with wooden walkways etc., but in other areas, the remains of trenches have only recently been uncovered by the cutting back of scrub vegetation. There are some very busy areas - the Turkish people, young and old, keenly visit the major Turkish memorials - to such a degree that there are stalls selling refreshments, and toilets, at these locations! Good natured, friendly and polite, we were always made welcome by the Turkish people we encountered. Away from these busy hubs, however, the battlefield can seem deserted.



Remains of a lighter on W Beach (Lancashire landing).

We walked the length of W Beach, infamous as the site of the Lancashire landings and “six VCs before breakfast,” although my interest lay with the 1<sup>st</sup> Essex Regiment who landed a short time later. There is a photograph in their regimental history of the Essex men on W beach, and I found the location to be instantly recognisable. It was pretty much deserted here, apart from our group. Relics from 1915 could be seen: the remains of a pier and an abandoned lighter (landing craft). We ascended the cliffs to look down on W beach, frequently finding pieces of shrapnel and other wartime debris as we climbed to a dugout in the cliff side. Ascending further, to the cliff tops, Peter pointed out how the problem of supplying water was solved: here were a couple of 1915-era reservoirs, one inscribed with the name of the unit who created it in August 1915. Nearby was Lancashire Landing Cemetery, where Victoria Cross winner Lance Serjeant William Stephen Keneally of the Lancashire Fusiliers lies. This cemetery not only contains the graves of some of the brave men who landed here on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915: graves have been concentrated here from as far away as the islands of Imbros and Tenedos.



David Bremner talking to us about his grandfather, R.N.A.S. pilot Francis Donald Holden “Bunny” Bremner, on a rocky outcrop overlooking his Imbros airfield.

We were fortunate enough to spend a day on Imbros, getting up early in order to board the ferry. On the approach to the island, Peter talked to us about the sinking of HMS Raglan in January 1918. A short coach ride along the island’s coast was the windswept Kephalos Bay;

apparently the resort of choice for Bulgarian windsurfers. It is also the site of a 1915 military camp, which we explored, on a bleak hillside overlooking the sea. Here we could see areas cleared of rocks where tents would have been erected, and the remains of an officer's dumpsite - mainly pieces of shattered glass, crockery and of the army rum jars which seem to litter the Gallipoli battlefields. Nearby was the site of one of the former military cemeteries, the exhumed bodies having been reinterred in Lancashire Landing Cemetery.

One of the highlights of our trip to Imbros was a very personal moment for one member of our group: David Bremner, whose grandfather's R.N.A.S. airfield was located here. We went as close as we could to the former airfield. David and others 'recreated' a wartime group photograph of David's grandfather and fellow officers, posing behind a boulder with the airfield in the background. David then talked to us all about his grandfather: a remarkable feat of research, which was wonderful to listen to, whilst sitting so close to the place where he served.

Returning to Gallipoli, our tour did look at some of the later fighting. We visited the village of Krithia - just a small place, capitalising on the tourist industry with its small shops, bars and stalls selling souvenirs. We also ascended Achi Baba, to take in its commanding view over the Allies' 1915 positions. We visited the French sector, calling in at the French cemetery with its grave markers made out of trench pickets. We visited during a thunderstorm, and in the incessant rain it was a dismal and deserted place, but probably ordinarily quite beautiful.



Examining battlefield artefacts at Salim Mutlu Special War Memories Museum, Alçıtepe.

We visited several small museums, presumably in private ownership, where relics of the campaign are preserved for future generations. These small museums reminded me of the Hill 62 (Sanctuary Wood) Museum in Belgium, containing lots of battlefield finds, such as rusting shells and ammunition, rifles, badges and buttons. In contrast, the impressive Gallipoli War Museum at Kabatepe is much bigger. Its purpose-built, professionally-designed galleries hold a large collection of military uniforms and equipment, scale models and life-sized mannequins depicting soldiers of both sides in battle, on trench duty and at rest. The museum grounds boast artillery pieces and even a bi-plane - sure to catch the eye of any passing battlefield tourist!

Of course, no trip to Gallipoli would be complete without visiting the ANZAC sector, and we spent two days here, exploring the famous battlefields. Starting at ANZAC Cove, we visited two picturesque Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries actually on shoreline: Beach Cemetery and Ari Burnu Cemetery. The epitaphs, added by family members after the war were, as always, moving: "A life made beautiful by kindly deeds," (528 Cpl. C.A. Treadgold, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry) and "Memory is the only friend that grief can call its own," (Lieutenant W.B. Granger, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry) being just a couple of examples. At the grave of 202 Private J. Simpson (a.k.a. John Simpson Kirkpatrick) of the Australian Army Medical Corps, we reflected on the story of men like him who risked their lives, repeatedly returning to the firing line to transport wounded men to safety on donkey back. Today, it doesn't immediately come to mind that many of the ANZACs were born in Britain, or had strong family ties there. References to this are sometimes found on grave epitaphs: "Ever remembered by his loving mother at Minehead," (806 Trooper P. Beckett, 8<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Horse) and "He died like a Britisher," (Lieutenant R.J.M. Hooper, 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry). More 'typically Australian', however, is the moving epitaph of 152 Trooper Harold Rush of the 10<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Horse: "His last words: Goodbye Cobber, God bless you."





Living history: Peter Hart directs a re-enactment of typical Gallipoli combat, bombing and bayoneting, in trenches at Johnston's Jolly, ANZAC.

The remains of trenches are evident in many places, for example at Johnston's Jolly and Silt Spur, near Lone Pine. We stopped frequently, and Peter would hand out quotes for us to read whilst he described the events that had taken place there. The only Australian in our group, Tony, was frequently called upon to read the Australian parts, with his truly authentic accent!

In order to obtain a better understanding of the ANZAC sector, our walks took us up onto the ridges. The terrain is quite mountainous; the scrubby vegetation is prickly. It is hard to imagine what it would have been like to fight here - our walks along Plugge's Plateau, Rhododendron Ridge and down Walker's Ridge were strenuous enough! Our explorations took us to the notorious battlefields of Lone Pine and the Nek, made famous by the 1981 Mel Gibson film, "Gallipoli". Actually seeing the stark stretch of grass which was once No Man's Land, and which is now The Nek Commonwealth War Graves cemetery, is chilling. There are hardly any headstones here, yet it is the last resting place of 326 men. The place which will remain in my memory longer than any other in ANZAC, though (and which I previously knew little about), is Hill 60. Here we learned about the wounded who lay surrounded by burning scrubland, which caused the ammunition in their pouches to explode, and Cpl. Syd Ferrier, who continued to throw bombs at the enemy, despite having had one of his arms blown off. This was also the location where Second Lieutenant H.V.H. Throssell won his Victoria Cross. Throssell tragically committed suicide by shooting himself in 1933, at the age of 49, believing

that his death would secure his family a war pension, and thus ease their debts. There is a small cemetery at Hill 60, with a monument to the missing. In the surrounding fields, the war is still very evident, and we saw several fragments of human bone, a human tooth and a complete artillery shell.



Viewing ANZAC from the heights: a walk along Rhododendron Ridge.

To me, the most fascinating day of the entire tour was the final day, which we spent exploring the Suvla battlefields. This is because of personal connections: my great-grandmother's first husband served in Gallipoli with the 6<sup>th</sup> York and Lancaster Regiment (he died of influenza in Sunderland in 1918, whilst serving with the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion). Other Yorkshire battalions served here, and so did the 9<sup>th</sup> Notts and Derby (Sherwood Foresters). One of the soldiers named on our village war memorial was serving with the latter when he died of wounds on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1915. The Scottish Horse served here too, and another man named on our village war memorial was badly wounded at Suvla and then invalided out of the army. Whilst recovering in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Northern General Hospital in Sheffield, he fell in love with a nurse and married her instead of returning to his native Scotland. He sadly died of cancer in Sheffield in 1919, aged only 39.

At Suvla, we climbed Lala Baba Hill, following in the footsteps of the 6<sup>th</sup> York and Lancasters on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> August 1915. We listened to Second Lieutenant Priestman's description whilst *in situ*: "As we push on, through sweet, sickly-smelling scrub now, the darkness in front takes the form of a peaked hill and we meet the first slopes of its flank. And then, to our straining ears, there comes a voice from the blackness on our right. Almost inaudible at

first, it swells up into a shrill, wordless whine, quavers for a moment and then dies again into silence.”



Hill 10 Cemetery, Suvla, Gallipoli. This is the last resting place of Second Lieutenant Edmund Yerbury Priestman, 6<sup>th</sup> York and Lancaster Regiment, from Sheffield. His letters have been published as “With a B-P Scout in Gallipoli: A record of the Belton Bulldogs”.

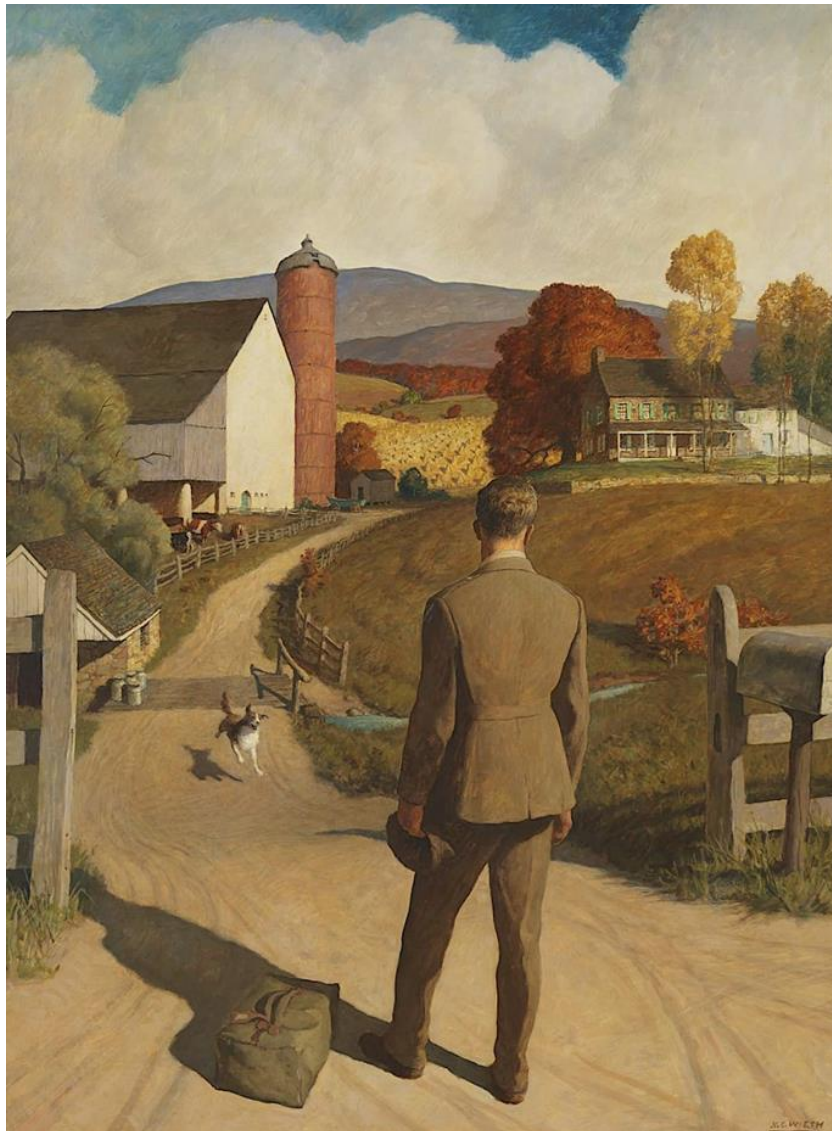
Continuing inland, we climbed Chocolate Hill, so-called due to the colour of its soil, which is a rich, dark brown colour, in contrast to the pale greyish-beige found elsewhere. Whilst here, we had a pre-arranged meeting with a local farmer in a transit van, who sold us jars of Chocolate Hill honey! We followed the progress of the Suvla actions, up Scimitar Hill and towards W Hills, where the Allies’ advance petered out due to determined Turkish resistance.

We visited several cemeteries in the Suvla area, containing the graves of many Yorkshire and Midlands soldiers: Lala Baba Cemetery, Green Hill Cemetery and Hill 10 Cemetery. At Green Hill Cemetery, we paused at the grave of Lieutenant William E.G. Niven of the Berkshire Yeomanry, father of the actor David Niven (1910-1983). Whilst having a short rest here, Peter Hart gave us a graphic description of some of the illnesses the soldiers suffered from at Gallipoli, including dysentery, enteric fever and soldier’s heart. One can never forget the causes of dysentery after seeing Peter act out the part of a fly: first attracted to human excrement, then to the corpse of a dead Turk, and finally to apricot jam!

I hope that this article has given you some insight into a Gallipoli battlefield tour. There’s a lot to see, and much of the landscape is little changed from 1915, the area having being designated as a national park. Evidence of the war is everywhere, from the frequently-found shards of rum jar, to the remains of trenches, landing vessels and piers. In this article I have

not even touched on our visit to Lieutenant Colonel Doughty-Wylie's grave, walking the full length of Gully Ravine or visiting a Turkish war cemetery (which are finally, in some cases, being restored, with funding from the Turkish government). If you have ever considered visiting Gallipoli, I would certainly recommend it as a worthwhile experience.

Yvonne Ridgeway



As the lone soldier returns home to the family farm, he is met by rural stillness punctuated only by his jubilant dog racing to greet him. The returning infantryman seems almost to hesitate—happy to be home, certainly, but overwhelmed. The faint reluctance of the man's posture hints at unforgettable experiences. The soldier has dropped his bag, releasing his wartime burden at the threshold of the farm so that he can accept with open arms the life he used to know and the dog running toward him. A man returning to a farmhouse he left as a boy. His burden is at his feet, but it is still with him.

## OLD ED

This is a true story. You will be glad that you read it, and I hope you will pass it on.

It happened every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembled a giant orange and was starting to dip into the blue ocean.

Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favourite pier. Clutched in his bony hand was a bucket of shrimp. Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now. Everybody's gone, except for a few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts...and his bucket of shrimp.

Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier.

Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds.

As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, 'Thank you. Thank you.'

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place .

When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away. And old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home. If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like 'a funny old duck,' as my dad used to say. Or, to onlookers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp.

To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant .....maybe even a lot of nonsense.

Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Millennials. Most of them would probably write Old Ed off, down there in Florida ... That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better.

His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous airman hero in World War I, and then he was in WWII. On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft.

Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger and thirst. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were or even if they were alive.

Every day across America millions wondered and prayed that Eddie Rickenbacker might somehow be found alive.

The men adrift needed a miracle. That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle.

They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. Time dragged on. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft...suddenly Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull!

Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal of it - a very slight meal for eight men. Then they used the intestines for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait....and the cycle continued. With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued after 24 days at sea.

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first life-saving seagull... And he never stopped saying, 'Thank you.' That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.



Eddie Rickenbacker in 1918

A copy of the signal that went out to front line troops telling them of the Armistice cease fire on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 at 11am

**"C" FORM.**  
**MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.**

Army Form C. 2408.  
(In books of 100.)

No. of Message.....

Prefix <i>Sm</i>	Code <i>0730</i>	Words <i>52</i>	Sent, or sent out.	Office Stamp.
Received from <i>60 Bde</i>	By <i>H. G. Gould</i>		At..... m.	
Service Instructions			To.....	
			By.....	

Handed in at..... Office..... m. Received..... m.

TO

*20th Bn M. G. C.*

Sender's Number.	Day of Month.	In reply to Number.	AAA
<i>93914</i>	<i>11</i>		
<p><i>Following from 17th Corps lined 0650 aaa Hostilities will cease 150 hours today Nov 11 aaa Troops will stand fast on line reached at that hour which will be reported by wire to Corps aaa Defensive precautions will be main- -tained aaa there will be no intercourse of any description with the enemy aaa End aaa</i></p>			
FROM	<i>20th Div 0730</i>		
PLACE & TIME			

\* Tab. No. except A & B, should be crossed, if not required.

GPO: W. WASHINGTON, 1918. Pub. 578. A.P. 104. (15302)



An old man's fragile, bird-boned hands clasp a photograph of a youthful soldier in his prime. The two men seem worlds apart. Yet the two images - separated by 80 years - capture a single person: Ted Matthews. Although pictured here in his twilight years, Ted lived a full life. Ted was among the first ANZACs to land on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. He always remembered how equipment-laden soldiers, who climbed out the rear of the boats, drowned in the depths. Early on, shrapnel struck him in the chest. A thick pocketbook - a present from his mother -

absorbed the blow, saving his life.

He recalled firing off one bullet while on Gallipoli, at a fleeing Turk. 'I hope I missed the poor bugger,' he said

Ted's experience at ANZAC Cove left an indelible mark on him.

'Gallipoli was a cow of a place,' he recalled. 'No water. Our first rations were hard biscuits, like pieces of wood. I used to wonder what God was doing at Gallipoli.'

After Gallipoli, Ted Matthews fought in France and Belgium and at Villers-Bretonneux.

His views on the futility of war hardened after the war. He regarded ANZAC Day as 'not for old diggers to remember, it's for survivors to warn the young about the dangers of romanticising war.'

Ted returned to carpentry, married, and had two girls. He said he felt the Depression harder than the war.

Ted died in 1997, aged 101.

At the time, he was the last living veteran of the Gallipoli landing.







A father marking Armistice Day