



CHESTERFIELD WFA

Newsletter and Magazine issue 51

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Welcome to Issue 51 - the March 2020 Newsletter and Magazine of Chesterfield WFA.

The next meeting of the Branch will be on
Tuesday 3rd March at 7.30 pm in
Chesterfield Labour Club.



Peter Hart

'Après la Guerre' Post-war blues, demobilisation
and a home fit for very few.

The Branch meets at the Labour Club, Unity House,
Saltergate, Chesterfield S40 1NF on the first Tuesday
of each month. There is plenty of parking available on
site and in the adjacent road. Access to the car park is
in Tennyson Road, however, which is one way and
cannot be accessed directly from Saltergate.

Grant Cullen – Branch Secretary



Western Front Association Chesterfield Branch – Meetings 2020

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

January	7th	. AGM and Members Night - presentations by Jane Ainsworth, Ed Fordham, Judith Reece, Edwin Astill and Alan Atkinson
February	4th	Graham Kemp `The Impact of the economic blockage of Germany AFTER the armistice and how it led to WW2`
March	3rd	Peter Hart <i>Après la Guerre</i> Post-war blues, demobilisation and a home fit for very few.
April	7th	Andy Rawson Tea Pots to Tin Lids...how the factory which inspired his research (Dixons) switched from making tea services for hotels and cruise ships to making Brodie helmets in the Great War.
May	5th	Nick Baker . The British Army has always fought a long battle with the debilitating cause to its soldier's efficiency through venereal disease, a combination of behavioural change and civilian interference resulted in an 'epidemic' of VD which threatened military effectiveness.
June	2nd	Rob Thompson 'The Gun Machine: A Case Study of the Industrialisation of Battle during the Flanders Campaign, 1917.
July	7th	Tony Bolton `Did Britain have a Strategy for fighting the Great War or did we just blunder from crisis to crisis? "From business as usual to total war"
August	4th	Beth Griffiths `The Experience of the Disabled Soldiers Returning After WWI`
September	1st	John Taylor . 'A Prelude to War' (An Archduke's Visit) - a classic and true tale of `what if` ?
October	6th	Peter Harris Tanks in the 100 Days. Peter will present some of his researches for his Wolverhampton MA course
November	3rd	Paul Handford Women Ambulance Drivers on the Western Front 1914 - 1918.
December	1st	John Beech 'Notts Battery RHA - Nottinghamshire Forgotten Gunners'

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Branch Outing - April 2020

Your Committee is in the process of arranging a Branch Outing on Sunday 19th April 2010 to the Training Grounds and Cemeteries of The Great War on Cannock Chase. As with the trip to Lincoln in 2018, the cost of transport to Cannock etc will be met from Branch funds , it is our way of saying `Thank You` to members for their continued support of the Branch. There will be a guided tour of the sites courtesy of Trevor Warburton. As soon as we have further details, timings etc these will be e mailed out. We will again be seeking permission from Chesterfield Labour Club for members to leave their cars in the Club car park whilst we are away on the trip. It is anticipated that transport to Cannock will leave from the Labour Club. Please let me know if you are interested so that we can gauge numbers for hire of minibus etc.

As we went to `press` I received the following provisional itinerary.

Visit to Cannock Chase Great War Camps April 19th, 2020

10:00 Meet at Marquis Drive Visitor Centre to view Great War Hut (toilets available)

Tour part of **Rugeley Camp** (best remaining archaeological features) and “E” to “H” Rifle Ranges

Tour of **Brindley, (Rugeley) Hospital**

Tour of **Commonwealth & German Cemeteries** (toilets available)

Tour of part of **Brocton & POW Camp**

The military railway will be encountered throughout the day as it was connected to two main lines either side of the Chase rising to the plateau. Railway cuttings, platforms, embankments and sidings snake across the heath. It was a standard gauge light railway.

Timings of each site visit will be flexible and meal breaks(s) as and when anyone would like. The weather on the day may have an impact but hopefully not.

The footpaths in places are narrow and uneven but with stout footwear and care are no trouble. Please be aware there are occasional uncovered manholes from the underground sewer pipes off certain paths. Some gradients are encountered but primarily most of the tour is on relatively flat ground. Transport is required from site to site in order to maximise the experience of the day. If time is available and desired, we can visit the other four rifle ranges "A" to "D".



Personal Note from the Chair (41)

Lots to talk about in these notes so I will start by thanking the people who responded to the Branch Survey. Grant will publish elsewhere in this Newsletter the full results but I would like to pick out some of the answers which I thought most surprising or at least worthy of further consideration in this piece. As you will see we had 18 completed surveys which added to the five Committee members who did not take part means that 23 out of an average attendance of 25 members responded which is a great result, so thanks again. For me there was several significant views expressed, 100% of respondents wanted to see more talks on the wider conflict including the Home

Front. The only other universally agreed view was the appreciation of the WFA's publications *Stand To* and *Bulletin*. Other strongly supported ideas was interest in having talks on other combatants. There were also significant numbers who wanted to widen the scope of talks to include inter war years and even topics beyond the First World War. One rather sobering result was that only just over half the respondents felt that the branch had the balance of talks about right. I am sure you are all aware that the organisation of the programme of speakers is a very onerous task and one that has to a large extent to reflect the speakers and subjects which are available. That said the Branch Committee will try to reflect more of the topics you have expressed a view on. I will again reiterate that Grant would be happy if either you know of a suitable speaker or wish to do a talk yourselves please let us know.

This weekend I will be at the Branch Chair's Meeting in London, this will no doubt involve a tortuous Sunday return involving either a bus replacement service between Bedford and Market Harborough or a multi change return from Euston via Tamworth to Derby. This time however, I hope to avoid being stranded in London overnight, courtesy of Storm Ciara whilst attending the WFA Executive Committee meeting. And you think being Chairman is glamorous!

Finally, I decided to lash out and take my wife to the pictures to see 1917. I have to say I enjoyed it. For those of you who have seen the film I would be very grateful to learn what the hero took to transform him from an exhausted wreck only capable of collapse whilst listening to a hymn service, into the dynamo sprinting along no man's land in search of the Colonel. Whatever it was please put me down for a box full.

Best regards,

Tony Bolton

Branch Chair



Secretary's Scribbles

Welcome to issue 51 of the WFA Chesterfield Branch Newsletter and Magazine.

The month of February seems to have flown by - or should I say 'blown by' given the high winds we have had to endure for most of the month!

Our next meeting on Tuesday features our 'hardy annual', Peter Hart, always a welcome visitor and one whose knowledge (and charisma) always ensures a good turn out.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will see advance notification of our Branch outing to the Great War sites at Cannock Chase, please let me, or any member of Committee know if you want to participate, the Branch will cover the transport costs from Chesterfield to Cannock - date - Sunday 19th April

As some of you may know regular Chesterfield Branch attender and occasional speaker, John Beech, has been appointed Branch chair at the East Midlands (Ruddington) Branch of the WFA. I am sure all will join with me in wishing John every success in his new role taking over from Tim Chamberlin.

The results of the Branch Survey appear in this Newsletter and the Committee would like to thank all those who took the time to respond. In response to some of the answers, Branch vice chair Mark Macartney has penned a series of notes as to how members can fully access the Chesterfield Branch pages on the National WFA website.

Whilst on the subject of Mr. M you will see elsewhere in this Newsletter that the WFA are promoting the sale of two new WFA Branded products - coasters commemorating the 40th anniversary of the WFA and Mouse Mats. Mark, who serves on the EC as Branded Goods Trustee has worked tirelessly to bring these items forward and never one to sit still, has other projects in mind. I hope members will support the WFA by purchasing these items

As some may have noticed, we are receiving regular contributions to these newsletters from Barnsley lady, Jane Ainsworth. Jane and husband Paul have become regular attenders at Branch meetings over the past year and I really appreciate her taking the time to pen these articles. I am always happy to take contributions for inclusion in this newsletter - the more the merrier, in fact

I look forward to seeing a good turn out on Tuesday evening - see YOU there !!

Grant Cullen - Branch Secretary

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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

Survey Responses

With the WFA now in the year in which it will celebrate its 40th Anniversary we sought feedback from Members and Friends about their ideas and suggestions of how we, as a Branch, can develop in the future. A total of 18 replies were received to the questionnaire and our Branch Chair Tony Bolton will present these at the forthcoming Branch Chairs Conference. Below is a resume of the answers we received. Thanks to all who participated.

1. Are you a Member of the WFA **18 replies** 17 yes + 1 no
2. If No is there anything that would encourage you to become a member?.
3. No Comments were received
4. Which of the following apply.
 - I am interested in tracing my family history. **11 / 18**
 - I am interested in learning more about the Western Front in WW1. **15/18**
 - I am interested in learning more about the wider conflict of the Great War including the Home Front. **18/18**
 - I am particularly interested in the Army. **11/18**
 - I am particularly interested in the Navy. **2/18**
 - I am particularly interested in the RFC/RAF. **2/18**
 - I would like to see more talks on individual service men or women. **5/18**
 - I am interested in other combatants not just Britain and the Empire. **16/18**
 - I feel there is not enough emphasis now on the major battles of the war. **2/18**
 - I feel the Branch should organise more trips within UK. **11/18**
 - I would probably support the Branch if it organised a battlefield tour. **8/18**
 - I would like more talks on the period between the wars. **11/18**
 - I would like talks on a wider range of military subjects than just the First World War. **10/18**
 - I think the balance of talks provided by the Branch is about right. **10/18**
 - I understand how the WFA is organised and how the Branch network works. **15/18**
 - I agree that the magazines *Stand To* and *Bulletin* are worth the subscription alone. **18/18**
 - I use the WFA website as my main link to the Association. **6/18**

- I follow WFA on facebook and twitter. 5/18
- Facebook reminders of meetings are useful. 4/18
- I do not attend branch meetings. 2/18
- I find the Branch Newsletter useful. 18/18
- I find the WFA Podcasts useful. 2/18
- I have used the Pension Records. 7/18

5. If you are a member but do not choose to attend meetings would any of the following apply.

- I have difficulty travelling.
- I don't know anyone that goes.
- I have mobility issues. 1/17
- Work commitments tend to mean evenings are difficult.

The other respondent who said he does not attend branch meetings said he is a founder member of the Branch but now lives too far away.



Special Edition WFA Coaster

In its 40th year, to commemorate 40 Years of the Western Front Association (1980 - 2020) a Special Edition slate coaster has been commissioned,. The coasters are 4" diameter round bespoke hand crafted slate coasters Individually polished and screen printed by hand, backed by a baize to avoid damage to surfaces.

Prices:

UK - £8.50 (inc. P&P)	(£7 + £1.50)
EU - £11 (inc. P&P)	(£7 + £4)
RoW - £12.50 (inc. P&P)	(£7 + £5.50)



Just Released WFA Mouse-mat

Just released is a WFA Mouse-mat. They have a fabric surface rather than the usual printed hard top laminate layer and are higher quality, also they have a rubberised base layer, these are 196 x 235mm

Prices: (£4.50 each)

UK - £5.50 (inc. P&P) (£4.50 + £1.00)

EU - £7.50 (inc. P&P) (£4.50 + £3)

ROW - £8.50 (inc. P&P) (£4.50 + £4.00)

Available now Via the Website www.westernfrontassociation.com

WFA Chesterfield Book Group

At the next meeting on **Tuesday 10th March, 7pm** ~ Labour Club, Saltergate we will talk about:

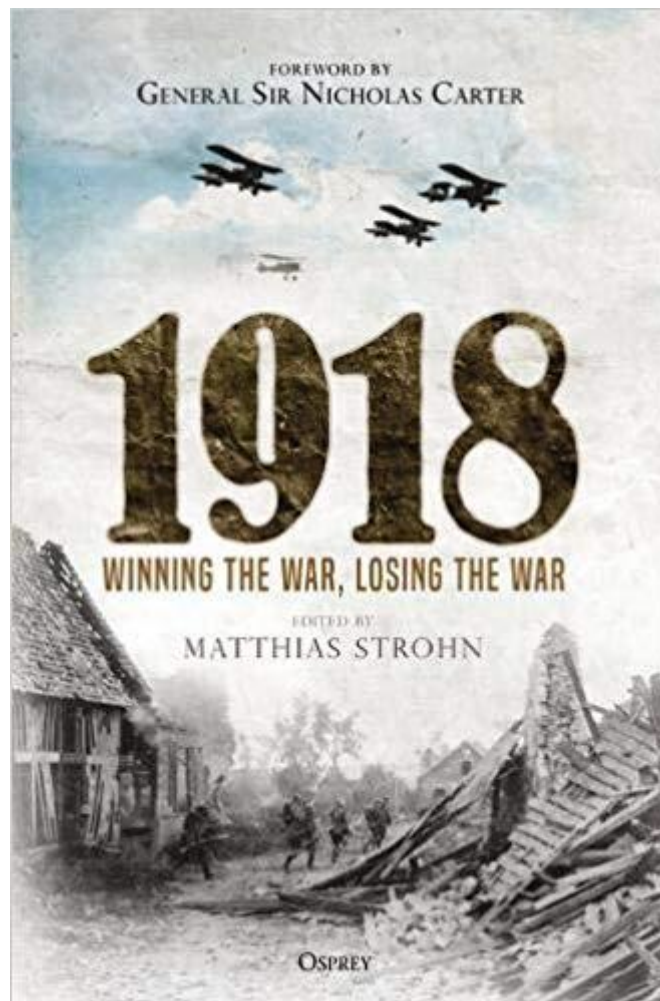
“1918: Winning the War, Losing the War” edited by Matthias Strohn

This new study is a multi-author work containing ten chapters by some of the best historians of the First World War from around the world writing today. It provides an overview and analysis of the different levels of war for each of the main armies involved within the changing context of the reality of warfare in 1918. It also looks in detail at the war at sea and in the air, and considers the aftermath and legacy of the First World War.

We thought we would do the first five chapters - (156 Pages) which are papers by different authors on the armies of Germany, France, Great Britain and USA. This will leave a further five for a later date.

Hardcover: 304 pages, Publisher: Osprey Publishing; (9 Mar. 2018)
ISBN-10: 9781472829337, ISBN-13: 978-1472829337

The book is also available on Audible and works well as a series of talks.



February Meeting

Branch Chair Tony Bolton welcomed a large attendance - good considering we had a least two `regulars` missing due to illness and another off on a long haul holiday. Ewin Astill spoke Binyon`s Exhortation while we all paused for a brief period of silent reflection. Tony mentioned the Branch Survey, thanking those who had already submitted a form and inviting those who hadn`t to do so.



Tony then welcomed our speaker for the evening Dr Graham Kemp. Graham is an assistant manager and tour guide at Lancaster Castle. He is also an amateur naval historian who has researched the Allied blockade for the past forty years, and has given many talks on the Great War. He has amassed a large library on the War, from which he draws his research for the evening`s talk *`The Impact of the economic blockage of Germany AFTER the armistice and how it led to WW2`*

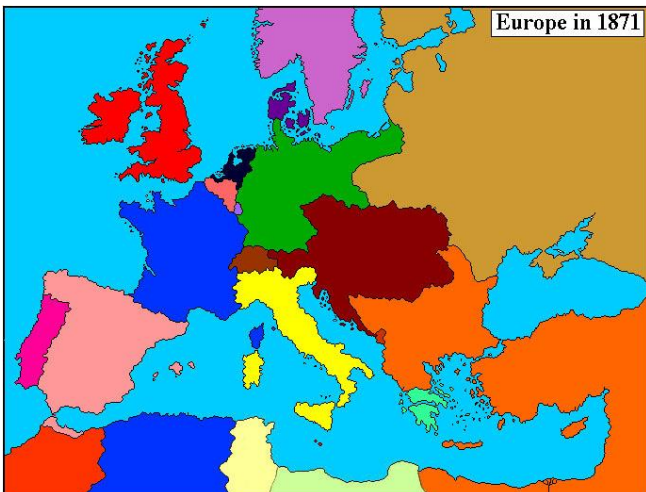
Graham opened his presentation by way of a quote....

“Think of 70 million human beings kept in semi starvation while slowly succumbing to its effects, think of all the babies in arms who died because their mothers starved, or children we became sickly and weak...and this is not a China or an India where stony nature of a land devoid of rain...but in Central Europe, the very the heart of culture and humanity. A semi starvation which was the result of decrees and power of men who want to glory in their civilisation. Where is the civilisation in that?”

These were the words of Marshall von Hindenburg in his war memoirs written in 1932, talking about Germany at the end of the Great War.

Is that statement true? How important is it? Had in any effect on the war...? That was to be what Graham`s talk was to be about and it would be up to the attendee to make up their own minds....

Graham began by describing the creation of Germany and putting it in its setting...it wasn`t just about the relationship with Britain. Germany was an `island` nation



When it was created it was surrounded by four Great Powers. It`s problem is they surround Germany. It doesn`t surround any of them. As long as three of them were on Germany`s side, it would be safe. Think of the `alliance of Emperors`...The `Driekaiserbund` - Britain, Austria-Hungary and Russia to protect Germany. Britain was very important to Germany as Graham went on to reveal why.

When Russia invaded the Ottoman Empire and were only a few miles from Constantinople, the British intervened and there was a Congress of

Berlin in 1878 at which representatives of six great powers of the time (Russia, Great Britain, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Germany), the Ottoman Empire and four Balkan states (Greece, Serbia, Romania and Montenegro). It aimed at determining the territories of the states in the Balkan Peninsula. Bismarck was persuaded by Britain to `rap the Russians over the knuckles and this offended Russia which had to pull back from its victories, Russia didn`t forgive and it gave the French the opportunity to align with Russia resulting in the Franco-Russian Alliance. Britain remained a bystander as a neutral country but still remains very important because it is Germany`s natural ally. Britain had really been allied with Germany since it began as Prussia. 1714, the fortress of Stralsund is located at the Southern coast of the

Stralsund, a sound of the Baltic Sea separating the island of Rügen from the mainland.^[3] Sweden. Now Sweden was at war with Denmark, Russia and Saxony. Britain is very concerned that if Sweden wins this war, it will dominate the Baltic, a source of much of Britain's naval supplies, so as neutrals, Britain and Prussia intervene, the Royal Navy isolating Stralsund whilst the Prussia / Brandenburg army did similar on land. It was a natural alliance - Prussia supplied the army - Britain the navy. The perfect alliance, particularly against France where the Prussians opposed us on one front, Britain on the other. The only war we lost where Prussia was not friendly/neutral was the American War of Independence with France being on the side of the Colonists, this was payback from the Prussians for Britain not backing them in the Seven Years War when Russia almost took Berlin. We were allies again in the Napoleonic era, fighting together at Waterloo...if we weren't allies we were neutrally friendly,,,indeed it was the Royal Navy which prevented the French Navy, during the Franco-Prussian War, going up and having a go at the German coastline...we sort of got in the way.

Britain went into splendid isolation only coming out of it in 1902 with the alliance with Japan.

Joseph Chamberlain spoke at Birmingham in 1904

“...it must be evident to everybody that the natural alliance is between ourselves and Germany”

So why didn't it happen? The Boer War...Concentration Camps...or more specifically what happened in the concentration camps. The German public were very anti-British at the time because of the Boer War - we were the pariah state at the time - there was no issue with ill-treating 'hottentots' - but the Boers were white, they were Europeans - you were treating Europeans in a very uncivilised manner. So the Germany government realised that, at that time, that an alliance might not be a good idea. By the time they thought of trying again, it was not the German public, but the British public which were against it - they were anti-German.

Graham then held up an old book published in 1892, one of many issued at that time about future European conflict - an all of them Britain and Germany fight alongside each other. Graham said he loved that book - why....it starts with the assassination of a Balkan prince which leads to Austria -Hungary to intervene in the Balkans, Russia declares war on Austria-Hungary, Germany declares war on Russia, France declares war on Germany. Germany invades Belgium, only passing through of course to encircle the French army and take Paris. France immediately appeals to Britain about its honour over the Treaty of Neutrality over Belgium. The book quotes Balfour as saying....

“...the British Government does not see the violation of Belgium neutrality as warranting going to war, on the basis that the French had already done it in 1870 (partly true) and, secondly that Germany is only passing through, offering Antwerp to Britain until the war is over and Belgium returns to neutrality...”

So Britain won't join Germany. Germany goes on and is defeated at the Battle of the Marne while Polish cities are bombed by Zeppelins and the Russian army is defeated by a combination of barbed wire and machine guns. The Italians enter the war, invade Savoy and the British smash - in a Trafalgar - the French navy out of existence. So everyone says it was a big mistake, war is over in six months, let's go back to where we were, let's have an armistice.

So what made the British anti-German ?.....the German navy.

The Germans decide to build a navy..as Churchill said to the German government...

“...your navy is just a luxury, ours is a necessity.”



Who is it aimed at? It could only operate in the North Sea, it could never get to the channel as its destroyers and torpedo boats did not have the range.

It could not be aimed at the Russians, it had lost its navy at Tsushima.

So who in the North Sea are you threatening?

The British public got whipped up with the threat of a German invasion, books like the 'Riddle of the Sands'...which was the first book where we are no longer allies of Germany. So the British public - not the Government - become anti-German. So the

idea of a treaty or alliance is put on hold, the last it being discussed was 1912, the thought of a United States - Germany - Britain alliance.

Churchill was trying to get the Germans to back off but the Kaiser did not like the idea of anyone in the British government telling him what he could or could not do even although it would have been good for him to do so and would not have led to the race to build Super-Dreadnoughts...`We can't wait...we want eight`.

This really drove a wedge between Britain and Germany and also forces us into the French camp because if the German navy is the only big threat to Britain in the North Sea, British battleships, currently in the Mediterranean to counter France, have to return to home waters to face a German threat. So a naval agreement is made with France - they look after the Mediterranean, Britain looks after the North Sea. Once we do that we are mutually dependent for our naval plans. Then of course Germany thinks it can drive a wedge with issues like Agadir which diplomatically back-fired and brought Britain and France closer together.

So it occurs to Germany and its war plan that it is quite likely there will be a war on three fronts....

WESTERN FRONTEASTERN FRONT.....and.....ECONOMIC FRONT. The latter is what they referred to pre-war in their plans to a war with Great Britain....an economic war.

As one commentator put it..`there is only one front in which Germany can be beaten..the economic front`

This was what the Germans really feared, a war with Britain ranged against her. Why...we have to look at what Germany had become since the Franco-Prussian War. From 1872 to 1901, Germany`s population had nearly doubled because in that period it had industrialised. Two thirds of its population now lived in industrial towns and cities - it had to be fed - you have to feed and supply an industrial workforce and if you consider where Germany got its supplies, very little was from Europe, the bulk came from overseas, Germany had become completely dependent upon overseas imports. Even although Germany was one of the largest coal producers in Europe it still imported one third of its coal requirements from Britain and the US in order to keep its factories and railways functioning. Germany has the second largest merchant marine in the world, second only to Britain, and very little naval assets that can operate outside of the North Sea so it cannot protect its sea routes like Britain. Germany had 30 cruisers - Britain 143 - that was the big issue for the Royal Navy, its cruiser force. Britain could cover its sea routes across the globe, Germany could barely cover the North Sea.

A British commentator said...

`...the problem that Germany faced from the very beginning was an economic one, she was not self-supporting and the supplies upon which she depended for feeding, clothing and munitioning her armies, after supporting its civilian population has to import from overseas.`

The Germans realise this and one expert gave them 8 or 9 months in any future war with Britain. To counter this the then Chief of Staff, von Schlieffen, came up with a plan which would win a war on three fronts....it`s not a two front war, they need to knock out France quickly, turn on Russia, and do all this in nine months. Another General said that ..`if we are not in Paris in 30 days, we have lost the war`.

As we all known Schlieffen plan is to send the German army round the back of the French army and surround it like Metz and Sedan in the 1870 war. The original French Plan XVI had the French army waiting to block the Germans on the Belgian border but Joffre said that was not aggressive enough and adopted Plan XVII which saw the French move into Alsace-Lorraine. But the original Schlieffen plan was not through Belgium...it was through HOLLAND and Belgium. They needed the railways through Holland to get those forces through. Schlieffen dies in a riding accident and is replaced by von Moltke who thought...`what if the plan doesn't succeed and Germany has to survive a war beyond nine months...how can we do that...?` He had realised of course that through neutral Europe was the way it received its supplies - through Holland, through Denmark, even Belgium . He could keep Germany supplied through the neutral countries with which it had a common border, yes, they would lose Belgium but not Holland which supports the Ruhr and the Rhineland. Supplies from America come down the Rhine via Rotterdam. Holland, and its neutrality will be `...the windpipe that will enable Germany to breathe`.

So the plan is watered down to just Belgium, but of course you cannot get so many armies through, making the Marne an inevitable defeat. So the Schlieffen plan failed, what was the Germans going to do next? Moltke is sacked and Falkenhayn is appointed. The War Cabinet ask him what to do next....his answer...simple...`make peace`. Of course they cannot do that so they tell him to think of

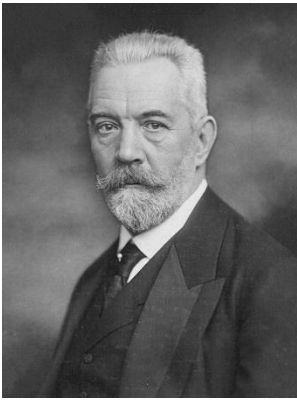
something...comes up with Verdun a year later. Actually the Germans do start to make feelers for peace in 1915 using a Copenhagen intermediary to try to find out if Russia would like an armistice or separate treaty with Germany to solve the problem.

So what was the blockade ?



There was no blockade of the Baltic and the Baltic coasts as Germany had persuaded Denmark to close off access to the Baltic Sea indeed there was 150000 tons of British shipping in Swedish ports which trapped in the Baltic for three years. There was one route out through Swedish waters but the Swedes had mined it ! It cost the British 100000 tons of wheat in 1916 to get the Swedes to release this shipping.

The American Civil War established that a distant blockade could be allowable under international law. The thing is we are not blockading Germany, within a few weeks of the start of the war the oceans had been cleared of German merchant shipping. The blockade is nothing to do with Germany, it is the blockade of neutral Europe. Neutral Europe is the `windpipe` ..that is the way Germany can survive this war, what will keep it going is imports through neutral Europe.



Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, speaking in 1916, defined the blockade.... 'England wants to victimise the women and children, the old aged, the sick and infirm of a nation of 70 million in order to force us into submission'

As Graham said...he would say that wouldn't he!

Indeed in 1914 Winston Churchill had said the same.

So, how do you blockade a neutral country? I had been discussed before the war, indeed Lloyd George had said that if Holland and Belgium remained neutral it would be very difficult...they should not be neutral, to which Churchill said 'let's force them to go one way or the other...if they won't back us - invade them' Lloyd George replied that that was a step too far. It was decided to check if these 'neutral' countries were importing more than before the conflict, if they are we know that it's going to Germany and we will deal with them ...not sure how...but we will deal with that.

Graham used as an example lubricating oil (Germany has none) but Denmark's imports in 1915 zooms up compared with pre-war and followed this with other examples - fishing - the Danes were supplying fish to Germany but relying on Britain for coal to fuel their fleet and Dundee jute for the fishing nets. We were supplying the means by which the Danes could send fish to Germany. So much fish was being sent to Germany that the Danish government had to pass a law to enable fish to be distributed to poor districts of Copenhagen. Similarly Danish pigs were being fattened up on British fodder before being sent to Germany.

So there had to be a way to put pressure on Germany by way of diplomatic pressure on neutral Europe...just persuade them. The Norwegians are quite happy, they were pro-allies. The Swedes were pro-German and did much to support Germany. The Danes, as the British Consul said 'were neither pro German nor pro Allies - they were pro-Dane. The Scandinavians refused to publish their trading statistics so it was left to British Intelligence to determine the movement of goods.

The 'neutrals' went to great lengths to cover up what they were doing for example the Danes would load a ship up with, for example, rubber send it out to sea into international waters where lo and behold it would be intercepted by a German cruiser which would 'arrest' it and take it to a German port where its cargo would be 'confiscated'. Of course the Danes would lose the value of the goods...or had they paid beforehand?

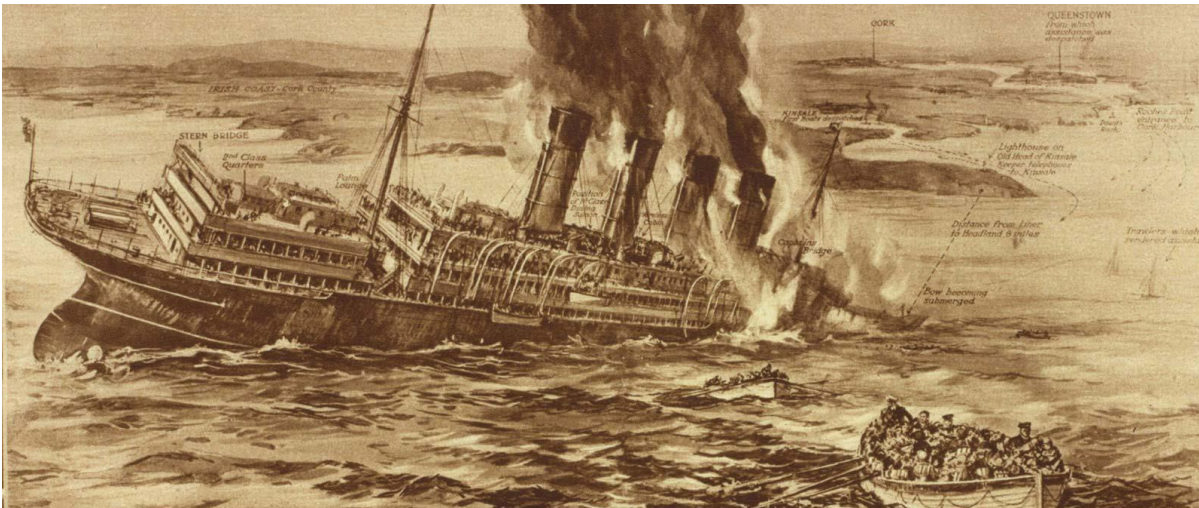
Britain is a trading nation and there was reluctance to put too much pressure on these countries, it was governed by Liberals, it was all about free trade. Then there is the United States the biggest neutral of all who did not like their commerce being interrupted at all...not that they were concerned about trading 'neutral to neutral' but because they were making a lot of money sending goods to Germany. The Americans protested everything the British did and we were reluctant to upset them as we were more and more dependent upon them for munitions. Then there was International Law, we allowed ourselves to be restricted on what we could do in a blockade. There was a problem with what was called a 'continuous voyage' ...sending goods to, for example Holland...no problem...but what if someone in Holland buys those goods and sells them on...to Germany. In other words the goods are going via Holland. How do you deal with that sort of situation? You could do what the Americans did during the American Civil War and just say 'stuff it' and interrupt it anyway. But the British didn't want to do that and anyway they had signed up to the Declaration of London, something the Germans

had wanted, as maybe they could not protect their shipping with cruisers but they could using International Law. It was not good enough to have a suspicion that a ship was carrying contraband...you had to *prove* it. This really restricted Britain's ability to enforce a blockade. The Liberal government had signed up to this but the Tory dominated House of Lords had thrown it out but it still tied us up for the first year of the war.

So to circumvent this the government came up with an Order in Council called the Reprisals Order using as an excuse that the German's had mined the Thames. Basically we are going to be on suspicion only, a suspicion that goods are destined for Germany - we will intercept them. When 'continuous voyage' was thought up by the Americans during their civil war, it was ships, a ship would call at a neutral port then continue to a belligerent port, ships would go to Nassau or Bermuda then go on to Charleston. The problem in Europe was railways, any goods arriving in Copenhagen could be in Germany a matter of hours later. Britain realised that so much stuff was getting through and Germany was surviving on it.

Germany's response to the blockade was unrestricted submarine warfare, an act against neutral Europe. Basically, Germany said that if you want to stop us trading with neutral countries we will stop you (Britain) trading with neutral countries. If we use our commerce raiders around Britain then neutral countries won't trade with you, it will hurt you as they don't want to lose their ships or their men. The international law was quite clear any shipping from neutral countries entering waters around belligerents, enters these waters at their own peril.

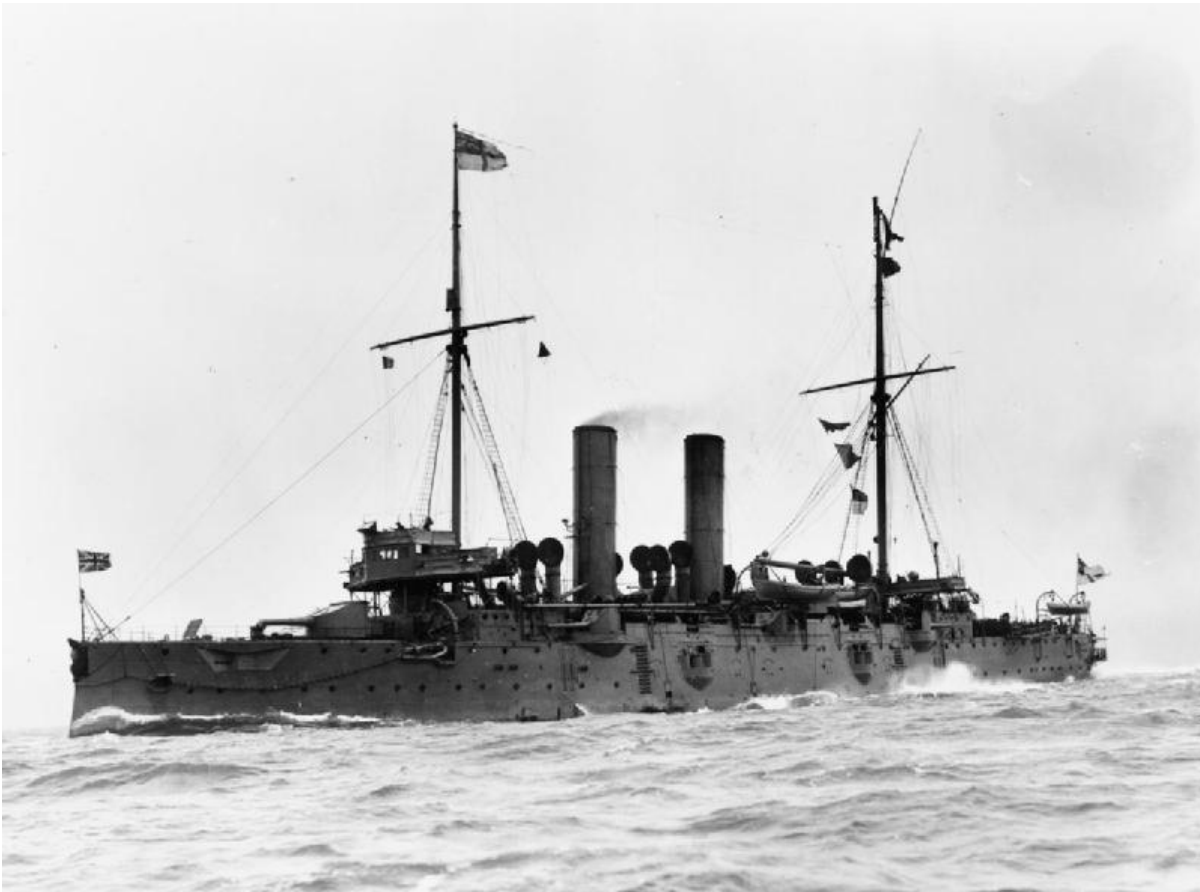
Germany then tried diplomacy to try to get America to back to international law to restrict British action and it worked as America at that time was very sympathetic towards Germany and was putting a lot of pressure on Britain....until Germany made a terrible mistake and that sympathy evaporated overnight....



....the sinking of the Lusitania and the loss of 128 US citizens.

Germany retracted their unrestricted submarine warfare order after this, but of course it was reinstated later.

So Britain had great problems, but then Britain discovered it had a secret weapon - the 10th Cruiser Squadron. These were old, out of date, barely serviceable cruisers whose duties was to stop neutral ships and investigate these for contraband.



HMS Edgar - flagship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron

These ships operated from northern Scotland to Norway, some of the roughest seas imaginable and indeed struggled to cope with the conditions and Admiral Jellicoe wanted to cease the operations but was countermanded by the Foreign Office as they considered the `stop and search` as being effective. Ship owners would not carry contraband, insurers would not insure cargoes except by charging extreme premiums. To facilitate a proper search ships carrying a variety of cargoes had to be taken into port to be properly searched, often an issue in rough seas. This could take days, particularly if contraband was well hidden. Ships are only making money when at sea and need to be turned round quickly when in port, so a ship held up for days whilst it was being searched was losing money for the ship owners. This of course had no effect on neutral governments - but it had a serious effect on neutral shipping. The Holland America Line contacted the Admiralty to give an undertaking that they were not carrying any goods that would be shipped on to Germany in return for their ships not being stopped and searched. The Admiralty agreed and other Dutch shipping companies soon followed with similar requests.

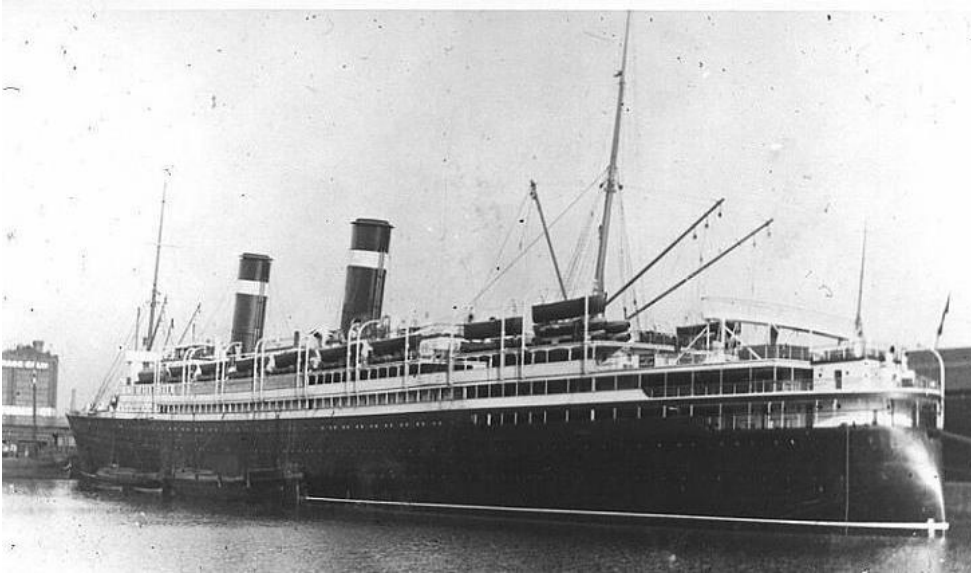
This was so effective that by 1917 you could not sell a tire in a Dutch garage without an Admiralty licence! So effective was this scheme that it was rapidly followed up by the Danes. The US government was unhappy about this, but not US shipping companies many of whom signed up to this on the understanding that the British Admiralty would not stop and search their ships as they had guaranteed that none of the cargo would ultimately reach Germany.

A report in 1916 stated...

`...the process of stopping neutral ships taking them to port for a full, detailed search for goods bound for Germany was always a source of annoyance for the neutrals...`

Admiral Beatty stated in 1917...`I can say without contradiction that the 10th cruiser squadron is doing more than any unit in the fleet to bring this war to a successful conclusion...`

The old cruisers like HMS Edgar were worn out and unfit for the rigours of the North Sea so these were replaced by armed liners which were larger, faster, ships.



SS Alsation, later flagship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron

The Grand Fleet is the support fleet to these ships as the German warships of the High Seas Fleet could sink these relatively easily. Ultimately there was 40 armed merchant cruisers operating in the waters of the north east of Scotland and the effect on Germany is dramatic and by 1916 they are feeling the bite.

`...with our troops fighting like heroes of the classical ages what is being interpreted at home is the miserable existence which could herald defeat of the Empire...` This was an extract from a German newspaper received at the Foreign Office. Indeed food riots took place across Germany in 1916. In fact Germany had to introduce `ersatz` or replacement product for the real thing for example ersatz coffee was based upon chicory.

The German working class had been, pre war, one of the wealthiest in Europe, indeed they looked upon themselves as `middle class` and were much better off compared with those workers in Britain. Now, in Germany, the workers were facing starvation. Children didn't go to school, instead they would spend hours queuing for food, afraid to move in case they lost their place. The average intake for a German worker in 1916 is 1300 calories...equivalent to that required by a child and this caused the productivity in German factories to slump by 40%. Schools closed during winter as there was no fuel for heating. German had been very proud before the war of the law abiding nature of its people - not any more - you want more food - steal it!. By 1916 juvenile crime had shot up to unprecedented levels.

Then the potato crop failed, after potatoes arrived in Europe in the middle ages, Germany never had another famine. Why did the crop fail? - it failed because they could not import fertiliser which their intense farming needed. Most fertilisers came from America. Fodder too, was in short supply as it too had come from overseas. Pigs, of which the Germans are so proud, their numbers declined and they had to have meatless days as they had to protect the breeding livestock. Leather - no longer available, everyone had to wear cardboard shoes. Cotton wasn't available, what little they had was used for munitions. Germans were living in an ersatz world. When chicory ran out they used turnip skins to make their coffee!

Germans were going around like ghosts, when the unrestricted submarine warfare resumed in 1917, Graham quoted from a U-boat officer...

`....it is shocking that we have to sink ships without warning, but when I see my children living on onions, what choice do we have...`

So, Germany is really falling apart, it has to think of a way to win the war, and it can't. It decides that it must seek peace. They had tried to seek peace through Russia in 1915, but this had failed.

The German chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, decided to make a determined effort and this time he had the backing of Erich Ludendorff although he cautioned not to move too fast...`.....we need a peace from a position of strength...let us crush the French at Verdun, blunt the British at the Somme...give it a few months...`

For a peace, everything would return to the 1914 borders although Germany was prepared to give Lorraine back, but there had to be a Poland, an independent `buffer` state between Germany and Russia, just as Belgium would be similar between Germany and France. Britain had to pay for all the loss of German commerce. Bethmann-Hollweg approached American President Woodrow Wilson who was for it, in fact so `for it` was Wilson that he said he would enforce an armistice by force - he would stop all sales of munitions to the allies if they did not agree to the armistice.

With that agreement from Wilson in his pocket, Bethmann-Hollweg went to a meeting that would decide the fate of Germany. Unfortunately whilst Bethmann-Hollweg was getting his agreement with Wilson, the Germany navy was making its plans for the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare. The navy said they could win the war, knock Britain out within six months. They had calculated that if they could sink 600,000 tons of shipping per month Britain would have to sue for peace. America might come into the war as a result of this, the German navy asserted that it would take the American military 2 years to be in a position to intervene, raise an army, train it, equip it, by that time Germany will have won the war. This was the plan the navy said, this will win us the war. Bethmann-Hollweg called it suicide.

They held the meeting in January 1917, Hindenburg was de facto, Germany's leader, not the Kaiser who by that time was a mere figurehead. Bethmann was late in arriving, the naval plan was enthusiastically received and Bethmann, cowardly, did not tell the assembly of Wilson's telegram. So Germany, fatally, went for the unrestricted submarine warfare.

In 1918 a German submarine commander who had been captured and being held in a Yorkshire PoW camp said, when he saw the food he was being given, that he knew the war was lost.

So, unrestricted submarine warfare resumed, America entered the war bringing something Germany had overlooked - economic power.

Supplies to European neutrals were made as long as America was not a belligerent, but as soon as they did, those supplies were cut off soon as America entered the war. America had supplied petrol and coal to the neutrals, much of which was used to power their fishing fleets which in turn supplied fish to Germany. Now no petrol, no coal...no fish!

With the introduction of the convoy system, Holland did not want to participate, fine, said America, we will seize all Dutch ships and intern them in US ports. Holland had to make a choice - agree to American demands, or starve. Holland agreed. Sweden, which had been pro-German, was forced, in 1918 to hand over its entire merchant marine to the allied war effort and were subsequently given one third back for their own support.

America told the neutrals they could import what they had taken in in 1913, reduced a bit for wartime conditions, but anything above that limit would be treated as contraband. This meant that materials imported by neutral states and sent on to Germany dwindled to zero and by 1917 the 10th Cruiser Squadron was disbanded as it was no longer required.

Ludendorff goes on and on about lubricating oil in his memoirs - what is so important about lubricating oil? - industry runs on it, machinery of any kind needs it, trains can't run without it, and Germany had no internal source of it. Fortunately for Germany, Roumania stupidly declares war on Germany, is beaten quickly, thereby giving Germany access to the Roumanian oil fields. Then in 1917 there is the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, for Germany this is the 'Bread Peace' - why? Because Germany won Ukraine giving them access to grain which will save Germany for another year. The Ukrainians were not very cooperative and in 1918 Germany actually invaded to take supplies by force.

Ludendorff, in his memoirs said that he sought an armistice when there was a lack of supply of lubricating oil, he couldn't move supplies to the Western Front, he couldn't move his men to the Western Front, another reason why he pushed Bethmann-Hollweg to seek an accommodation with Woodrow Wilson.

The German colossus is falling apart due to the blockade which is sapping life out of it. As Bonart Law said in November 1918.... 'the economic campaign was the most important campaign of all, far more important than the Western Front and elsewhere....'

Germany agreed, it had conquered Belgium, Poland, Serbia, Lithuania ...but the allies had conquered oil, cotton, jute, leather, coal...said Foreign Secretary Zimmerman.

The power of a world war had slipped away from the army, the strategic situation overhauled by the economic situation. Victory, which had one time would have been absolutely decisive, had not brought Germany near to peace....Germany could have won militarily but lost on the economic front. So when they came up with the armistice in November 1918 the Germans agreed to everything except Article 26, the existing blockade arrangements as set by the allies would remain unchanged, German ships at sea would be captured. Food had won the war, said Foch, food would win the peace. Matthias Erzberger complained, the imposition of Article 26 would be a one sided continuation of the sea warfare on the economic front by the allies. The armistice would close the conflict on two fronts - but not on the third - the economic front. This was what Erzberger said when he signed the armistice - an act for which he was later assassinated.... 'after the discussions which preceded the armistice, we expected terms that assured complete security for the adversaries, would have terminated the sufferings of our non combatants, but no, we are keeping it on. The war was terminated by starvation itself and it cannot be right to continue the starvation after peace was declared.'

The German fishing fleet cannot put to sea as the armistice had closed that down. The Germans have no coal - the French now operate the coalfields of the Ruhr, the Czechs the rest. Railways no longer run as there is no coal for the engines. Cereal consumption is down by 64%, meat production is only 18% of pre-war levels, fats 12%. The average adult food intake is 1000 calories. Civilian mortality rates have rocketed - up by 37% in 1918. Erzberger said 230 million people were facing the worst famine since the 30 Years War - and that was AFTER the armistice.

Graham then produced a series of statistics to back up this assertion - many people's weight loss was 50% compared to 1914 leading to a reduction in physical and mental capacity, willpower - all these affected by starvation. This led to a re-emergence of diseases like TB, dysentery, rickets, all of which were running at levels unheard of in these modern times. Fertility amongst German and Austrian women plummeted and the mortality rate amongst the

aged and very young increased. A British commentator overheard a Bavarian woman say that things were worse than when the war was raging. The rations were so poor it was said that there was more nutrition in the ration card.

Such was the shortage of coal that the Viennese police would inspect every house to ensure that coal was only used for cooking as it was against the law for it to be used for heating. Mothers of new born children were dying, as well as their babies, from lack of milk. Rickets and scurvy was rife, teenage children had the appearance of seven or eight year olds. This picture shows Berlin children at a soup kitchen during the `hungersnot` - famine



Milk was almost impossible to obtain in Germany as the allies insisted that German dairy cows be given to Belgium.

The strict maintenance of the strict rules of the blockade was imperative from a military point of view. Haig appealed to Foch to get food from Rotterdam - there was 150,000 tons of it - but the French said `no` and food just rotted on the dockside.

Graham then told an interesting story. General Plumer, who was in charge of the British forces in Germany in 1919 rushed to see Lloyd George at Versailles. Plumer (allegedly) pushed Lloyd George against the wall because the morale of his British troops was falling because German children with swollen bellies, were trying to steal the offal out of the canteen bins and he told Lloyd George he had to do something - or else!

20% of children attending school in the spring of 1919 were sent home as they were unfit to attend. Many were condemned to spend the rest of their lives, crippled, sickly and under weight.

Lloyd George approached the French who continued to refuse suggesting that the Germans pay in gold - no said the French - we want that. Eventually after weeks of British pressure the French were persuaded to allow the blockade to be lifted, this happened on the 21st March 1919 ended a whole winter of starvation for Central Europe. The French insisted that the blockade could be reinstated at any time if the Germans resisted any aspect of the peace deal.

Vienna was in a terrible state after the war, being so far from the sea, the Swidss were appalled at the situation so they sent food to Vienna in defiance of the blockade before the 21st of March.

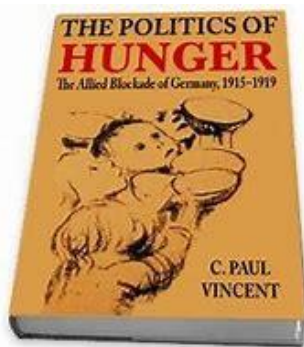
The Swiss sent train loads of food to Vienna and the Viennese have never forgotten this and they renamed a park, the `Swiss Garden` to commemorate the saving of Vienna from total ruin in the spring of 1919.

Graham said he believed the true date of the armistice to be 21st March 1919, when all three fronts were lifted.....the third being the economic front.

The last word to the Allies by one of the two German signatories to the Peace Treaty...

`...hundreds of thousands of non-combatants have perished since the November 11th armistice as the result of the continued blockade, despite our enemies being assured of their complete victory...you still wanted to kill us....the allies will some day find the memories of starvation turned against them.`

There was never more prophetic words than that, said Graham...who went on...`if you starve teenagers of fat and protein during their time of massive brain development...their emotional development is stunted with a lack of empathy and many of those teenagers of 1918 and 1919 are the Gauleiters of 1940.



Graham then held up a book `The Politics of Hunger` and in his conclusions he said ...`the victimised youth of 1915 to 1920 would become the most radical adherents to National Socialism...you cannot underestimate the part starvation played in the development of their Nazi character`. In 1938 a Frenchman interviewed 600 of Hitler`s most fanatical followers and a common thread was the memories of intense hunger and privation in their childhood.

Graham then moved on to anti-Jewish propaganda from the Nazis in the 1930s, putting up a slide showing some of the posters . What have all the Jews got in common - they are fat!



„Gut, Kleiner, bist du etwas zum Schlagen! Aber schau nicht die beide mit mir gehen.“



In 1918 the Germans had to blame somebody for the soaring food prices, so they blamed capitalists....like Jews....oh, yes...it`s the Jews, isn`t it. So when they made propaganda posters or literature the Jews were always portrayed as `fat` ...and that had an echo....which was what Graham was meaning when he had said we would pay for the winter of 1918-1919, and for the blockade we would pay hand over fist for the Second World War.

The Germany of 19139 is not the Germany of 1914, they are almost two different countries. One is run by gentlemen, the second by a group of criminals, a Germany still in a state of `ersatz` ...as Graham asked the question, did we not know that Germany did not return to its 1914 level of economy until 1964. There was still meatless days in the 1930s as even then Germany was still short of food.

There is no exact figure but over 700,000 civilians died in Germany, that in a country that had caused the least civilian deaths in the Great War. Russia and Austria caused many more in their mutual massacres of East European minorities, indeed Russian officers in their messes were talking about Jews in Galicia....wouldn't be easier just to shoot them rather than the time and effort to deport them?

Britain was the worst, we were the worst, that is why the number of books on the blockade is so small....there are more books written about the *first minute* of the Somme, than written about Britain's part in the blockade.

This is the reason we forget about it, all those people on the Western Front, they didn't need to die in all those great 'pushes', all we had to do was wait for the blockade to take effect, and stop Germany winning militarily before it's economic collapse. Let Germany though it's troops against our barbed wire and machine guns....it was losing through the blockade...we knew this....but the government couldn't admit it.

After the war, there had been so much suffering and loss on the Western Front, there was no way this story could come out as it would only have devalued the loss of life on the Western Front

There was a shock in Britain and many people who had visited Germany after the war were horrified at the state of the starving children. A charity was set up in 1919 to save German children.....what was it called..... 'Save the Children'...which still exists today as the Save The Children Fund....set up to save GERMAN children in 1919.

In his Vote of Thanks, Tony Bolton paid fulsome tribute to Graham for a very thought provoking presentation which had been delivered with a passion that comes from someone who really cares about his subject. I response Graham said it was a subject largely hidden from common sight compared with other aspects of the Great War and may be to some, controversial.

Branch Area on the National WFA Website

Members were informed some time ago that after a vote it was decided, that, as the Branch Website subscription had increased and the branch now had its own dedicated space on the National WFA website there was no point in running our own site as well. All the information that was on the Branch website was repeated on the National site which doesn't cost the branch anything. All these things being considered we took the decision to close the Branch Website and use the dedicated area on the National Website. Since doing this we have gone from strength to strength .

Here again is an easy to use guide for anyone not 100% sure on how to get into our Branch area of the National Website.

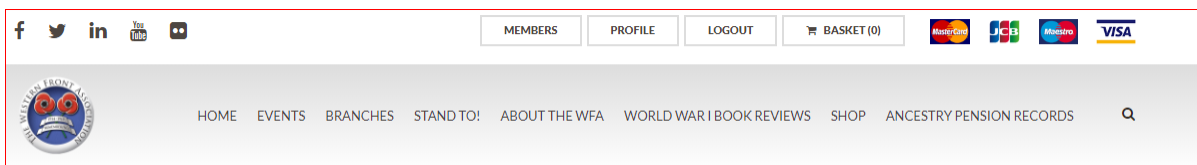
Remember the Branch area of the National Website covers the following areas:

Branch Contacts, Committee, A little about the Branch, Gallery of Previous Speakers, Recent Events, Future Events, Newsletters, Book Club, Speaker Biographies.

There is also a record of all talks given at meetings since our first one on 4th March 2010

Mark Macartney
Vice Chair/Publicity

User Guide when accessing the Branch on the Western Front Association Website



Click on Branches (above)

then against Chesterfield select view Branch (see screenshot under)

Cambridgeshire	The Comrades Club, 58 Cambridge St, Godmanchester, Huntingdon PE29 2AY	VIEW BRANCH
Cheltenham & Gloucester	National Star College, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, GL53 9QU	VIEW BRANCH
Chesterfield	Chesterfield Labour Club, 113 Saltergate, Chesterfield, S40 1NF	VIEW BRANCH
Cleveland	Bufs Social Club, 60 Norton Road, Stockton on Tees, TS18 2BX	VIEW BRANCH

Or you can use the hyperlink to go direct to our Branch,

(cut and paste) which is:

<http://www.westernfrontassociation.com/branches/united-kingdom/chesterfield/>

Either way this will bring you to our (Branch) main page:

The main page shows information on the Branch, The Committee, and a Photo Gallery of Speakers. After that the next couple of Events, (just click on 'View Event' for more info, later events are on subsequent pages).

It also shows the following: Down left side) (See Snapshots Under) Just click on any to get more info.

Contact Details

Previous 10 Recent Events (just click on any to get full info on the last 10 Events)

Branch News - for example the Book Club any info on the Book Club can be seen her

Speaker Biographies all speakers that we have info of are here

Speaker Talks. Recorded here is every speaker and title of their talk. Since we were set up in January 2010. Previous, Present and future talks

Previous 7 Newsletters

Labour Club Location and Map

Recent Events



'Impact of the economic blockade on Germany AFTER the armistice -- By Graham Kemp

04 Feb 2020



AGM, followed by a Membership Participation Presentation

07 Jan 2020



'A Hundred Years of Battlefield Tourism' with Tim Lynch

03 Dec 2019

Branch News

Newsletter

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February 2020 Issue No 50

02 Feb 2020

Newsletter

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January 2020 Issue No 49

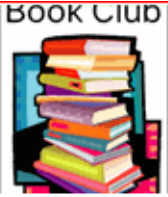
03 Jan 2020

Newsletter


48

December 2019 Issue No 48


01 Dec 2019



BOOK CLUB
16 Apr 2018




Speaker Biographies
02 Jul 2017



Speaker Talks
30 Jun 2017

Branch Location

Chesterfield Labour Club, 113 Saltergate,
Chesterfield, S40 1NF



This should be clear but if you require any more info please don't hesitate in getting in touch,

Also other than looking at the Branch dedicated area I strongly recommend that you go into the other tabs, of course some are in the member area only :

I suggest the following interest would be of SPECIAL interest

(a) STAND TO! (B) SHOP (C) ANCESTRY PENSION RECORDS

The following is only accessible through the Members Login (If you have forgotten your password you can request a New Password at this point



Finally.

You can also click here (or copy and paste) for the full List of Chesterfield Branch Speakers for 2020 (on one page)

<http://www.westernfrontassociation.com/branches/united-kingdom/chesterfield/events/>

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SOCIAL MEDIA

The Branch has a Twitter, Linkedin and Facebook Page, all are self explanatory but to get into the Facebook Page you will need a Facebook Account (The Branch and National Facebook info is detailed under)

For our Twitter Account

WFA Chesterfield

@ChesterfieldWfa

The URL is <https://twitter.com/ChesterfieldWfa>

URL for Linked in is <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8481987/>

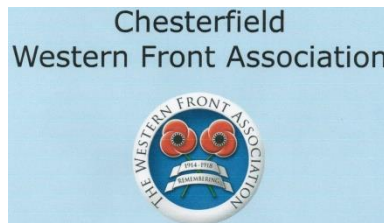
THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION FACEBOOK PAGES

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National WFA Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/westernfrontassociation/?ref=br_rs



Chesterfield Branch WFA Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/157662657604082/>

Our Story

THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION · THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2019 ·

Established in 1980 by noted military historian John Giles, The Western Front Association has grown over the years to around 6,000 members worldwide.

The WFA has supported many remembrance and research projects, from the renovation of battlefield memorials to re-establishing the 11 o'clock two-minute silence at the Cenotaph on 11 November each year. The WFA has been instrumental in saving, preserving and - in 2018/19 - publishing millions of pension records. This has enabled family historians to identify and research relatives who served in the Great War.

We have over 50 branches in the UK, with others in Ireland, Australia, Canada and the USA. Details of these branches can be found on the WFA web site

www.westernfrontassociation.com/branches

Or this link takes you to all future Events at Chesterfield Branch on the WFA Website

<http://www.westernfrontassociation.com/branches/united-kingdom/chesterfield/events/>

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The ethnic makeup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1910. Though small, the Italian-speaking Alpine and coastal provinces were near and dear to Vienna, which had very limited access to the sea.



REGIMENTAL COLOURS OF THE YORK AND LANCASTER REGIMENT

I visited Sheffield Cathedral towards the end of 2019 because I had arranged to meet Colonel (Retired) Geoffrey Norton of the Yorkshire Regiment Territorials and Chair of Trustees of the York and Lancaster Regiment. It is always a huge pleasure to spend time with Geoffrey; I have learnt a great deal from him about the York and Lancaster Regiment and I am very grateful to him for his support of the Barnsley Pals Colours Project, which I am coordinating.



Earlier in the year, Geoffrey had shown me round St George's Chapel and the York and Lancaster Regiment Crypt, explaining the significance of various Colours and other memorial items. I was pleased to hear that a new guidebook was being produced by Sheffield Cathedral.

I am sure that everyone with an interest in the First World War is aware that the Sheffield and Barnsley Pals served together in the same Brigade along with the Accrington and Chorley Pals (11th Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment). An enormous number of these Pals were killed on 1 July 1916 with many more in earlier raids and subsequent Battles of the Somme.

On this more recent occasion, I visited to collect the copy ordered of John Cornwell's latest book: 'The First and the Last of the Sheffield City Battalion' (Pen and Sword), which was inspired by Geoffrey who wrote the Foreword. I have not yet had time to read it but am looking forward to.

While in the Cathedral shop, I checked on sales of my 'History of the Barnsley Pals Colours: the 13th and 14th Battalions of the York and Lancaster Regiment', which they kindly agreed to stock for me (RRP £5 for 50 pages with all proceeds being donated to the project). I was delighted to notice that the new book was available: 'A Legacy of Remembrance: the York and Lancaster Regimental Chapels of St George' by Margaret Garner, Specialist Tour Guide (RRP £4 for 30 pages in support of Sheffield Cathedral).

I consider that these two books complement each other and I would like to recommend people to buy both and support two separate but interrelated important causes.

Margaret's book is a comprehensively researched brief history of the Chapels and the York and Lancaster Regiment with detailed explanations of the various magnificent War Memorials in Sheffield Cathedral, the spiritual home of the Regiment. There are wonderful stained-glass windows, the unusual screen of swords and bayonets, many statues, plaques and Colours, including for HMS Sheffield, and even a Columbarium (read the book to find out more!). The photographs by Paul Russell-Sewell are exquisite, making this book an impressive 'Legacy of Remembrance'.

My own history provides background information about Army Colours and the York and Lancaster Regiment then focuses on those of the 5th (Territorial) Battalion, 12th, 13th and 14th Battalions (Sheffield and

Barnsley Pals) in the First World War. I discovered with the help of Major (Retired) Andrew Greenwood at the Ministry of Defence that the Service Battalions were not issued with Colours when established because they were temporary for the duration of the war. However, King George V felt after the Armistice that they ought to be awarded in recognition of the men's much valued loyal service. While many of the York and Lancaster Colours were laid up in Sheffield Cathedral, the two King's Colours for the Barnsley Pals were laid up in St Mary's, the Civic Church in Barnsley town centre.

I found many old photographs to illustrate my book, including some of the laying up ceremonies in Sheffield and Barnsley – from Rotherham Archives and old newspapers such as 'Barnsley Chronicle'

I am shamelessly promoting my own book as well as Margaret's because of the necessity to continue to fundraise to conserve the unique War Memorial Pillar in St Mary's. Money raised so far is being spent on framing the two Colours so that they can be relocated back to the dedicated War Memorial Chapel from which they were moved inappropriately in the 1980s. Some of the grants awarded – from South Yorkshire Community Foundation (Barnsley: Y&L Fund), Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership (with Heritage Lottery Fund), five Barnsley Ward Alliances - must be spent by the end March 2020 so Conservators from the People's History Museum in Manchester are booked to carry out the work early March. (Viewings are being arranged but are limited to avoid disturbing the Conservators who have to work in St Mary's to complete the framing. Priority will be given to Friends of Barnsley St Mary and Donors).



We are extremely grateful for the generosity of many individuals and groups in making donations and purchasing books, but we still need to raise an equivalent amount to complete the project. If you would like more information about the Barnsley Pals Colours Project or our new Friends of Barnsley St Mary group, please contact me.

Jane Ainsworth

janemaa@hotmail.co.uk

45 Victoria Road, Barnsley, S70 2BU



FRIENDS OF BARNSELEY ST MARY



INVITE

Groups and Individuals interested in Barnsley to
HERITAGE CONNECTS SOCIAL

Thursday 12 MARCH 2020 2.30 – 4pm

We provide refreshments (+ CAKE)



Unique opportunity to see **Conservators framing Barnsley Pals Colours**
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CONTACTS: Rev Canon Stephen Race at St Mary's Church
Jane Ainsworth: janemaa@hotmail.co.uk 45 Victoria Rd, Barnsley, S70 2BU

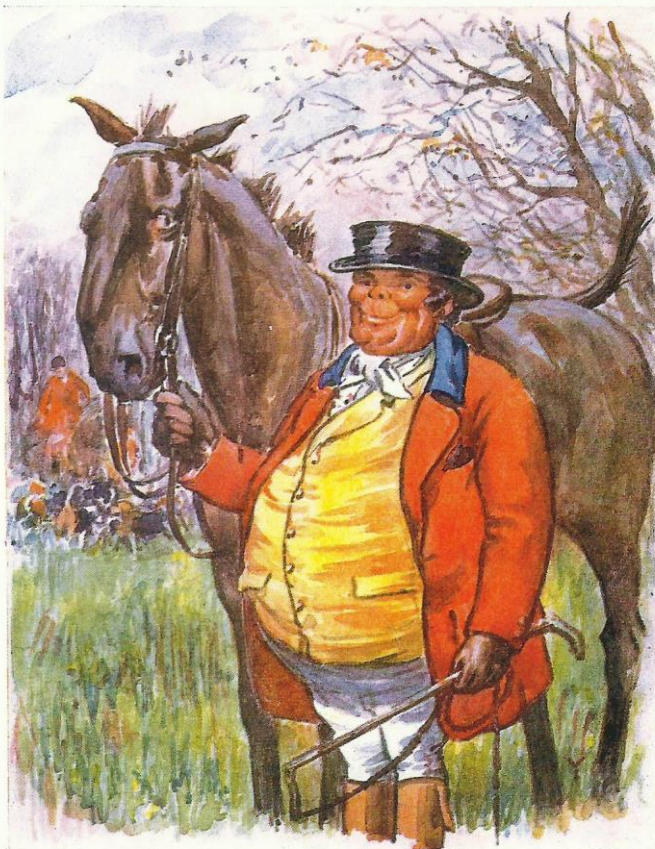
Jorrocks and Arterxeres????

At the last meeting Edwin Astill handed me a postcard (see below). This postcard was published by a company who specialise in art featuring horseracing (www.rssurtees.com) why did Edwin think this postcard was of interest to a fellow Great War afficianado? Clue was on the reverse of the card which says....

Front: Jorrocks and Arterxeres, by Sir John French, 1st Earl of Ypres

Now it is well known that Sir John French was a keen horseman (militarily his love was the cavalry) and he loved foxhunting ...but an artist ?? ...never heard that one before. The only biography I have on French is Richard Holmes excellent book 'The Little Field Marshall - A Life of Sir John French'. I can't pretend to have gone through this book in detail seeking reference to French's artistic inclinations but I have looked at the introduction, the epilogue and the index.....result...nothing.

So, could anyone enlighten us on this conundrum ??



'Tell me a man's a fox-hunter, and I loves 'im at once'

www.rssurtees.com

Edwin posted the question on the Great War Forum and several respondents suggested that the pictures may have been done by Sir John's son, the 2nd Earl of Ypres, but it appears that is not the case.

Edwin contacted Surtees, producer of the postcard, this their response...from the RS Surtees Society,

"Yes - this and several other illustrations were definitely painted by the 1st Earl of Ypres, Edwin. His great granddaughter Lucy helped with the sourcing of same."

A little bit of detective work has revealed a hitherto (I would think to most of us) unknown facet of Field Marshall Sir John French's life

Regular contributor to this Newsletter, Jane Ainsworth has sent in this article, yes, it is not a WW1 topic, but given we are approaching the 75th Anniversary of VE Day, we thought it topical and worthy of inclusion.

Rationing Across the Nations in World War 2 – 1940

Cannibalism, eggs for cash and a lack of tea - which countries suffered from food shortages in WW2?

Rationing and price control prevented against hoarding and ensured equal distribution of food and goods to both rich and poor. By limiting the production of goods and 'luxury items', governments were able to ensure enough resources could be used towards the war effort and there was enough food available for the armed forces.

To mark the 80th anniversary since rationing started in Great Britain we look back at the hardships that citizens suffered with food shortages in the Second World War when many countries suffered shortages of sugar but elsewhere millions of people died from starvation and disease.

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Great Britain

In 1939 only 30% of food was produced in the UK and relied heavily on imported goods. Merchant ships became requisitioned for the war effort and many ships destined for Britain carrying supplies were sunk by German U-boats.

The Government became heavily involved in the nation's health and food intake during the Second World War. Over 200 'Food Flash' short films were shown in cinemas, the BBC broadcast 'The Kitchen Front' and 'Food Facts' were printed in newspapers.

The 'Ministry of Food' introduced rationing in Britain on 8th January 1940.

The resulting campaigns such as 'Dig for Victory' ensured and 'Make Do and Mend' were hugely successful. Public spaces and private land across the country was used to grow food and keep animals and by 1943 there were over 1.4 million allotments producing over a million tonnes of vegetables and material was salvaged for blankets and uniforms for the Armed Forces.

'Dig for Victory' campaign was set up by British Ministry of Agriculture during WW2.

Men, women and children were all issued ration books to allow them to buy their weekly individual allowance of meat, sugar, tea, clothing, milk, eggs and fats from their registered greengrocers, tailors and butchers although people were encouraged to buy fats less often to reduce packaging waste. A points system was introduced for tinned goods, cereals, dried fruits etc which could be bought anywhere, and value was dictated according to demand and availability.

Bread wasn't rationed until the end of the war where it stayed in place for two years.

Milk and egg rations were larger for priority groups and the vulnerable (pregnant women and children) which led to free milk in schools in 1946. Children were given extra vitamins and orange juice and railway workers extra tea rations. Factories and schools began feeding their workers and students and British Restaurants provided cheap meals which relieved some of the pressures of rationing in the home kitchen.

Petrol rationing didn't end until 1950.

United

States of America

Despite America being producer and distributor of much of the rationed goods during the Second World War, it too had rationing implemented after the attack on Pearl Harbour.

Tyres, previously imported from Asia, were the first item to be rationed in January 1942 and food rationing began in May. Sugar was the first item to be restricted and the list began to grow with coffee, meat, tinned goods and vegetable oil and fats. Fuel was rationed to those who could prove a need and food items had different coloured coupons which each household received.

Sugar was one of the first foods to be rationed during the war.

Factories were converted from domestic production to items for the war effort and scrap metal drives were held so that recycled metals could be melted down for weapons and vehicles. Nylon and wool were needed for uniforms and parachutes. There was a huge increase in agriculture production as the US needed to feed its troops, citizens and allies and a new Act was passed that dramatically increased the number of Americans who then had to pay income tax.

The Soviet Union

Rationing had been in place throughout the USSR several times over the years but the invasion of the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany in 1941 saw areas besieged and surrounded without any possibility of food reinforcements. Millions of people starved both during and after the Second World War, people survived by any means they could - with even reports of cannibalism.

The siege of Leningrad (now St Petersburg) was one of the longest and most destructive in history. The blockade started on 8th September 1941 when the German army cut off the last road leading into the city, and lasted for 872 days. Thousands of people starved to death, an estimated 800,000 civilians were killed - nearly as many as all the World War II deaths of the United States and the United Kingdom combined. Some historians classify the blockade as genocide.

According to historian Lisa A. Kirschenbaum given the "unimaginable circumstances" of mass starvation, cannibalism was relatively rare. Given the scope of mass starvation, cannibalism was reported but this was not thought to be any more widespread than a few rare incidents.

More common was murder for ration cards. In 1942, the city witnessed 1216 such murders at a time when 100,000 people a month were perishing from starvation, many of them children.

Elsewhere in non-occupied areas there was a complicated system of rationing in place with the government and economy focused on war production. Rationing included bread, flour, meat, eggs, sugar and fish with those working in important industries crucial to the war effort receiving the largest amounts (and were also kept warm) but those lower rates were left unable to access food staples including meat and fish. Soldiers had more rations than civilians and would trade food with them for clothing.

Soviet soldiers became adept at foraging and using nettles and pine needles for stew.

Eventually, US shipments of food were able to get through as part of the 'Lend-Lease' bill but the impact of such food shortages and the destruction of farms, factories and industry had long lasting repercussions for the people of the Soviet Union. Official rationing was in place between 1941-47 but some remote areas still suffered under rationing for some years afterwards. A subsequent currency reform after the war also had far-reaching consequences for its citizens.

Ireland

At the start of the Second World War Southern Ireland held a neutral stance and an 'Official State of Emergency' was declared on 2nd Sept 1939 giving extra powers and control of censorship for papers and correspondence.

The war was referred to as 'The Emergency' and many foodstuffs and supplies were rationed including fuel which had a severe impact on the productivity of factories and heating of homes. (Fires were banned and electricity restrictions put in place). Ireland relied heavily on coal imports from Britain and Britain relied heavily on agricultural produce including eggs, livestock and milk from Ireland.

Tea, sugar, tobacco, soap, petrol, flour, butter and clothing were heavily rationed and marches and protests took place across Ireland as draperies, tailors and factories reacted angrily to the drastic cuts to the drapery trade. Additionally, a harsh winter destroyed much of the wheat harvest which resulted in severe shortages and bread rationing in 1942..Meat and eggs weren't rationed although it was much harder for those living in cities to get hold of them (eggs became a valuable trading commodity) and there was much reliance of locally produced goods. There was a surge in the use of bicycles and the horse and trap and trains began using turf as an alternative fuel supply and despite the backwards step in farming methods, Ireland's agricultural production soared. Imported fruits weren't rationed but they were rarely seen until the end of the war. Citizens of many countries at war began to grow their own vegetables.

Germany

Rationing was brought into Germany at the start of the war and covered meat, eggs, sugar, fruit, dairy, leather and clothes but were considered generous portions. Hitler tried hard to minimise the impact of rationing on its citizens and heavily plundered countries it invaded and sent supplies back to Germany and as such there was a thriving 'black market' and barter business.

He ensured the agriculture and farming industries were kept going by enforced labour, refugees and POWs and German citizens grew their own produce and kept animals like pigs and rabbits. Clothing was in short supply because of the disruption of cotton imports and there were coal shortages, particularly in the winter of 1939 which led to restrictions of heating for homes.

Industry and building materials were difficult to acquire because they were used for the war effort and imported goods including whipped cream, coffee, chocolate and certain types of fruit became widely unavailable but it was only in the later stages of the war when large scale bombing and destruction disrupted road and rail networks that German civilians became badly affected by food shortages when ration cards could no longer be honoured, bombing had cut off power supplies and there was no more wood or coal available.

Jane Ainsworth copied text plus one image from Forces Network e-newsletter 13.2.2020

Keen to know more about the relative who escaped to Britain and became a First World War spy, Jane Archer found answers in the city of Mainz

It could never happen now. An eight-year-old me being given a few shillings to go down to the newsagent to buy cigarettes for grandfather.

"Tell them it's for the old man with the long nose," he would tell me. I didn't have to. All these years later, I still remember he smoked Craven A. It was the days before political correctness and stranger danger, and I loved that I was grown-up enough to go to the shop alone.

In fact, I loved everything about these visits to my grandparents. They lived in Ham in a new flat with mod-cons such as central heating and a washing machine. Moreover, from nearby leafy Richmond, we could take the Tube into London. So exciting.

My home, more than 200 miles away in Cornwall, was old, always cold, and with such archaic plumbing that you could only bath in a few inches of water. With the A38 cutting us off from town, I couldn't go anywhere alone (my mother never worried about people, but busy roads were a no-no). In Ham, there were safe walkways to the shops.

Although we used to stay with them a couple of times a year, that 200-mile distance between us and my grandparents ("Pop", my grandfather and "Ham", my grandmother, so-called to avoid confusion with "Gran", who lived with us) and their deaths when I was young meant I never knew them well. But I did know about them from my mother.

Ham was a slightly eccentric, laissez-faire woman, who ate what she called "mush-mush" for breakfast (a rather unappetising concoction of oats, bran and yogurt) and shaped mum's liberal ahead-of-her-time views against marriage, exams and homework.

Pop was a German who, according to my mother, was from Germany's "other" Frankfurt on the Oder river (about 63 miles east of Berlin), and came to the United Kingdom just before the First World War.

And that's where my story really starts. He arrived in the UK in 1912 as Frederick Baruch-Shultz and was interned on the Isle of Man as an enemy alien when war broke out two years later. He had already met the woman who would become my grandmother, and her father, the influential owner-cum-editor of the Jewish Chronicle, persuaded the war office to make use of his language skills and employ him as a spy. A 007 without the mission to kill, if you will.

He was sent to Sweden with a new surname, "Sholto", and with a backstory of being a potato merchant from Birmingham. When, soon after, he feared he had been rumbled, he scarpered over the border into Norway. Hours scouring through the National Archives in Kew revealed he sent back intelligence about proposed naval bases in Norway.

His problem, once the war was over, was getting back to the UK. The Foreign Office did not have records about anyone called Sholto - an undercover name that my mother thought was inspired by the Sherlock Holmes mystery *The Sign of the Four*. Again the future father-in-law stepped in.

When my mother died 20 years ago, I didn't think much more about Pop - or indeed have any contact with the rest of her family, from which I had been cut off both geographically and by the fact that there was no meeting of minds between my father (the son of a miner) and my mother's relatives: Jewish middle-class intellectuals, who wouldn't so much as consider changing a light bulb themselves.

But then I spotted a river cruise with Saga Holidays that called into that "other" Frankfurt, along the Oder river, which flows from the Czech Republic through Poland and empties into the Baltic at Szczecin. It was a fascinating itinerary, sailing through what had been Germany and was now Poland.

As well as a chance to see where I believed my grandfather had come from, there was a day in Berlin, a tour into war tunnels built as part of Hitler's Ostwall fortifications against invasion from the east and a harrowing visit to Auschwitz, where many of my distant relatives might have ended their days.

I booked, but the cruise never happened - at least not that year - because of ice on the Oder. It was a disappointment, but it did give me some time to do a bit more research.

I enlisted the help of my sister, who managed to find out from one of family members that in fact, Pop might have come from Mainz, a town on the Rhine near Frankfurt on the other side of the country. I knew my mother's geography was poor. She had been several hundred miles out.

I had been to Mainz on a couple of Rhine river cruises, to pay homage to the man I owe my livelihood to: Johannes Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press. Now there was another reason to go. I found a cruise, my husband contacted the Mainz archive office and we were told to call in any time.

So that's how we found ourselves in an imposing 19th-century building on Rheinallee, close to the river, hoping for the best, but assuming the worst. Even if he had come from here, more than 100 years and two world wars had intervened. In the Second World War, much of Mainz was destroyed and presumably the public records with it.



The historic town centre of Mainz

I put my finger on the bell, but hesitated, fearing disappointment. “We might as well - we’ve come this far,” my husband urged. Inside, I explained my mission, brandishing a document with Pop’s date of birth.

I had anticipated the challenge of trying to make myself understood in my poor German; what I hadn’t expected was how awkward I felt explaining I was looking for information about a man who had left his homeland to escape the First World War (his plan didn’t work, but he did avoid the trenches) and went on to spy on his country.

She was unfazed, hit a few buttons on her computer and in a few minutes had unearthed his birth certificate. I had found my grandfather on a river cruise. That could have been the end of the story, except the document named his parents and identified his father’s occupation as a wine merchant. This was all news to me.

A bit more digging on the computer and Anna uncovered their marriage certificate and that they tied the knot in Neuwied, a town north-west of Mainz, also on the Rhine. A few more keys and she found their death certificates. They had both died in Offenbach across the Main river from Frankfurt.



My great-grandfather passed in 1933, my great-grandmother in 1940. The date was distressing. She would have seen her freedoms and possessions stolen one by one after Hitler came to power in 1933, lived through Kristallnacht in 1938, when the Nazis smashed Jewish homes and shops. My consolation was that she was spared the death camps.

Incredibly, the archive office still has yearbooks detailing the names and addresses of every Mainz citizen going back well over a

century. The book for 1892, when Pop was one year old, showed an address on Bahnhofstrasse.

We went to look, of course. Coincidentally just around the corner from the stadt archive, an ugly concrete block now stands there, run down and uncared for. I like to think that when he lived there, it would have been like the grand apartments across the road that had escaped the Second World War bombs. The Baruch-Shultz family was mentioned in the yearbooks for another two years and then vanished. The trail had gone cold. Well almost. I still had a nagging feeling about the “other” Frankfurt, so, when Saga rescheduled the Oder cruise this year, I was on board.



I was hoping it would be the high point of the cruise for me. Instead, I found a former East German city that feels sadly forgotten. Before 1945, it had looked over the river to Dammvorstadt in Germany; now it looks at Slubice in Poland.

After the fall of communism, with industry gone and no work, thousands of people left, I was told by Soeren, from the government’s German-Polish cross-border cooperation unit, who doubled as our guide.

Soeren offered to check the archives for any mention of my grandfather. Three months after my visit, he emailed to say he had drawn a blank.

And that’s where my search has ended. So far. Given that my great-grandfather’s business was wine, and there are acres of vineyards along the Rhine and Moselle, the family could have gone any number of places after Mainz. As I see it, that’s a good reason for going on more cruises.

WW1 pilot's items found in Leicestershire barn 'flabbergasts' expert



An "incredibly rare" collection of items belonging to a World War One pilot have been found inside a barn.

The discovery of Lt Stuart Leslie's memorabilia in Leicestershire has "flabbergasted" a militaria expert. Among the items found were a flying log book, rolls of gun camera photographs and aerial maps that would have been on his knee in the cockpit of the plane.

The collection, thought to be worth about £2,000, is due to be sold at auction next month. The discovery was sparked by the owner visiting Hansons Auctioneers in Etwell, Derbyshire, to get a valuation of a photo frame made from a World War One aircraft propeller.

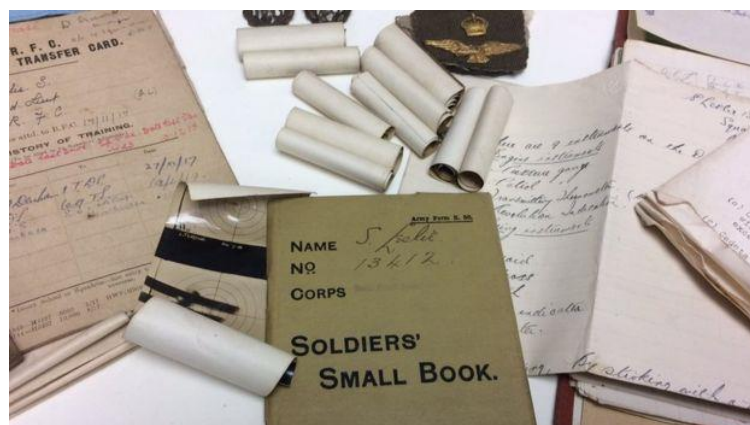
The man, who has not been named, returned to the auctioneers with a large box from the barn.

He said his mother had been given the box as part of "old family heirlooms".

A diary detailing another **soldier's experience in the Battle of the Somme** was also found in the barn and is due to be sold in the same auction.

2/10/18	12:20	Jurmer	RES	2 hrs	6,000	Engine trouble forced to land
2/10/18	6:30 AM	Smith	RES	3 hrs	6,000	Patrol. THREUSHAUX near FLÈTRE
2/10/18	11:5 AM	"	RES	2 hrs	6,000	Patrolled Corps front from PLOEGSTEERT to ERQUIN
2/10/18	9:10 AM	LEE	RES	2 hrs	6,000	Patrolled Corps front from PLOEGSTEERT to ERQUIN
2/10/18	5:15 PM	Hard	RES	1 hr 30	6,000	Dropped 4 bombs on ARMENTIERE (1 mile from 100)
2/10/18	9:30 AM	LEE	RES	3 hrs 25	6,000	Patrol, during our push north of PLOEGSTEERT
2/10/18	10:40 AM	"	RES	1 hr 50	3,000	Bomb raid on LINSELLES. (ARCHIEVERY. A)
2/10/18	"	"	RES	10	50	DROPPED 4 BOMBS 1/2 MILE N.E.
2/10/18	"	"	RES	2 hrs 40	6,000	Patrolled Corps front from WARMETON to ERQUIN
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrol on GUESNOY RAILWAY STATION (4 BOMBS. 1/2 MILE N.E.)
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Engine choked taking off cracked into 2
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrolled Corps front, dropped 4 bombs on GUESNOY
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	At 1:30 PM attacked by a PERAZ Scout at 2,500' down
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	and 2000' down & down it off, but RES forced to land
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	DAILLEUL S.W. 500' down to damage sustained in fight
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrolled Corps front from COMINES to ERQUIN
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrol. dropped 3 bombs on GUESNOY
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrolled Corps front from COMINES to ARMEN
2/10/18	"	"	RES	"	"	Patrol. dropped 6 bombs on road & rails

Adrian Stevenson, an expert in medals and militaria at Hansons, said: "I was flabbergasted when I started pulling out the items. It was a militaria treasure trove. "This has to be one of the most outstanding militaria finds I've ever made." Lt Leslie was a second lieutenant with the Royal Flying Corps, which was later changed to the Royal Air Force (RAF). His soldier's small book shows he enlisted in October 1915, aged 22 and saw active service until October 1918 with over 260 hours total flying time.

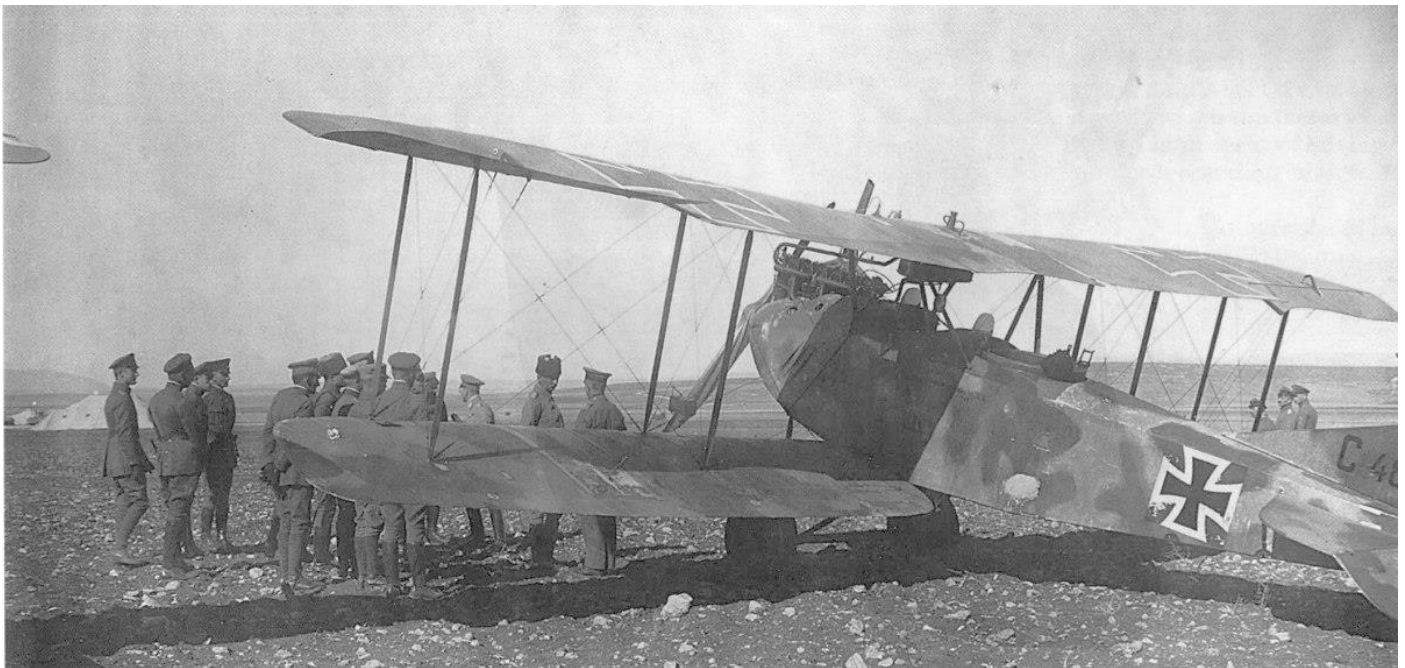


Mr Stevenson said: "The entire collection is fascinating but that pilot's flying log book is particularly special. It's incredibly rare. I have only ever seen one in a museum." It includes entries describing crash landings, number of rounds fired from a Lewis gun, number of bombs dropped and actions with enemy aircraft. It's not known how the collection ended up in Leicestershire as Lt Leslie was born in Finchley, north London, Mr Stevenson added.

.....

Some years ago a guy with whom I had worked with in the 1990s in the United States picked up a collection of Great War aviation photographs at a 'yard sale' in St. Louis, Missouri. Knowing my interest he passed them on to me. Members may recall I made a presentation to the Branch some years ago using this collection of photographs as a basis.

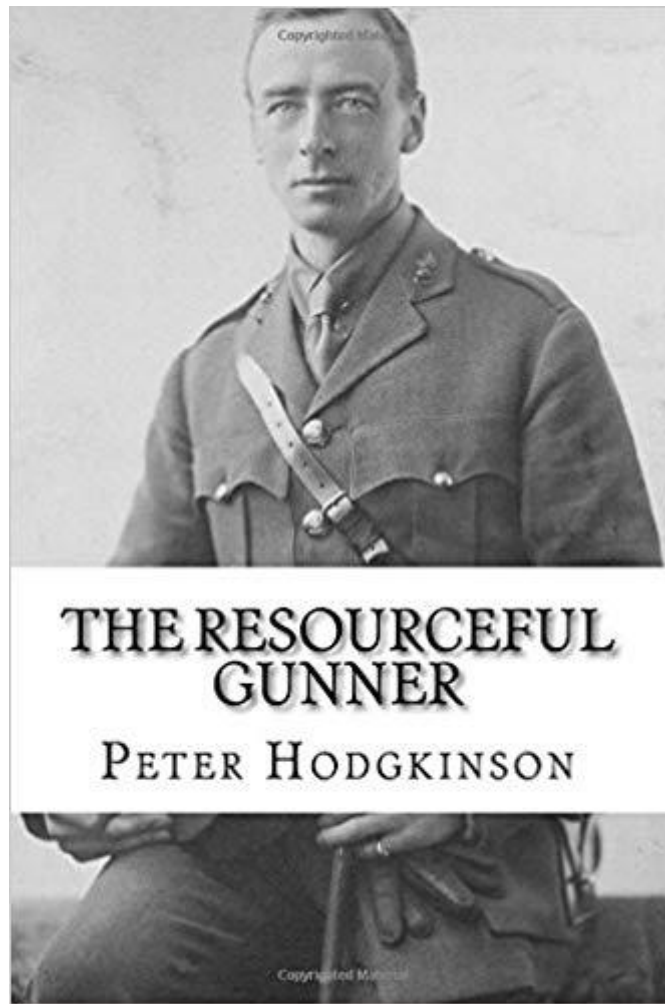
Here is one of them - German AEG C-IV 48XX-17 - a two seater reconnaissance aircraft - see here in the 'lozenge' pattern camouflage.



The C.IV was a twin-seat biplane aircraft produced by the German firm of Allgemeine Elektricitäts-Gesellschaft (or simply "AEG"). The type was primarily fielded as reconnaissance platform from 1916 onwards though it also served as a bomber escort and saw service with the German air service through to the end of World War 1 in 1918. The C.IV represented one of AEG's most successful wartime ventures with production exceeding some estimated 658 examples.

Outwardly, the C.IV was a conventional biplane through and through. The wings featured an equal span upper and lower wing assembly with double bays and parallel struts. The engine, a single Mercedes D.III water-cooled in-line type of 160 horsepower - was mounted in the extreme forward portion of the fuselage with the distinct radiator "horn" protruding from the top. The engine powered a two-blade wooden propeller. The forward portion of the fuselage was contoured to an extent, producing a somewhat aerodynamic look while the rest of the body maintained a boxy-like appearance. Seating was for two, made up of the pilot and an observer in tandem, with the pilot in the forward cockpit behind a simple windscreen.

Another book by our former Branch Chairman, Peter Hodgkinson



Conrad Hugh Dinwiddy - husband, father, sportsman, politician, surveyor, inventor and gunner - was a civilian turned artilleryman. He was one of those individuals who turned a keen brain to the technological developments necessary in winning the First World War. He invented an aerial range-finder, an aiming post scheme for night-firing, and put forward schemes for the firing of artillery from barges and the use of monorail in artillery supply. He died at the Battle of Polygon Wood in September 1917. This book delves into his pre-war world, examines his inventions and the science of accurate artillery fire, and explores the life of a 6-inch howitzer battery on the Western Front using his letters home. It also charts the careers of his brothers, two of whom were Territorial officers, two being naval officers, and one a Regular army captain, taken prisoner at the fall of Kut in 1916.

The book is 226 pages long and is currently available on Amazon for £9.99

Gallipoli - Helles Memorial to the Missing - September 2017 - my picture



The names on this panel are predominantly from the Border Regiment men from Hawick and its surroundings