



THE WESTERN FRONT
ASSOCIATION

Lancashire North Branch

Despatch

Issue 15: May 2015



(Portrait by William Orpen c/o Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery Trust, Carlisle)

Residents of North Lancashire, especially Over Kellett, in the 1870s would never know that the young Jack Cowans growing up their midst would *“go down in history as being one of the indispensable soldiers of the War”*. He was the British Army’s Quartermaster General from 1912 to 1919. On Page 4 is the first part of his story. Also read inside about: the losses of 1 Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment at Loos on 25th September 1915; Lieutenant Bleakley’s Gallipoli experiences; how a General’s name caused laughter throughout the army; major events & move of Lancashire battalions to war in June - Nov 1915; reports from museums; Peter Denby’s suggestions for visits; a report on Stand To! made searchable and more.

Editor's Musing

In 2010 my thoughts when musing for Issue 5 were whether the restrictions on political reporting on Election Day would result in the media helping to solve my problem with Sir Gilbert Mackereth's grave in Spain. My wishes were fulfilled spectacularly and many of the throng attending the celebrations/commemorations in Bury on the 100th anniversary of the landing at W Beach (see page 19) would have seen the remembrance stone and plaque above his remains in the Gallipoli Garden.

My thoughts for this Despatch as Election Day approaches relate to the threats to the United Kingdom 100 years on from the fighting to stop the enemy's war machine in France and elsewhere. Then we had a unified Government with clear aims whereas after 7th May we could have the opposite. There are threats to our country's economic improvement, the UK's unity, and ability to defend ourselves whilst elsewhere the world is not short of serious dangers.

When the UK votes on 7th May I hope all will very carefully consider the implications of where to mark their ballot paper. Now is not the time for protest voting but the time to think how to achieve the best Government to surely deliver continuing economic improvement, the UK's unity, defence AND to have the strongest credibility around the world. I have decided where to place my X and I hope my feelings for the future after 7th May match what I felt about Sir Gilbert's future in 2010.

In writing about Sir Gilbert's medals (Page 27) I mused long on what I could reveal about Arthur Marlow's "work" and concluded little!

(+P) or (+S) after article title indicates more photos in Photo Gallery or Supplementary Report on our website www.wfanlancs.co.uk

Articles are by Editor unless stated otherwise.

TO SEE DESPATCH WITH LARGER TYPE AND PHOTOS IN COLOUR VIEW ON OUR WEBSITE

Thomas NAYLOR, Lance Sergeant 8467, 1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

Thanks to Adrian Kay's research of Preston's soldiers in WW1 I can tell the story of Lance-Sergeant **Thomas Naylor** of the Loyal North Lancashire (LNL) Regiment. Adrian provided me with information on 5 soldiers with the 1st Battalion (1LNL) who were killed at Loos on 25 September 1915 and subsequently remembered by short articles in the Preston Guardian. I chose Thomas since he was a Private on board the SS Agapenor which carried 1LNL across the Channel to Le Havre where they disembarked on 12 August 1914 becoming founder members of *the Contemptibles*.



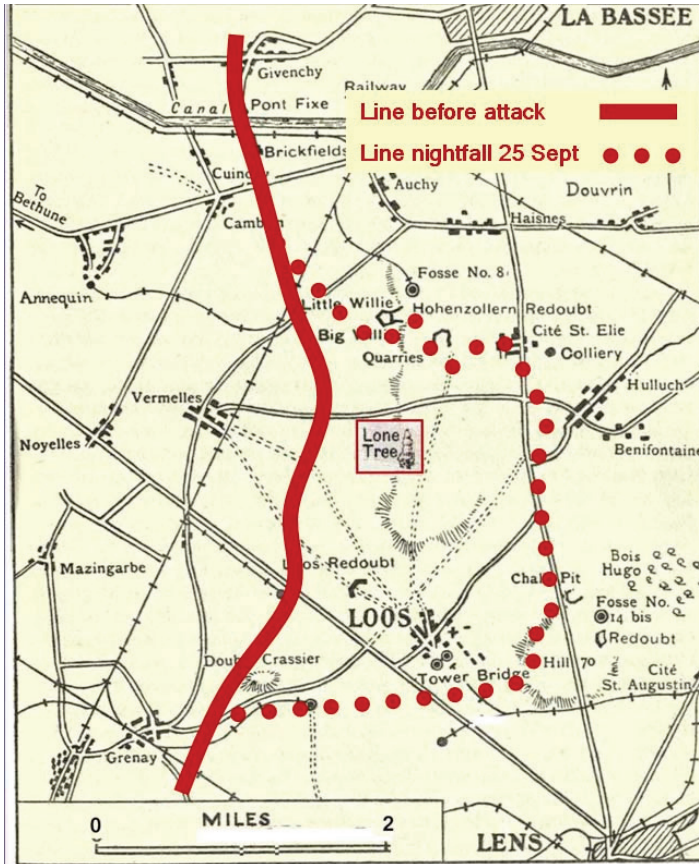
He had enlisted with the LNL Regt. in November 1905 to serve 7 years with the Colours and five years on reserve. After training he was posted to the 2nd Battalion (2LNL). 2LNL were in South Africa until October 1907, Mauritius until November 1909 when they moved to India where they remained until 1914. He would return to civilian life in 1912 and prior to re-enlistment when war was declared he was employed as an attendant at Whittingham Asylum.

1LNL (and Thomas) was not engaged in any serious action at Mons or during the retreat to the south east of Paris. However they suffered very severe casualties north of the Aisne in mid September 1914 and at Ypres in October and November. It is most likely that the wound(s) suffered by Thomas, reported in the Preston Guardian, was incurred at the Aisne or Ypres.

The Regimental History of the Loyals reports that in June 1915 13 officers and 340 NCO's and men joined 1LNL at Annequin East of Bethune. In July and August more reinforcements joined so that 1LNL was a

with IV Corps in the south and I Corps to the north.

1LNL were in 2 Brigade of 1st Division, the left-hand division of IV Corps. The objectives for 1st Division were, first, a line about the south-west edge of Hulluch village, and, secondly, a support line of trenches running from east of Bois Hugo to the south-east of Hulluch. 2 Brigade was to assault a 600-yard section of German trench between Northern Sap and Lone Tree on 25 September. 1LNL attacked on the left with 2nd Kings Royal Rifle Corps attacking on the right.



strong battalion at the beginning of September. By this time Thomas had gained the rank of Lance-Sergeant, recovered from his wound(s) and was on the strength of 1LNL.

Coordinated attacks were planned against German positions in Champagne and Artois. Three French armies were to undertake the main effort in Champagne whilst the British 1st Army and French 10th Army would attack in Artois. The British 1st Army would attack between Grenay and the La Bassee Canal

from Marles-les-Mines (approx 9 miles west of Annequin), where the last few days had been spent, into battle positions. The advance was to have been heralded by a gas attack, but the hour for this was more than once altered, and when at 6.34 a.m. on the 25th gas was at last released from the British trenches, the wind changed and blew it back on the attackers, the front and support lines suffering considerably, while the presence of the gas had the effect of causing the advancing lines to become somewhat intermingled. The attack moved forward right

up to the German wire, but this was found to be uncut and the Battalion fell back again to its starting-point. Lieut.-Colonel Sanderson led out once more as many men as could be collected, but the attempt was fruitless.'

It was not until the afternoon of the 25th that the Lone Tree position was taken by supporting troops but the delay had a decisive influence on the course of the whole battle. The losses of the Battalion on the 25th were very heavy, comprising sixteen officers and 489 other ranks, killed, wounded and missing.

When gathering information for this article

Chris Payne visited the National Archives and kindly photographed the papers of **Captain Robert Sylvester John Faulknor**. He was one of the 1LNL officers killed in the attack. A native of Jersey he joined the Loyals in 1907 and quickly gained a reputation as a good runner. He was seconded to the Colonial Office in 1913 and severely wounded in autumn 1914 fighting German forces in East Africa. He was one of the 13 officers, mentioned above, who joined 1LNL in June 1915. In his papers is a note giving Sergt. Macnamara's account of what happened: 'Capt Faulknor, Co. Sgt Major Rumney, and Sgt Cassidy were all together at the Lone Tree when we made the big advance. I found these three dead on the barbed wire of the German trenches. Two of them were well known runners in the regiment and had led the charge.'



CWGC Records indicate 124 men of 1LNL died on 25 September (7 officers and 117 other ranks). 113 (inc. Lance Sergeant Thomas Naylor and 2 officers) are commemorated on the Loos Memorial; 9 (inc. 5 officers one of whom is Captain Faulknor) are buried in the St. Mary's A.D.S. Cemetery,

4

Haisnes and 2 are buried in the Dud Corner Cemetery.

Stand To! Number 75 of September 2005 carries an excellent article examining how the 25 September 1915 attack at Lone Tree was planned and conducted. Also how "whatever could go wrong for 2 Brigade **did** go wrong."

THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS LIE IN
THE HANDS OF GOD – Captain R S J
Faulknor Loyals North Lancashire Regt

GENERAL SIR JOHN COWANS G.C.B., G.C.M.G. - THE PRE-EMINENT MILITARY ADMINISTRATOR

Kitchener's Army by the WFA's President Peter Simkins was an excellent read in 2014 telling of the vast expansion of our military forces 100 years ago. I was particularly struck by his comment about the "outstanding" officer I knew nothing about who was Quartermaster-General throughout the war.



Gen. Sir John Cowans

Who's Who on firstworldwar.com says Cowans 'remained ever unperturbed at the enormous task of overseeing the huge expansion of Britain's army services (and) was viewed with great approval by the demanding David Lloyd George (both were noted philanderers).' My resolve to know more about him was further increased by the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)* which also indicated that 'few studies of Britain's war effort have troubled to acknowledge or assess the significance of this **pre-eminent military administrator**.'

After obtaining his 2 volume biography, which revealed a local connection to our Branch, this clinched my thoughts on writing

about the man who was responsible for feeding, clothing, equipping and transporting our Army in England and overseas during WW1. Stand To! gives him brief mentions in 9 numbers, 5 of which were cursory (ST41, Page 9; ST42, Page 26; ST68, Page 35; ST89, Page 15 a caricature and ST100, Page 113). Two others relate to the remarkable movement of the BEF to France in August 1914 (ST10, Page 9 and ST78, Page 6); one concerns his ill-judged involvement in army personnel matters (ST79, Page 27) whilst the other is a short review of a book about 3 liberated women one of whom was his mistress (ST98, Page 50). My objective in writing is to tell the story of his life and work, including some of the problems he tackled.

The 2 volume biography commissioned by Lady Cowans was written by Major Desmond Chapman-Huston and Major Owen Rutter (C-H&R) was published in 1924 and is the main source for my article of which this is the first part based on C-H&R's Volume 1.

In their preface they say '*Generous assistance from scores - indeed hundreds - of the friends of the late Quartermaster-General has been showered upon us. Everyone was eager to do his utmost to help make a memorial of a valued friend and comrade and a great life-work.*'



Woodbank & Jack, age 5

John Steven Cowans, known as "Jack" from infancy, was born at Woodbank, near

Carlisle on 11 March 1862. His father, John Cowans (born 1816), was apprenticed on Tyneside to Robert Stephenson and company, whose founder invented the steam engine, and there he met Edward Pattison Sheldon. Together they formed Cowans, Sheldon and Company which had its beginnings in 1846 at Woodbank and produced railway engineering equipment. In 1861 John married Jeannie Steven the eldest of two sisters who had returned to England after being orphaned in New Brunswick. After Jack they had 2 more sons William Greenwood (died 1886 in Italy) and Ernest Arnold (Brigadier General in WW1, died 1942).

C-H&R say little about Jack's childhood and Ancestry reveals that in 1871 he and William Greenwood attended the Grange School, Ewell, Surrey. In 1872, with Mr Cowans in failing health, the family went to live in a country house known as Hartlands at Cranford, Middlesex. Mr Cowans died in May 1873, aged 56. After his death Mrs Cowans spent much of her time abroad, principally in Rome and William Greenwood was also attracted by Italy where he studied painting.

Jack and Ernest Arnold went to live with their aunt at Hall Garth, Over Kellett (approx 4 miles N of Lancaster). Mary Steven, Mrs Cowans' younger sister, married Aymer Ainslie in 1866. Mr & Mrs Ainslie looked upon them as they did their own son. Mrs Ainslie loved her nephew Jack; he returned her affection and, to the end of his life, was full of tender devotion and courteous consideration for her.

Jack was sent to Dr Burney's Academy at Gosport with a view to him joining the Navy. However before he was fourteen he failed his examination. He was sent abroad with a tutor, travelling in France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland and on return went back to Dr Burney's to be prepared for Sandhurst, which

he entered in 1878 and passed out with distinction at the end of 1880.

He gained a commission in the Rifle Brigade and in March 1881 sailed for India to join the 1st Battalion at Poona. Soon after arrival he became acting ADC to Sir John Ross who commanded the Poona Division of the Bombay Army, a position he probably held until January 1882. It would bring him, early in his career, into close contact with important people who would be much use to him later. In India he gained a reputation as a sportsman, particularly at cricket.

He returned to England towards the end of 1883 on sick leave and on 14 February 1884 married Eva May Coulson at St Pauls Parish Church, Grange-over-Sands.

She was the eldest daughter of the Reverend John Edmund Coulson, Vicar of Long Preston, Yorkshire. The marriage did not result in children.

In Spring 1886 Jack was at the Rifle Brigade Depot having 'a *very pleasant easy time with a good deal of hunting and shooting, and cricket in the summer.*' Later that year the 1st Battalion was sent to reinforce the expedition in Burma and Jack endeavoured to rejoin to get experience of active service. After several refusals he was allowed to go but did not reach India before the campaign ended. (It was in this campaign that the later **Field Marshal Sir Henry Hughes Wilson** received the eye-wound which he carried all his life. He had gained a commission as a subaltern into the Rifle Brigade in November 1884).



In May 1887 Jack joined the 2nd Battalion at Woolwich and whilst continuing to enjoy all games and sport he began to take his

profession seriously. In 1889 the Battalion moved to Dover and Jack was in the detachment quartered at Fort Burgoyne. Also there was Lieutenant Henry Wilson having recuperated from his wound. Captain Coke commanding D Company thought '*Cowans and Wilson were even then the most remarkable subalterns in the Battalion. They were great friends and full of life and fun.*' He described them as a '*perfect pair.*' Also one of the ablest in the Battalion, and lifelong friend of Jack, was **Captain Charles à Court** who joined the Regiment in 1878. (He became Charles à Court Repington in 1903 on the death of his father. He resigned his commission in 1902 and became a military journalist).



Jack Cowans



Whilst at Dover Jack decided to pursue entry to the Staff College and after passing the exam he entered in February 1890 and passed out with distinction in December 1891. He then joined the War Office working on mobilisation schemes which formed the basis of arrangements implemented for the Boer War and WW1. He also gained intimate knowledge of the newly created Army Service Corps. In September 1894 he became **Brigade Major to 2nd Infantry Brigade** (caricature, c/o Royal Green Jackets Museum). On leaving that post in August 1897 he went to India. However he again missed any active service since the 3rd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade was ordered back from the North-West Frontier after suffering heavy casualties from sickness, mainly due to the men drinking bad water, which would be a lesson for Jack.



In March 1898 he was promoted Major and posted to one of the Rifle Brigade's home battalions and shortly after was appointed Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General in the Movements Branch of the War Office. He was immediately involved in moving troops to support the Nile Expedition of 1898 followed by making the necessary rail arrangements to move 78,000 troops for the first ever autumn manoeuvres. In October 1899 Jack had a key role in the movement of troops, horses, supplies etc on commencement of the Boer War and had to sacrifice the opportunity for active service but the reward was he gained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in March 1900.

In April 1903 he was promoted Colonel and became Assistant Quartermaster-General of 2nd Division at Aldershot, a post which brought him into closer contact with troops and 'rounded off' his training as a Staff Officer. In February 1906 he became Director-General of Military Education in India and aided Lord Kitchener in setting up a Staff College there. In December 1908 he took command of the Presidency Brigade and in 1910 became Major-General.

Whilst on leave from India in October 1910



Lord Haldane (Secretary of State for War) offered Jack the post of Director-General of the Territorial Force, then in the third year of its existence. His new post would bring Jack back into close contact with Henry Wilson, who had held the Director of Military Operations (DMO) position for 2 months and he would be "on the spot" if the Quartermaster-General post became vacant.

Haldane needed to get best value from the limited money available; improve cohesion and cooperation of the County Associations and improve the popularity of the Force so that it 'wagged its tail.' Consequently Jack toured the country visiting the County

Associations; meeting employers and landowners; visited drill halls and inspected the men; and made frequent speeches to stimulate public interest in the Territorials. He gained the goodwill of the Associations; employers became more sympathetic, land was secured for exercises; training became more attractive and practical.

Whilst D-G of the Territorial Force Jack had brought to his attention the problem in relying upon County Associations to acquire horses upon mobilisation. Following discussions Jack arranged that the Army Annual Act 1911 and associated Circular made it the responsibility of the GOC of each Army Command to select and classify in peace the horses (and vehicles) required to bring units to war strength plus a margin of 25% for casualties.

Jack became Quartermaster-General (QMG) to the Forces and Third Military Member of the Army Council on 3rd June 1912 and in their Chapter VII C-H&R review the man who at the early age of 52 had attained that high position. In summary, they report it was solely through his own abilities, qualities and hard work. Furthermore being a good manager he chose his subordinates well, delegated as much as possible, laid down clear guidelines and trusted his staff. Staff returned his confidence and in consequence he obtained results. Also he was a good decision-maker, kind and sympathetic. These are some of the points they report in his favour.

They also say that '*Cowans, as who does not, found in women a source of refreshment and renewed energy, and if he did not always turn to the most refined and cultivated he shared that weakness, if it be one, with men even greater than himself.*' Ancestry reveals Eva May Cowans first petitioned for divorce in February 1896 which was dismissed in November the same year. She petitioned again in December 1910 which was dismissed on 1st March 1912 '*the parties*

having come to terms’, shortly before Jack became QMG.

In the King’s Birthday Honours of June 1913 he became Sir Jack.

In the last chapter (VIII) of Volume 1 C-H&R outline the changes Sir Jack wished to pursue on becoming QMG. One was to limit the control of civil servants on the War Office and place the organisation more in the hands of soldiers. Delegation of more powers and decentralisation to Army Commands would have eased the difficulties when mass recruitment occurred in 1914.

He used the power of his position to perfect the arrangements for requisitioning horses by setting up the voluntary Army Horse Reserve. He also pushed through modifications to wagons and equipment so that 2 heavy horses, which were relatively plentiful, could be used to pull non-tactical transport instead of 4 light horses. These changes were in place in April 1914.

Following the autumn manoeuvres in 1912 it was evident that the use of aircraft and mechanical transport required a petrol reserve. When this was secured Sir Jack insisted on the provision of containers (steel drums, cans and cases) in huge quantities and carried the day in discussion with the Treasury.

He was also Chairman of a Committee set up in autumn 1912 to work out a complete plan for mobilisation. Henry Wilson as DMO was the driving force and, as reported in Stand To! Number 10, Sir Jack delegated 3 of the officers he had appointed to work with his old friend in planning and implementing the movement of the BEF to France in August 1914. According to Sir Jack his *‘Movements Department worked out every item of detail with the railway companies and Admiralty Director of Transports.’*

The next part of this article will describe Sir Jack’s work in supporting the growth and spread of British Forces to the Armistice, and beyond until his death in April 1921.

**OUR GRIEF IS HUSHED IN GLORIOUS
PRIDE OF YOU -Private F E Harper
Essex Regiment**

GALLIPOLI EXPERIENCES (+S): Major Bleakley (with introduction and other necessary words by Editor)

In the early 1990s the sisters of Major James Franklin Bleakley (JFB) gave to Grant Smith of our Branch various documents, photographs etc relating to their brother’s service in WW1. The sisters knew of Grant’s interest in WW1 and he subsequently loaned the documents to the Imperial War Museum and the museum of the Manchester Regiment so they could take copies. Grant recently loaned the papers to me and it could be that readers will be interested in an extract from Bleakley’s report of his experiences in WW1 relating to Gallipoli. He served with the 10th Battalion Manchester Regiment in the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division and after the 126th Brigade Machine Gun Company. The photographs in his report were taken by Lieutenant (Later Colonel) J A C Taylor, also of the 10th Manchesters.

He wrote the report at Nasirabad, India in November 1919 and his Introduction ends with the following paragraph:

The following notes, have been compiled from a diary and have been written with the object of recording the gallant work carried out by the units previously mentioned, as a stimulus to one’s memory in after years when details are apt to be forgotten.

The Territorial Division and Lieutenant Bleakley arrived Egypt in early October 1914. *The next five months were spent in intensive training*



at the end of which time, our men were said to be a match for any 1st Line regular unit, and keen for active service.

On Sunday March 28th, 1915, the Division marched past Sir Ian Hamilton in CAIRO. Sir Ian was proceeding to take charge of the operations in GALLIPOLI, as by this time it had been realized that the passage of the DARDANELLES could not be forced by the Navy alone and that it was necessary to have a land force operating with the Navy to make a success of the expedition.

On May 4th 1915 we moved to PORT SAID bivouacked the night and embarked next day for GALLIPOLI on H.M.T. HAVERFORD. On May 8th 1915 we anchored in MUDROS HARBOUR and after a few hours there set sail for GALLIPOLI.

Long before land was sighted the roar of the guns was heard and the smell of the dead wafted out to us on the breeze, as a welcome to the inferno in which we were soon to find ourselves.

The din increased as CAPE HELLES was approached. The slopes of ACHI BABA could be distinctly seen suffering under a heavy bombardment of high explosive and shrapnel.

A heavy pall of battle dust and smoke hung over the land like a black mantle.

This was Sunday, May 9th 1915 and as we spent our last few hours in the comfort of the ship, we witnessed a fierce battle ashore which was afterwards known as the "Large Advance of May 1915".

The ship was anchored close to the Cape, and a continuous stream of casualties could be seen coming down to the Beach, to be taken off in lighters to the Hospital Ships.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon of Thursday May 13th 1915, the disembarkation at W. BEACH commenced, and by 6 o'clock we



V. Beach with HMT River Clyde in background

were ready to move off.

To many of us, who were now on the threshold of action for the first time, the spectacle we beheld was appalling. The dead were littered all around, twisted and mangled beyond recognition. The price of the Landing had indeed been paid in full, by the blood of the finest fighting troops in the British Army.

We moved inland past the ruins of the SED-UL-BAHR FORT into the French Area and bivouacked the night. Unfortunately, the bivouacs were in a depression close to a battery of French 75's which kept up a continuous fire all night. The next morning the Turkish Artillery opened fire on this battery with shrapnel, which fell on our bivouacs and inflicted many casualties before we could get clear.

We moved for cover up the valley known as "The Valley of Death" and awaited orders.

A party of us were detailed for a fatigue in the Firing Line with the Royal Naval Division digging communication trenches, and were subjected to a heavy shrapnel fire all day, but by the mercy of Providence the roll of wounded was only slight.

The Turkish sniper at this time was giving a lot of trouble and causing many casualties. It was several weeks before the ground behind the Front Line was cleared of these pests. When caught they, were terrible objects to look upon, and after a short Inquiry usually shot. They were well concealed, with faces and hands painted the colour of the surrounding ground and foliage, had a fortnight rations and 2000 rounds of ammunition. Their favourite trick was to lie in wait for the water fatigue going to the wells, and pick them off.

At dusk on the evening of May 15th 1915 our trenches were heavily



bombarded and the Turks emerged .to attack, but we drove them off with rifle and machine gun fire killing many on their wire as they endeavoured to get back.

Sunday May 23rd, 1915, found us in the FIR TREE FIRE TRENCH with orders to go over the top and straighten out a re-entrant in the line. We scaled the parapet at dusk and moved out cautiously to the landmarks, noted in daylight, and commenced to dig, only as one does when under fire. A desultory rifle fire was coming over, but we were too intent on our job to take much notice. . After about two hour's digging we were well under cover and by dawn had completed our task. The annoyance of the Turk at daylight on finding this new line was evidenced by a heavy shell fire, under which several officers and men lost their lives.

We were digging all day, and at night a relief came along. We moved out in a heavy thunderstorm, floundering down the Ravines

up to the waist in water. On arrival at the bivouacs we found them flooded, valices soaked and had to commence digging again, to provide cover for the-night.

The whole of the Peninsula was under fire from three directions, and the Turk knowing the positions of our rear bivouacs, almost as well as we did ourselves, directed a steady gun fire on these targets night and day, in their endeavour to weaken the morale of the troops.

After this followed a period of trench routine and preparatory arrangements for the next battle, when the whole line from the DARDANELLES to the AEGEAN SEA was to advance, ' and which was afterwards known as the BATTLE OF KRITHIA.

BATTLE OF KRITHIA, JUNE 4th - 6th, 1915

The order of battle from the right was - French Division - Royal Naval Division - Three Brigades 42nd, Division and 29th, Division on the left, with the East Lancs Brigade of the 42nd, Division attached. The objectives were KRITHIA and ACHI BABA.

The Battle commenced at 11 a.m. June 4th, 1915 with a terrific bombardment on the Turkish Lines, by every gun on the PENINSULA, and every gun of the Fleet. The bombardment lifted at 11.15 a.m. when every man sprung on to the Firing Step, cheering and waving his bayonet in the direction of the Turk at the same time a rapid fire was opened with the machine guns. At 11.30 a.m. our bombardment swooped down again on to the Turkish second line of trenches, and remained there till 12.noon when our assault was launched, the Artillery fire moving on and searching Points of Concentration in the Turkish hack areas.

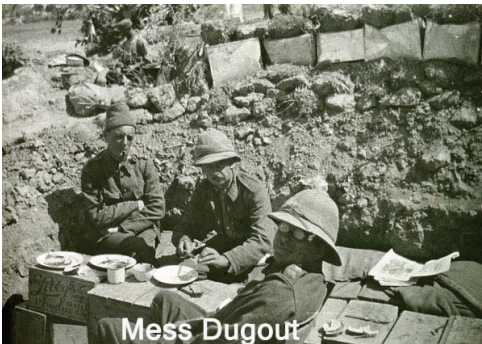
The attack on the left and centre was successful, but the French were held up against a strong Turkish Redoubt (The Haricot) and unable to progress. This left our flanks on the ACHI BABA NULLAH exposed,

and we suffered heavy casualties from bombs and rifle fire.

Darkness increased our difficulties. The blazing gorse, groans of the wounded, artillery fire, rifle fire, and bombs, and the weird cheers of our troops on the right as they made assault after assault in their effort to establish the position, made the place a veritable hell on earth.

Dawn (June 5th), came at last, and found our positions maintained. On Saturday and Sunday June 5th, and 6th strong Turkish counter attacks were delivered, in which they suffered heavy casualties and failed to retake the ground gained by us on June 4th.

The line was straightened out, and the usual trench warfare carried out till June 18th, when a raid was made by one of the Regiments of the Brigade from Trench H.11.



This was not a success, and resulted in the death of two officers and several other ranks. The raid was carried out under extraordinary and difficult conditions. It was afterwards learned that the Turks themselves were to make a raid on our trench H.11, from which our men were to launch their attack. The Turks attack was evidently timed to commence at the same time as ours. The opposing forces met in "no man's Land" and a hand to hand fight ensued, with an indecisive result.

Our troops by this time were getting battle worn and weary, so we were sent to *IMBROS* for a rest and to re-equip.

IMBROS is a beautiful and highly fertile island in the *AEGEAN SEA*, with *PANAKIA* as its capital. , The population is chiefly Greek.

On Sunday July 11th, 1915 we were back again at *GALLIPOLI*, disembarking at *V. BEACH*, at 2 am. In the afternoon of the same day, we moved into the *VINEYARD TRENCH* of the Firing Line.

To celebrate our victory in the Persian Gulf, volley firing at the Turkish positions and cheering took place on July 30th 1915. The Turk was evidently much surprised at this demonstration, and, no doubt thinking an attack was pending; proceeded to bombard our Firing Line, which somewhat damped our ardour.

On August 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th, 1915 large demonstrations were carried out on the *CAPE HELLES* front to hold the Turkish troops in that zone, and prevent them reinforcing their troops at *SUVLA BAY* who were opposing the new landings of British troops there.

After this, no operation of any magnitude took place until the evacuation of the Peninsula Dec, 1915 - Jan, 1916.

JFB's report goes on to describe, in more summary form, his experiences in Sinai and France. A copy of his well presented report, including many more photographs, can be seen at www.wfanlancs as a supplement to the May 2015 Despatch.



**IN MANNERS GENTLE IN COURAGE
STRONG -
Serjt H Thiems Cameron Highlanders**

BRIGADIER GENERAL REGINALD JOHN KENTISH (RJK) & HIS 4th TALE - "HALT! WHO GOES THERE?!"



R.J.Kentish

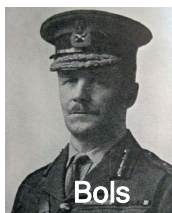
In November 2013's Despatch I told of my visit to the Imperial War Museum to view the papers of RJK and my discovery of stories (tales) he had drafted around 1940. They described amusing incidents he experienced in WW1 and this is the fourth tale.

HALT! WHO GOES THERE?! (A story of the 'politeness' of a Sentry in WW1)

SCENE: TIME: PLACE: Headquarters 1st Battalion East Lancashire Regiment in the village of Hamel-sur-Ancre, about four hundred yards from the front line, about 9 p.m. sometime in July 1915.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: Major General (afterwards Lieut. General Sir Louis) Bols, M.G.G.S. III Army; Major Blunt G.S.O. II also III Army; myself, commanding the Battalion; my Adjutant, Lieutenant (later Major General) H. T. McMullen - and a sentry.

We had just come into the line, which the III Army, to which our Division (the 4th) belonged, had a few days previously taken over from the French, and I was sitting in my Headquarters reading just after dinner, with my Adjutant and M.O., when suddenly I heard a "Good evening, Kentish" and, looking up, I was somewhat surprised to see General Bols standing in the doorway and with him Major Blunt.



Bols

The General, I thought, looked a bit ruffled, as he came in, whereas Blunt, who was

standing just behind him, had a broad grin on his face why, I hadn't the slightest idea, but I was to know later!!

"Good evening, sir," I replied, jumping up from my chair and giving him one of my Number 1 Salutes!

"Blunt and I have just come up to see how you're getting on and also to have a look at the line," he said. "How are things?"

"Oh! We're getting on splendidly sir," I said, "and we're all - - officers and men - - in fine form!!"

"Good," he said, and then I told him all the news about the front line which is what he really wanted to hear, and having told him everything I could think of, and having answered all his conundrums, he said "Now, let's go and have a look at the line," and off he, Blunt and I went with a couple of orderlies.

After a long walk round the whole line, we eventually got back to my Headquarters, where the General had a drink, and then saying "Well I think we must be getting back now", and with a "Good night everybody and good luck," he had got as far as the door, and was just going out, when he suddenly stopped and, turning round, he said, with a very distinct twinkle in his eye, "Oh, by the way, I wish you'd let your men know that I spell my name with an 'o' and one 'l', and not," he said, "with an 'a' and two 'l's!!", and with that he again said "Good night" and disappeared with Blunt into the darkness.

Not having the slightest idea what he was driving at and MacMullen and my M.O. being just as much in the dark as I was, the next morning I rang Blunt up and I said:

"Tell me, Blunt, what was the joke about the General's name last night?"

"Oh," said Blunt, starting to laugh, "it was very funny! Just as the General and I were



MacMullen

getting near your Headquarters, your Sentry called out 'Halt! Who goes there?' to which the General replied rather quietly, as he wasn't sure how far away the Bosche were, 'General Bols and Staff Officer.'

"Instead of saying 'Advance one and give the countersign,' the Sentry called out 'Who are you? What's your name?'

"The General repeated 'I'm General Bols' on which the Sentry said 'To 'ell with your --- -- b---s, what's yer ----- name?' and it wasn't until the General had spelt his name letter by letter, and had told him his rank and who he was, that the Sentry at last said 'Advance b--s and let's have a look at yer lad!!'

"The General then advanced right up to the Sentry, who, seeing for the first time who he was, said at once 'Pass Sir. All's well,' and the General and I then passed, and that's why I was laughing, when we came into your Headquarters last night!!"

The story, of course, went right through to the Ill Army, and I think the other Armies too! Certainly the General never heard the last of it, but, as I remarked to MacMullen, after I had heard the story from Blunt, if a General will have a name like that, what else can he expect?!!

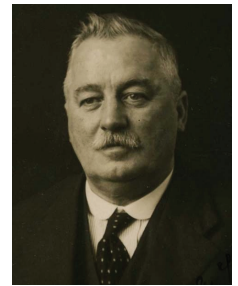
GREAT WAR MEDALS - THE MERCANTILE MARINE MEDAL (+S): Bill Myers



The Great War campaign medal with perhaps the most striking, modern design is the Mercantile Marine Medal. A total of 133,135 bronze medals were awarded by the Board of Trade.

The qualification was to make a voyage through a war or danger zone. The front shows the standard bust of King George V, by Sir Bertram MacKenna. The back, by Harold Stabler, shows a steamship, ploughing through rough water, with a submarine and a sailing vessel in the background.

The medal above was sent to Barrow merchant seaman **John Scott** - and he had to wait until April in 1921 to get it. More information about John Scott's maritime experiences can be found as a supplement to this Despatch on our website.



The ribbon is green and red with a thin white stripe - symbolising the colours of port and starboard lights and the white masthead steaming light.

The edge is impressed with the full name of the recipient but with no rank, number or name of ship. This makes it difficult to be sure - without supporting papers - of the identity of sailors with particularly common names.

The Mercantile Marine - later called the Merchant Navy - provided vital support to Britain. It brought in food and raw materials, transported troops overseas and kept them supplied. Around 8 million tons of British merchant vessels and fishing boats, along with 14,500 lives had been lost by the time of the Armistice in November 1918.

The Mercantile Marine Memorial at Tower Hill in London was unveiled by Queen Mary in December 1928. It lists 12,210 sailors of the Mercantile Marine and fishing fleet who died in the First World War who have no known grave.

For those who were killed, a memorial plaque in bronze would be issued along with a condolence slip and a scroll. The scroll includes the wording: *'This scroll is written to honour that great company of our men who, though trained only to the peaceful traffic of the sea, yet in the hour of national danger gave themselves with the ancient skill and*

endurance of their breed to face new perils and new cruelties of war and in right cause served fearlessly to the end.'

From King George V at Buckingham Palace, the condolence slip reads: *'I send you this memorial on behalf of my people and myself. We all desire that the brave and loyal service of the Mercantile Marine in war-time shall be gratefully recorded, and that the names of those who gave their lives for us shall be handed down with honour from one generation to another.'*

A FAVOURITE POSTCARD: Andrew Brooks

This postcard caused a certain amount of interest some time ago when I tried to research the black footballer (middle row, third from the left) and the story behind the team. After a long search I came up with the name Walter Tull whose story is now well known, unfortunately nobody can confirm that the man on this postcard is Walter!



Someone has written on the front of this card 'Middlesex Regiment Footballers Battalion V Sportsman Battalion Fusiliers'. Two of the men have been named, Jackson (Middlesex) and Lt. Evans (Fulham) and one man has been circled. The card received a Croydon postmark on the first of May 1915 and it was addressed to Corp. G.W.E. Chart No.47 Coy. RGA, The Castle, Tynemouth. The message on the reverse of the card was written in pencil and is quite difficult to read.

*New Place Farm
Holmbury St. Mary
Near Dorking*

To an old pal From Will. This is our company team in stripes playing against the Sportsman Batt. I am in the middle.

On the 26th April the 17th Middlesex played the 23rd Royal Fusiliers at Craven Cottage. The team of the 1st. Sportsman included many well known sportsmen including the cricketer Patsy Hendren (Middlesex). The Footballers battalion won 2-0.

William Joynson-Hicks the MP for Brentford suggested to the War Office in August 1914 that he would raise a Footballers' battalion and he set out to do this with great energy. The battalion eventually moved early in 1915 to the village of Holmbury St. Mary where Joynson-Hicks set up a camp for them in the grounds of his house. I would imagine that the man circled is the one who wrote the card.

**I GAVE MY LIFE FOR THEE WHAT
HAST THOU DONE FOR ME - Private
M C Swindle Royal Army Medical**

WESTERN FRONT AND OTHER STRATEGIC EVENTS TIMELINE - 1ST JUNE 1915 TO 30TH NOVEMBER 1915 (largely based on www.greatwar.co.uk)

Some of the centenary events to the next Despatch are as follows:-

Jun-15			
3	Amara (Mesopotamia) captured by British forces.	23	Greek Government order precautionary mobilisation.
5	1 st Conference of British & French Ministers on war policy	24	French & British Govts inform Greek Govt they are prepared to send requested troops
10	Garua (Camerouns) capitulates to the Anglo-French forces	25	Allied Autumn Offensive inc Battle of Loos begins.
16	British advance E of Festubert	25	Gen Sir J Wolfe Murray CIGS resigns & replaced by Lieut Gen Sir A J Murray (on 26 Sept)
18	Second Battle of Artois ends	28	British victory at Kut al Amara
22	Austrians continue eastward advance & retake Lemberg.	30	Lord Derby assumes control of recruiting in Great Britain
27	British start move up Euphrates	Oct-15	
July-15		1	Germans gain air mastery in France with Fokker machine
2	GB form Ministry of Munitions	5	French & British forces land at Salonika
9	German SW Africa capitulates to General Botha	6	Austro-German invasion of Serbia begins
11	German cruiser "Konigsberg" sunk in Rufiji River, Ger. E Africa	8	Battle of Loos ends
15	National Registration Act becomes law in GB	12	Edith Cavell shot by Germans in Brussels
17	Signing of secret treaty between Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria	14	Bulgaria and Serbia declare war on one another.
25	Nasiriya taken by British forces.	15	Great Britain declares "state of war" with Bulgaria.
Aug-15		28	Gen. Sir Charles Monro takes command of forces at Gallipoli (ex Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton)
6	Landing at Suvla (Dardanelles).	31	Steel helmets being introduced on British Front
10	Battle of Sari Bair ends in failure	Nov-15	
13	Transport "Royal Edward" sunk in Aegean by German sub.	10	Indian Corps begins to leave France for Mesopotamia
16	Lowca and Harrington, Cumbria shelled by German submarine	11	British advance on Baghdad from Kut al Amara begins
19	SS "Arabic" sunk by German sub, Americans on board.	23	Entente Powers demand of the Greek Govt. non-interference with Allied troops and guarantee eventual restoration of occupied Greek land
21	Italy declares war on Turkey	24	Greek Govt. accept Entente demands
25	Fall of Brest-Litovsk to Germans	25	After battle at Ctesiphon British retreat to Kut al Amara begins
Sep-15		30	Serbian retreat through Albania begins
1	German Govt. accepts USA's demands for limitation on submarine activity		
2	British Transport "Southland" torpedoed in Aegean		
21	Bulgarian Govt commences mobilisation		

INTO THE FRAY (1st JUNE TO 30th NOVEMBER 1915)

In last November's Despatch I reported on the 41 units of infantry and cavalry with affiliations to Lancashire that had entered war theatres by 31st May 1915. This comprised 13 "Regular" infantry battalions, 1 "Regular" cavalry regiment, 26 Territorial infantry battalions, 1 Extra Reserve and 1 "Service" infantry battalion from Kitchener's new armies.

The table below uses the same coding to denote the regiment of the battalion, namely:

King's Own Royal Lancaster: KORL
 King's Liverpool: KL
 Lancashire Fusiliers: LF
 East Lancashire: EL
 South Lancashire: SL
 Loyal North Lancashire: LNL
 Manchester: Mcr

Additionally "S" after the battalion number indicates it was raised as a "Kitchener"



British troops disembarking in France
 © IWM Q33306

Service battalion. "G" indicates it was raised from those too young/old/unfit for front line and they literally garrisoned areas.

The following table reports on the 43 Service battalions and 1 Garrison battalion (1G KL) which entered war theatres in the period 1st June to 30th November 1915.

Battalion	Theatre	Entry Date	Narrative
6S KORL, 6S EL, 6S SL, 6S LNL	Gallipoli	6 July 15 (7 July for EL & SL)	Cape Helles (Gallipoli). Formed Aug 14 (K1). To Tidworth part of 38 Bgde, 13 Div. 31 July 15 to Mudros, 4 Aug 15 landed Anzac. Sari Bair. Jan 16 to Egypt. Feb 16 to Mesopotamia
10S LF	France	15 July 15	Boulogne. Formed Bury Sept 14 (K2). To Bovington part of 52 Bgde, 17 Div. The Bluff.
7S KORL 7S EL 7S SL 7S LNL	France	17 July 15 (18 July for EL & SL)	Boulogne. Formed Sept 14 (K2). To Tidworth part of 56 Bgde, 19 Div. Battalions in support role at Battle of Loos.
12S Mcrs	France	17 July 15	Boulogne. Formed Ashton-under-Lyne Sept 14 (K2). To Wool part of 52 Bgde, 17 Div. Somme 1916
12S KL	France	27 July 15	Boulogne. Formed Seaforth Sept 14 (K2). To Aldershot, Army Troops 20 Div. Jan 15 part of 61 Bgde, 20 Div. Battle Mount Sorrel June 16
8S EL	France	30 July 15	Formed Preston Sept 14 (K3). To Codford part of 74 Bgde, 25 Div. March 15 to 112 Bgde, 37 Div at Ludgershall. Gommecourt Sept 15.
10S LNL	France	1 Aug 15	Boulogne. Formed Preston Oct 14 (K3). To South Downs as Army Troops 22 Div. Apr 15 to 112 Bgde, 37 Div. Trenches, St Amand.
9S LF 11S Mcrs	Gallipoli	6 Aug 15	Suvla. Formed Aug 14 (K1). To Grantham part of 34 Bgde, 11 Div. Hill 10 (9LF), Scimitar Hill (11 Mcrs)
1G KL	Egypt	? Sept 15	Egypt. Formed Seaforth Aug 15. Remained in Egypt
9S KORL, 14S KL, 12S LF, 9S EL	France	5 Sept 15	France. Formed Oct 14 (K3). To Eastbourne part of 65 Bgde, 22 Div. 8 Nov 15 landed Salonika. Retreat from Dioran, Dec 15.

9S SL	France	7 Sept 15	Boulogne. Formed Warrington Sept 14 (K3). To Seaford part of 66 Bgde, 22 Div. 5 Nov 15 arrived Salonika. Retreat from Dioran
13S Mcrs	France	early Sept 15	France. Formed Ashton-under-Lyne Sept 14 (K3). To Seaford Army Troops, 25 Div but soon 66 Bgde, 22 Div. Oct 15 moved to Salonika.
8S LNL	France	16 Sept 15	Boulogne. Formed Preston Sept 14 (K3). To Salisbury Plain part of 74 Bgde, 25 Div. 26 Oct 15 to 7 Bgde, 25 Div. Mont St Eloi.
11S LF	France	25 Sept 15	Boulogne. Formed Codford Sept 14 (K3). Army Troops 25 Div but soon to 74 Bgde, 25 Div. Cabaret Rouge & Souchez
9S LNL	France	26 Sept 15	Boulogne. Formed Preston Sept 14 (K3). To Salisbury Plain part of 74 Bgde, 25 Div. Le Touquet.
13S KL	France	27 Sept 15	le Havre. Formed Seaforth Oct 14 (K3). To Salisbury Plain, Army Troops 25 Div. Feb 15 part of 76 Bgde, 25 Div. On arrival France transfr to 9 Bgde, 3 Div. The Bluff
8S KORL	France	28 Sept 15	le Havre. Formed Lancaster Oct 14 (K3). To Codford part of 76 Bgde, 25 Div. The Bluff.
8S SL	France	28 Sept 15	France. Formed Warrington Sept 14 (K3). To Seaford part of 75 Bgde, 25 Div. Neuville St Vaast.
16S, 17S, 18S, 19S Mcrs	France	6 Nov 15	Boulogne. Raised Manchester 28 Aug 14 by the Lord Mayor and City. April 15 at Grantham the 4 city battalions form 90 Bgde, 30 Div. 21 Dec 15 19S transfr to 21 Bgde, 30 Div. Somme 16.
17S, 18S, 19S, 20S KL	France	7 Nov 15	Boulogne. Raised in Liverpool by Lord Derby on 29 Aug 14 (except 20S KL on 16 Oct 14). The 4 city battalions form 110 Bgde. On 30 Apr 15 to Grantham as 89 Bgde, 30 Div. (all arrive Boulogne Nov 15 but 7 Nov known only for 17S KL)
11S SL Pioneers	France	7 Nov 15	le Havre. Raised St Helens 1 Sept 14 by Lord Derby. 15 May 15 at Grantham as Pioneer Bn 30 Div. Somme
20S, 21S, 22S Mcrs	France	early Nov 15	Boulogne. Raised Manchester Nov 14 by the Lord Mayor and City. April 15 at Grantham the 3 city battalions part of 91 Bgde, 30 Div. 20 Dec 15 91 Bgde to 7 Div, 20S to 22 Bgde, 7 Div. Somme 16.
24S Mcrs	France	early Nov 15	Boulogne. Raised at Oldham 24 Oct 14 by Mayor and Town. April 15 at Grantham part of 91 Bgde 30 Div. 20 Dec 15 91 Bgde to 7 Div and Battalion transfr to 22 Bgde in 7 Div. Somme 16.
15S, 16S LFs	France	22 Nov 15	Boulogne. Raised Salford by Mr Montague Barlow, M.P. and the Salford Brigade Committee. 15S on 11 Sept 14 and 16S on 5 Nov 14. At Catterick Bridge 21 June 15 part of 96 Bgde, 32 Div. Somme, Spring 16.
19S LF	France	22 Nov 15	le Havre. Raised Salford 15 Jan 15 by Mr Montague Barlow M.P. and the Salford Brigade Committee. At Catterick Bridge June 15 part of 96 Bgde, 32 Div. 5. Jan 16 transfr to 14 Bgde, 32 Div. 29 July 16 to GHQ Troops as Pioneer Bn.

**SHATTERED HOPES AND BITTER
TEARS DIM THE GLORY OF HIS
DEATH: Pte Joseph J Allan
Cameronians**

MUSEUM REPORTS

The Liverpool Scottish Regimental Museum Trust: Ian Riley

Whilst we have continued to see occasional visitors to the archive office off Dale Street in Liverpool, our main activity in the last six months, particularly up until Christmas, was dealing with the flood of queries that reached us, mainly from families of those who had served with the Liverpool Scottish but also including topics such as a badge (not Liverpool Scottish) found on the shore of Loch Leven and service in the Korean War by a soldier who was neither Cameron Highlands nor King's Liverpool, our two parent regiments. We try to answer as well as we can and redirect when we can! Certainly, the centenary of the start of the war saw a tripling of queries received for four months.

At the moment, our cataloguing and photographic work has come to a stop as we are heavily committed to preparations for the Liverpool Scottish trip to Ieper (Ypres) in June when nearly 200 will cross to commemorate the centenary of the 'First Action at Bellewaerde', better known to us as the 'Battle of Hooge', on 16th June 2015. The location is about 3 km east of Ieper. This was the first 'over-the-top' action in which the Liverpool Scottish were involved, although they had been in France and Flanders since November 1914, and resulted in the deaths of 10 officers and 178 other ranks of the approximately 540 men who left the trenches. It is the action for which Noel Chavasse, the Liverpool Scottish medical officer later to win the VC twice, was awarded the MC.

An interesting family story resulting from recent queries is that of **RQMS William Vandyke Temple MSM** (known always as 'Van'). Born in 1887 and enlisting in the Liverpool Scottish in 1904, he had an interesting war.



Obviously an administrative expert from his experiences in the Liverpool HQ of the Royal Insurance Company (something of a commercial super-power) and then in their Grimsby offices, he was not allowed overseas in 1914 but retained in the UK to administer the 2/10th Battalion, King's Liverpool Regiment (the Liverpool Scottish second line), going to France in 1917 with the 57th (Second West Lancashire) Division on the HQ staff of the 172nd Infantry Brigade in which 2/10 KLR was serving. When the 2/10th amalgamated with the 1/10th KLR in the 55th (West Lancashire) Division in April 1918, he remained for a while with 172nd Brigade (apparently in the rank of Warrant Officer



Class 1), re-joining the Liverpool Scottish battalion in 55th Division as RQMS in July 1918. However a chance search of the IWM archive produced the above photo of the 172nd Brigade HQ staff in late September

1918 with him almost certainly (comparing with a family photo) in the centre which suggests it was later. He served on until late April 1919. He was received a Mention in Despatches and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. When he finished, the War Office had not heard the last from him.

What made Van Temple's file stand out are his immaculately phrased letters to the War Office, arguing for his Territorial War Medal, disputing his date of discharge and arguing the case for his Territorial Efficiency Medal. It is quite obvious that the War Office was taking on a master of Orderly Room procedure and a man well-versed in concise commercial correspondence, a world from which he came and to which he returned, after the war, with the 'Royal'. His grandson recalled to me Van's membership of the Presbyterian Church and that, in the Royal Insurance offices in Grimsby, *'During the Depression he did not mind if his staff wore threadbare suits, as he understood that their priority was food on the table for their families, but he did expect their shoes to be polished!'*

The full story of William Van Temple and illustrations of his correspondence can be found at <http://www.liverpoolscottish.org.uk/~liverpo4/a-hundred-years-ago/one-man-s-story/>

Fusilier Museum - VCs and Gallipoli: Mike Glover Curator and Regimental Secretary (Lancashire) (Written late March 2015)

The commemoration of the Great War has been both a challenge and an opportunity for regimental museums. It has been a challenge, in so far as it has been difficult to satisfy the expectations of all the stake holders involved with regimental collections. It has also provided an opportunity as, for the first time in many years, nefarious groups have suddenly woken up to our existence

and are banging on our door asking for help. In my mind, if the commemoration of Great War does not confirm the importance of regimental collections within the museum and education community, then nothing will.



Capt. (temp Major) C. Bromley VC

Significantly, this is happening at a time as the MoD is planning to pull the rug from underneath the majority of regimental museums!

At the Fusilier Museum the plan to commemorate the Great War has developed along three strands. The first is to provide support to the regimental family and specifically enhance regimental anniversaries. The second provides for support to schools and other educational establishments and the third strand will focus on support to the wider community. It is easier to deal with the second and third strands first. We now have a very active education programme, part of which is funded by the Salford based Booth Charity. Support to the wider community includes assisting local authorities with the Victoria Cross Commemorative Memorial Stone scheme and other events including street

naming.



Cpl. J. Grimshaw VC

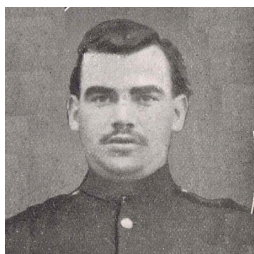
Picking up on the theme of the Memorial Stones providing support is proving to be a bit of a challenge as the Regiments have had little input into the commemoration of

this important part of our regimental heritage. As I write this article, there are six councils all wanting support to commemorate the six

Lancashire Fusiliers awarded the Victoria Cross at Gallipoli and all on Saturday 25th April this year. By way of interest, the Lancashire Fusiliers (LF) were awarded 18 VCs during the Great War, more than any other infantry regiment in the British Army, add to these the VCs awarded to the other antecedents fusilier regiments of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (RRF) and we are looking at commemorating 40 VCs, or 42, if you include the two awarded to the Royal Fusiliers in Russia in 1919.

100 th Anniversary Year	LF VCs	Total RRF VCs
2014	0	2
2015	7	9
2016	1	2
2017	2	13
2018	8	14
2019	0	2
Totals	18	42

The table illustrates the award of the Victoria Cross to the Lancashire Fusiliers and to all the antecedents of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers today including the Lancashire Fusiliers. The table is a good indication of the intensity of fighting during the Great War. The anomaly is 1915 which includes the famous “Six VCs before breakfast,” awarded to the Lancashire Fusiliers for the landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula.



LCpl. W. Keneally VC

Clearly each museum has to exploit its unique selling points and for the Lancashire Fusiliers this is the famous Gallipoli “Six VCs before breakfast.” Not surprisingly with the 100th Anniversary of the Landing of the 1st

Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers on W Beach taking place on 25th April 2015, Gallipoli will form the Fusilier Museum’s main effort in 2015. I have no intention of describing the events of 1915 as there are numerous books and articles and books available. What I am going to do is illustrate what the Fusilier Museum is intent on doing about it in 2015.



Serjt. A. Richards VC

There will be other Gallipoli events held in the North West including in Salford and Rochdale, but by far the largest commemoration in the UK will be in Bury, over the weekend 24th-26th April 2015. The weekend will be a mixture of commemoration and celebration. Commemoration of the 88 officers and 1,728 other ranks killed during the campaign, but celebration of the spirit of the Fusilier that overcame overwhelming odds in the most difficult of circumstances and is very much part of the Fusilier spirit and ethos to this day.

Prior to the weekend there will be considerable activity involving local schools and youth groups as well as a campaign in the local media to locate members of the public who had ancestors that fought at Gallipoli. A number have already come forward and they have been invited to take part in the commemoration.

The Gallipoli Weekend will be a very full weekend for the Museum which will host the Gallipoli Dinner on Friday, the Gallipoli Gathering on Saturday, and the Gallipoli Lunch on Sunday following the parade through Bury. It is



Serjt. F.E. Stubbs VC

expected that some 600 will be attending the commemorative service with some 1500 taking part in the Gallipoli Parade.

The Fusilier Museum is also responsible for two unique events. The first is a special exhibition that will bring together in the Fusilier Museum, for the first time ever, all of the original six Victoria Crosses that were awarded to the 1st Battalion the Lancashire Fusiliers for their action on W Beach on 25th



Capt. R.R. Willis VC

April 1915. We are grateful for the assistance provided by Lord Ashcroft who has loaned the Willis, Richards and Grimshaw VCs from his collection held at the Imperial War Museum. We thank the Bromley family for loaning their cherished family VC. The Keneally family loaned their family group to the Museum some years ago, where it is presently on display alongside the Stubbs VC. The exhibition will tell the story of the Landing by the regular 1st Battalion and the individual stories of the six members of the battalion who were awarded the Victoria Cross. It will also include the story of the Lancashire Fusilier Territorials from the 42nd East Lancashire which rapidly reinforced the regular 29th Division at Gallipoli and last but certainly not least the story of the 9th (New Army) Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers

The other unique event sponsored by the Fusilier Museum will be a special concert in Bury Parish Church on Saturday 25th April, Gallipoli Day, by the Band of the Royal Marines. The concert will feature a special suite of music commissioned by the Fusilier Museum following a grant from the Arts Council. The music has been specially written for Gallipoli 100 by the famous composer Martin Ellerby. The suite is

approximately 40 minutes long and includes narration to tell the moving story of the 1st Battalion at the Landing. It will feature the ships bell from HMS Euryalus that landed the Lancashire Fusiliers on that fateful day and it is pleasing to know that the audience will be able hear the same bell that the Fusiliers heard 100years ago to the day. Martin Ellerby has also written the Gallipoli March. The March which will not only be played in Bury on Gallipoli Day but also at the Cenotaph in London and by the Army Bands of Australia and New Zealand on Gallipoli Day.

This is an exciting time for all of us at the Fusilier Museum and if we survive Gallipoli we can look forward to the Somme in 2016!

**SORROW IS FOR EARTH ONLY LIFE
AND LOVE ARE OF GOD AND ETERNAL
- Lieut S Corah Leicestershire Regt.**

Lancashire Infantry Museum - Major Sam Boast's Medals: Jane Davies, Curator



An iconic set of WW1 medals has recently been purchased by the Lancashire Infantry Museum (with the help of a grant from the V&A Museum). The Military Cross and WW1

trio belonged to Major Sam Boast who served with the South Lancashire Regiment.

Sam Boast enlisted in the Regiment in 1909 and in 1914 (as a Corporal) accompanied the 2nd Battalion to France. He was wounded in the first battle of Ypres. In 1916 he was granted commissioned rank and in 1918 he was mentioned in despatches and awarded the Military Cross.

In the late 1920s the officers of the 2nd Battalion subscribed towards a piece of silver which would serve as a memorial to those officers who had died in the war. The well known sculptor



2nd Lieut. S. Boast MC

Reid Dick was commissioned to make a silver statuette of a subaltern dressed in field service uniform. The honour of being the model fell to 2nd Lieutenant Sam Boast MC because he seemed to symbolise the tradition of family service, the mutual trust and respect between officers and men, and the unifying and sustaining spirit of the Regiment.

The sculpture was completed in 1930 and is now located in the Officer's Mess of the 1st Battalion, Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. By tradition Sam is never cleaned because the unpolished silver conveys the rugged feel of the mud of Flanders. His helmet, however, is shiny from the touch of generations of Regimental officers who, by leaning on Sam, can identify with the deeds of their forbears.

The Boast family had a tradition of service with the South Lancashire Regiment and at one time four of them were serving together as Quartermaster, Platoon Commander, Drum Major and Drummer.

Sam's father, Major S.T. Boast MC, DCM enlisted at Warrington in 1886. He saw active service with the 3rd Battalion in the Boer War for which he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. In 1911 he was commissioned, being made lieutenant-quartermaster of 2nd Battalion. In WW1 he was mentioned in FM French's first despatch and received special promotion to the rank of captain. He was mentioned in despatches twice more, awarded the MC and in June 1918 was elevated to the rank of major.

Sam's uncle Captain John Boast MC joined the South Lancashire Regiment in 1894 and served with the 1st Battalion in South Africa. In 1914 he accompanied the 2nd Battalion to France where he was wounded in the fierce fighting on the Aisne, in September 1914. He was Mentioned in Despatches and granted commissioned rank. In 1915 he was promoted to Captain and again "mentioned" and in 1916 was awarded the Military Cross. Captain Boast was killed in action during the German's offensive which commenced on 21st March 1918.

Lieutenant F. Boast, Sam's brother, enlisted in 1913 but due to his age could not proceed to France until 1918. In July 1918 he was commissioned but met an untimely end in the Irish Civil disturbances, in December 1919, when he was killed while on Vice Regal Guard in Phoenix Park, Dublin.

Two other brothers later joined the Regiment, one died whilst serving with the 2nd Battalion in India and the other served as a Bandsman with the 1st Battalion.

Major S.W. Boast's medals will be on display in the Somme Room.

**WITH LOFTIEST COURAGE IN GLORIOUS
DEATH ENTERED LIFE EVERLASTING -
Capt J L Evans 5th Bn Canadian Inf**

THE FORGOTTEN OF THE FORGOTTEN! Rick Preston

On the 22 Feb the Lancaster City Museum hosted a talk by Steven Lau on the Chinese Labour Corp. As it was the Cumbria AGM on that day I was disappointed not to be able to attend. Assuming that Mr Lau worked at the Lancaster University I rang to enquire as to whether the gentleman was giving the talk in another venue at another time, to my delight it was being repeated on Monday, 23 Feb at the university itself. As it had been 40 years+++ since I used to visit the university as a student myself I resolved to go to the talk.

Steven Lau was not, as I thought, a university lecturer but the Chairman of the "Ensuring We Remember Campaign" based in London which brings together 8 different Chinese groups to publicise, commemorate and remember the work of the Chinese Labour Corp. Its aim is to build a memorial in the UK to the dead of this group. The CWGC indicate approximately 2000 dead while other estimates have put the numbers as high as 20,000. Like other research projects on the 1st World War, because of the loss of official records in the blitz, it is now extremely difficult to produce a comprehensive record of their activities and even more difficult to study individuals. What material that is left is fragmented and dispersed.

Firstly, Steven gave a brief history of China during the previous 80 years. While this may seem a little odd in the context of the war, in fact it set the context of relations between Japan and the European Powers and China and helped to explain why China created a Labour Corp, and not fighting soldiers.

Once a decision had been made to create a Labour Corp the British Government used a rather peculiar method of recruitment. Instead of establishing their own army organisation they used the missionary stations which were scattered all over the



interior Shantung Province of China. The population of southern China was dismissed as being unable to withstand the cold winters of Western Europe, whereas the population from the NE of China were in an area where the climate was more extreme and so would find Western Europe acceptable. The population of that area also was of a more stocky build, perhaps better suited to labouring jobs!

Initially the Chinese were transported by ship via the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean Sea, and so to France. The Mediterranean Sea became increasingly dangerous as submarine activity rose during 1917. After the



sinking of the SS Athos by torpedo in the Mediterranean Sea on 17 February 1917 when 543 Chinese labourers were drowned another route was adopted. This was from

China to Canada where they were put in sealed trains for the 6 day trip across the North American continent to Halifax, Nova



Chinese coolies on Canadian Pacific Rail

Scotia and hence to Liverpool, and then train to Dover and so to France. Chinese Labour was never employed in any capacity in GB.

The Labour Corps purpose was essential to release British soldiers to fight; some 95,000 Chinese were employed by the British and 40,000 by the French. They were engaged in all manner of activities but one particular group made an essential contribution to keeping the newly invented tanks moving, in that there were 1000 who



Chinese in Tank Repair Workshop

were employed in the tank workshops. Whilst the labourer's contract stated that they were not to be used near the front, this idea was stretched and they often found themselves under shell fire. The French also used them on farms in other parts of France.

Their treatment in France was rather different than that of soldiers. They were kept in camps with no visits to towns allowed and only 4 days holiday each year. The camps had their own hospital staffed by doctors,

who because they had been on missionary work in China, could speak the languages. As they did in many camps, the YMCA built huts where many labours learnt to read and write.

The 250,000 Chinese who were employed in Russia fared even worse. Being employed by companies, which, when the Revolution broke out were closed down, they were stranded in the midst of the civil war. One group ended up fighting in the Spanish Civil War years later,

So the war ended but because of shipping shortages there was a delay in returning them to China. The Australians and Canadian soldiers had a similar problem. It was at this time when discipline broke down and there were 8 executions of Chinese personnel for murder. The Belgians at this time excluded them from their country because the population were mistrustful and blamed them for all manner of misdemeanours so they continued to work in France helping to clear up the debris from the conflict. One particular difficult task for the Chinese was the clearing of dead from the battlefields site. To the Chinese psyche death

was a taboo subject, so although they were given the task of body clearance or moving graves to the new cemeteries many found it psychologically traumatic. Some

350 labourers who were insane were the first to be returned to China. This did not give a positive image to the labourers treatment in China itself.

So the labourers were eventually returned to their own country but once there they were dispersed back to their villages in the vast



Chinese Water Carrier

hinterland of China, they were forgotten. They were not heroes as the fighting men were but just labourers. Who cares for the labourer? They received the same medal as that of the British but they were made of bronze not silver and some 20,000 were returned by the Chinese themselves as a sign of their disgust at their own and their nation's treatment. The Chinese government established the Corps to gain influence at the peace table and to regain territory lost to Japan but the ploy failed. They refused to sign the Versailles Peace treaty and they remained in the eyes of their allies a second rate power.

The Speaker started and ended with a short documentary tape which made unpleasant watching to anyone with a conscience. It was an excellent, informative and thought provoking talk. Well worth the round trip of 130 miles from Carlisle.

**BE HIS DEAR FACE THE FIRST TO GREET
US AND BID US WELCOME HOME -
Private E Appleyard Welch Regiment**

Denby Visits: Peter Denby

**1 War Walk - Captain Albert BALL VC, DSO
(2 bars), MC**

On a visit to Nottingham in May 2014 I was pleased to find that the local rambling group were running a series of monthly themed guided walks to mark the centenary of the outbreak of World War 1.

So it was that I was able to join May's

urban walk, which took us in and around the Lenton area of the city to commemorate

Albert Ball VC,
the celebrated



Nottingham WW1 ace pilot who was killed in May 1917. Albert was born on Lenton Boulevard in 1896. His father, Albert Ball senior, was a plumber who went on to become a successful businessman, Lord Mayor of Nottingham, and who received a knighthood. With increasing success and prosperity, the family moved to Sedgley House, 43 Lenton Road in The Park estate, where Albert lived for most of his short life.

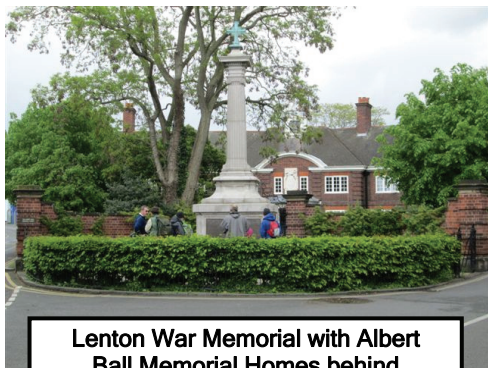
At the outbreak of war Albert joined the Sherwood Foresters, transferring to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in 1915 and gaining his 'Wings' in January 1916. The moody and aggressive Albert was Britain's first fighter ace, shooting down 44 enemy aircraft, usually by his preferred tactic of coming up underneath his victim.

Albert died, aged 20, on May 7th 1917 during a melee with Lothar von Richtofen (the brother of the 'Red Baron' Manfred von Richtofen). The Germans claimed Albert had been shot down, but eye witness evidence from both sides is that Albert had likely become disorientated in low cloud, crashing behind enemy lines. He was buried by the Germans with full military honours at Annouelin, France. The 'Red Barron' himself remarked that Albert was *"...by far the best English flying man"*.

A popular hero, in February 1917 Albert had been made an honorary Freeman of Nottingham, and France and Russia also honoured him. Albert's death sparked national mourning, posthumous promotion to Captain and the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross. Among the large crowd attending his memorial service at St Mary's Church in Nottingham on 10 June 1917 were his father and his brother Cyril (also a RFC pilot), but his grief stricken mother was not present.

After the war his father commissioned the building of the (now Grade II listed) Albert Ball Memorial Homes in Lenton to house the families of local servicemen who had been

killed in action. These are now homes for the elderly. In front of the homes is the Lenton War Memorial, also paid for by the Ball family.



Lenton War Memorial with Albert Ball Memorial Homes behind

In 2006 Albert was featured in a set of Royal Mail commemorative Victoria Cross stamps. His VC and other medals and memorabilia are in Nottingham Castle Museum, and in the Castle grounds there is a splendid memorial to him.

2 Dunham Massey - Sanctuary from the Trenches



From April 1917 to February 1919 Lady Stamford gave over her elegant home, **Dunham Massey Hall**, to the war effort, it becoming the Stamford Military Hospital, one of over 3,200 auxiliary hospitals created to

treat the wounded of the First World War. By the time it closed 282 soldiers had found sanctuary here in its beautiful surroundings.

For 2014 and 2015 this National Trust property has been transformed once again into the Stamford Military Hospital. The recreated hospital is based on original records from the Dunham Massey archives, and is complete with a ward, recreation room and operating area.



Information boards tell its story, and actors present the lives of the patients, staff and members of the family who were there in the hospital years.

Some outdoor art installations commemorate the war time hospital, and the remainder of the house, the grounds and extensive deer parklands and garden are a pleasure to explore.

This child friendly venue makes for a very nice day out for all the family.

Dunham Massey is off the A56 near Altrincham (WA14 4SJ). For opening times (March to November) visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk; ring the info line 0161 942 3989 or 0161 941 1025; or email dunhammassey@nationaltrust.org.uk

**IT IS WELL WITH YOU AMONG THE
CHOSEN FEW AMONG THE VERY
BRAVE THE VERY TRUE - Lieutenant A
G Murray-Smith 2nd Life Guards**

Last May I reported that Frank Norton had found **Sir Gilbert Mackereth's** medals in the possessions of his deceased uncle Arthur Marlow (AM) MBE and had donated them to the Lancashire Fusiliers Museum. AM was the Executor and principal beneficiary from the Will of Nigel Watson (NW) OBE, Sir G's brother-in-law. I had searched unsuccessfully for AM in Australia and Frank told me of the mystery surrounding his uncle's activities: a military man, with 3 passports, a Buddhist with 2 wives and families. Last August Frank was in Lancashire and he loaned me his uncle's hand-written memoirs.



Born in Leicestershire **Arthur Marlow** joined the army in September 1939 as a signaller. In 1943/44, then a sergeant, he parachuted into Yugoslavia with 'a Major'

with 'one of the crack Hussar regiments'. This was NW since I had established NW was a member of the SOE who had also parachuted into Yugoslavia and knew Tito. AM's memoirs describe the considerable time he spent in Southeast Asia on active service after WW2, sometimes with NW, from which I can conclude he did not have any work connection with Sir G who retired in 1953.

AM would come to know about Sir G from his close friend NW and it is remotely possible they might have met in company with NW before Sir G's death in January 1962. Importantly in dealing with NW's estate after his death in February 1995 AM retained Sir G's medals and after AM's death his nephew Frank delivered them to Sir G's regiment.



Despatch of November 2012 told of my arranging the scanning of some 1200 regimental journals held by the Lancashire Infantry Museum to make them word searchable and thus "unlock" the information they contain. Time permitting I felt the WFA's *Stand To!* would be similar project to tackle.

In January with inclement weather affecting opportunities for cycling, an updated version of *ABBYY Finereader* in my Christmas stocking and my pondering about what attention had been paid to General Sir John Cowans in *Stand To!* I decided to do the necessary scanning of *Stand To!* Andrew Brooks kindly loaned me the Numbers I did not have and after processing nearly 4,700 pages I had the information on Cowans I was seeking (Page 5) and, as a by-product, was able to locate photos to show in Rick Preston's article (Page 23).

Having digitised all Numbers of *Stand To!* as PDFs they will be of use and value to other WFA members, and possibly others. Several members of the WFA's Executive Committee are aware of situation and it will be a matter for the Committee to decide how they should be made available. Whether for research purposes or to carry and read *Stand To!* on a tablet, the utility of our prestigious publication has been improved.

Chris Payne reported that whilst Branch finances appeared to be in a healthy position it was largely due to the one-off opportunity of selling books from Hal Egerton's donated collection. Income for 2013/14 was down compared to estimates largely due to the average attendance at meetings falling to 24 but expenditure was well-within budget.

For 2014/15, income projections were based on achieving an average monthly attendance of 27 and the expenditure projection was set cautiously. Subsequently the WFA have provided £250 to support the Armistice Prize in 2015 and 2016.

Chris was thanked for the work he had done as Treasurer over the past 3 years and Andrew Brooks took over the position temporarily.

It was reported that the King's Own museum would not be open to the public on Mondays but Peter Donnelly kindly indicated he would endeavour to accommodate our Monday meetings, as normal. (TD)

Dare all except Dishonour: January 2015 (21 attended)

Nowadays we know only too well the story of the Accrington Pals, that the Battalion was raised by the Mayor of Accrington, and that the Companies were drawn from Accrington, Burnley, Chorley and the surrounding Districts. Indeed, one might think that there is nothing more that could be added to their tale. But, the talk, given by the East Lancs WFA Chairman, **Andrew Gill**, gave the Branch some new perspectives centred as the talk was on the Burnley Lads Club.

The Club had been formed at the beginning of the 20th Century by Henry Davidson Riley, with the aim of providing the young lads of Burnley, recreational, educational and physical facilities. Playing football in one of its five teams, evening

BRANCH AFFAIRS

MEETING REPORTS

No Labour, No Food, No War: November 2014 (22 attended)

After describing the agricultural background of Great Britain prior to the First World War, **Richard Preston** explained that Great Britain in 1914 was not self-sufficient in food, so the loss of ships during the war due to submarine action was a great problem.

As a result, farms were under constant pressure to produce more in spite of a shortage of labour and the loss of horses for war service. Wheat and oats were particularly required and production increased by 68% in Westmorland and 35% in Cumberland.

Labour problems were eased by the use of the Women's Land Army, POWs and village women.

The Government became more involved, bringing in legislation, such as the Corn Production Act in 1917 and encouraging the use of tractors.

Other ventures included the establishment of allotments in 1917 and the arrival of the Canadian Timber Corps. One local venture was the Penrith Pigs, fed on swill and cabbage.

Did the Government learn not to rely on imported food? Richard concluded his interesting and informative talk that the Government did not learn, which resulted in problems in the Second World War. (Gaynor Greenwood)

**A SOLDIER AN AUTHOR AND BELOVED
BY ALL - Private C V Hargreaves East
Lancashire Regiment**

classes in English and summer camps such as that in Llandudno in 1914 were amongst the activities on offer. In an era when the working classes had little leisure time, the Club offered both camaraderie and opportunity. By the time that the Great War broke out, some 1000 boys were or had been members, and it is no surprise that many would join up if they had not already enlisted previously.

Andrew brought us the stories of some of these young men, backed up by photographs of the Club's football and cross-country teams as well as those men in khaki or navy blue attire. As to the Accrington Pals, some 70 members and former members of the Club would volunteer, following in the footsteps of Henry Riley who was immediately commissioned in the rank of Captain. Andrew looked also at 'Young Kitchener', namely seven year-old Jennie Jackson, who spent many hours on the streets of Burnley, wearing cut down army uniforms and collecting money to buy comforts for Burnley lads at the front. In the four or so years that she collected, she even managed to obtain enough to buy an ambulance. 'Okay' you say, 'she was a girl while the talk was about boys!' Andrew qualified her inclusion by pointing out that her older brother, William, who had joined up in 1914, was also a Club member. Sadly, William Jackson along with another 122 boys would die during the Great War, including Henry Riley who was killed on 1st July, 1916.

One finds that most talks on this unit or that battle tend to centre on the military, be it training, life in the trenches or the 'blood and guts' business of going over the top. So, it was an interesting departure to briefly learn of the Burnley of 100 years ago and the rôle that Burnley Boys Club performed in seeking to develop these young men. For my part, Henry Riley is the hero of this tale in showing leadership and foresight in establishing the Club, however, even he could not have

anticipated the Great War, while it does seem that his former charges did not let him down. There was certainly no dishonour amongst them to stain Burnley's good name. (Barrie Bertram)

Yser Tower and the Flemish Martyrs: February 2015 (22 attended)

As a result of the original speaker being unable to give his talk **Dave O'Mara** from the Burnley branch stepped in at short notice to speak about the fighting north of Ypres. Starting by showing the 84 metre high tower



which was erected in memory of Flemish soldiers killed during WW1 he continued by describing the actions of October/November 1914.

After the fall of Antwerp the River Yser formed a natural defensive line from Dixsmude to the sea. When the Germans threatened to breach the line, the Belgians sealed the 22 culverts under the Nieuport-Dixmude railway embankment and opened the Nieuport sluices to admit the sea. The flooded area between the Yser and the railway stopped the Germans north of Dixmude. French marines and Senagalese troops assisted the Belgians to hold the line. Dave described the impregnable Minoterie west of Dixmude and the "trenches" to the immediate north.

King Albert of Belgium urged the Walloon and Flemish populations to fight together but during the war a split formed between the

French speaking officers and Dutch other ranks. Also the Flemish soldiers who died had French inscriptions on their headstones and in 1930 the original tower was constructed as a symbol of Flemish nationalism with some Flemish-speaking Belgians who were killed during WW1 placed in the crypt.

This tower was blown up by persons unknown in 1946 and subsequently converted into a Gateway of Peace with the current Yser tower being constructed between 1952-62. Dave concluded by giving brief details of the martyrs. (TD)

Tsingtao: March 2015 (20 attended)

Having previously delivered a talk to the Branch in 2014 about the Italian Campaign, **John Chester** returned to the podium to present his perspective on one of the First World War 'sideshows', the siege and capture of Tsingtao.

By the 1890s, Germany was still a relative newcomer to a colonial role. Nonetheless, during colonial competition within China between the European powers, in 1898 Germany acquired a 99-year lease of a coastal peninsula in what is now the province of Shandong. Tsingtao was the main population centre in the area, and by 1914 it had largely been rebuilt by the Germans. Tsingtao provided good port facilities and had become the base for the East Asia Squadron of the German Navy with 2 heavy cruisers and 3 light cruisers as well as 4 gunboats and a torpedo-boat.

Keen to reduce German influence in the Pacific, in August 1914, the British Government requested the assistance of the Japanese to invade and occupy Tsingtao. At that time Japan, was formally an ally of Britain but also had close links with Germany. In the event, Japan sided with Britain and a joint assault was made on Tsingtao, from

whose port the main German battleships had already sailed.

The German forces amounted to some 5000 men, consisting of militia, marines and sailors. The British forces included the South Wales Borderers and the 36th Sikh supply column; a total of about 1500 men. 28,000 Japanese troops were brought in at the beginning of the campaign and were supplemented later by a further 30,000. The Germans were well-led by the Governor of Tsingtao, Alfred Meyer-Waldeck, and had established defensive lines with machine gun positions and two forts, but had few artillery weapons and little ammunition for them. Despite encountering a typhoon, the invading Japanese troops gained a foothold in September 1914 and spent several weeks establishing solid artillery positions before launching the main attack on Tsingtao between 30 October and 5th November 1914. The British troops fought in relatively exposed territory and found themselves in receipt of 'friendly fire' from the Japanese, until the men were equipped with Japanese overcoats so that they would no longer be confused with German forces. On 7th November 1914, after "quite a fight" the Germans surrendered.

In the remainder of his talk, John Chester, described the fate of the German Prisoners of War (POWs), whose treatment by the Japanese was generally in stark contrast to the fate of POWs captured by Japanese forces in the Second World War. About 4000 Germans (including Governor Meyer) had been captured and these men were transported to Japan. Treated with respect, the POWs found their arrival received by crowds, bunting and flowers. Initially housed in camps mainly located in Japanese temples in the heart of civilian areas, the men were well-treated, and had the opportunity for physical and cultural activities, including the establishment of camp orchestras. After the camps were inspected by American

observers, a decision was made in 1915 to construct a smaller number of larger camps, further away from civilian populations so that the POWs were less 'on display'. These camps were relatively loosely guarded, not least because there was no point in escaping as an escaped white European would have been quickly identified and captured amongst the Asian population.

It was only 12-18 months after the 1918 Armistice that the POWs were able to return to Germany, mainly because the terms of surrender, had left Germany without the ships to bring the men home. Ultimately the Japanese made the shipping arrangements. Approximately 400 German POWs chose to remain in Japan. During their time in Japan, the German POWs were credited with teaching the Japanese football and introducing 'new' crops such as tomatoes and teaching the Japanese to produce a range of traditional German foodstuffs (including smoked sausages).

The audience responded favourably to the well-illustrated talk and there was no shortage of questions for the speaker. (Chris Payne)

Prisoners of Conscience: April 2015 (22 attended)

This talk was a fascinating insight into the minds and actions of a small percentage of men during the Great War. **Steve Erskine** who is involved with English



Heritage at Richmond Castle, Yorkshire and who is also the editor of 'The Green Howard' the magazine of the Friends of the Green Howards Regimental Museum presented his thought provoking talk in an even handed manner on a subject that can still be contentious in WFA circles.

The talk commenced with a run through of the various events leading up to the treatment of those men who had a conscientious objection to war. Steve dealt with the Derby Scheme in detail as well as the Military Service Act 1916 and the infamous Tribunal system. He used many illustrations including one from the 'Magnet' comic featuring Billy Bunter attacking a fellow pupil who professed to support the COs! The Non-Combatant Corps was lampooned in cartoons and many contemporary picture postcards denigrated the actions of the COs.

After showing a series of illustrations of CO graffiti left on their cell walls in the castle Steve mentioned the case of J.H.Brocklesby (JHB), one of the 'Richmond 16'. JHB was a confirmed Methodist and did not find it an easy decision to become a CO. He was supported in this by his father (a member of the local War Funds committee) and two of his other brothers who were shown wearing military uniforms in a family group photograph. When he was arrested he was allowed to make the journey to Pontefract gaol on his own! JHB was one of 49 COs sent to France where the Camp Commandant pleaded with them to change their mind and fight. He sent them into Boulogne for a meal but they still would not compromise their ideals. The next day they were asked to unload food at the Boulogne docks and when they refused they were sent before a court-martial and sentenced to death. This was commuted to ten years penal servitude by the C-in-C.

Steve finished his talk by reminding the audience that many famous people were COs during the war including Bertrand Russell and Tom Atlee the brother of a future British Prime Minister. (Andrew Brooks)

**LO, THERE BREAKS A YET MORE
GLORIOUS DAY - Pte R Nutter Duke of
Wellington's Regt**



On 16 April the bugler signalled the start of the ceremony to re-inter the remains of six British soldiers killed in action in October 1914. Their remains were found in 2008 and 2010

in a farmer's field at Comines-Warneton near Le Touquet. It is thought they had been given field burials after the action(s) in which they died. It had not been possible to identify any of those being re-interred but it was established that two served with the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment and two with The Lancashire Fusiliers. The photographs were sent to me by Gerard Lemaire, my friend in Bailleul who commented '*La très belle cérémonie*'.



RE-BURIAL AT PROWSE POINT CEMETERY (+S)

PROGRAMME OF FUTURE MEETINGS (FIRST MONDAY OF MONTH AT 7.30 PM)

June 1st: *"Wives, Workers and Widows - Life of Women in WW1"* - Jennifer Wray

July 6th: *"Beyond Vimy Ridge: Canadian Corps Operations, 1918"* - Rob Thompson

Aug 3rd: *"How 10th Cruiser Squadron Won the War"* - Graham Kemp

Sept 7th: *"A neutral view of the War"* - Michael O'Brien

Oct 5th: *"British Red Cross VAD Nurses out in France 1917 - 1921"* - Liz Howard Thornton

Nov 2nd: *"Death Battalion"* - Lesley Wright

Dec 7th: *A.G.M and Christmas Social* - An invitation to members to speak for 10 minutes on any WW1 topic.

Western Front Association, North Lancashire Branch

Chairman: Stan Wilkinson

Tel: 01524 262302

Secretary: Dr. Graham Kemp

Tel: 01524 310649

email: graham.kemp@nasuwt.net

Treasurer: Andrew Brooks

Tel: 01524 272526

Editor: Terry Dean

Tel: 01772 864182 Mob: 07866 493210

email: editor@wfanlancs.co.uk

Website: www.wfanlancs.co.uk