



The Spire Sentinel



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



ISSUE 75 - May 2022

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



Western Front Association Chesterfield Branch – Meetings 2022

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

January	4th	.Branch AGM and Members Evening - 3 short presentations by Jon-Paul Harding, Andy Rawson and Grant Cullen
February	1st	`Steaming to The Front` - Britain`s Railways in The Great War by Grant Cullen
March	1st	`They Think It`s all Over` By Andy Rawson . Plenty has been said about the breaking of the Hindenburg Line. This presentation looks at the pursuit of the Germans which occurred during the final weeks of the war.
April	5th	<i>Soldiers and Their Horses - Horses and Their Soldiers</i> by Dr Jane Flynn - a sympathetic consideration of the soldier - horse relationship 1914-18
May	3rd	<i>`Finding Deborah`</i> by Mike Tipping. How the team that discovered tank Deborah D-51 went on to find me, and my journey to Deborah.
June	7th	<i>The Cost of the War`</i> By Roy Larkin. Hansard tells us that the Great War of 1914-18 increased the National Debt to £7,435,000,000 or £377,144,063,927 at today's value which took 100 years to pay off.
July	5th	<i>The Italian Front 1915-1918</i> by John Chester. Covers the fighting in Italy from beginning to end. Includes the contribution of the British and their part in ending the war.
August	2nd	TBA
September	6th	<i>The Inventions Department</i> by Richard Godber. A little known part of the Ministry of Munitions. Based upon Richard`s dissertation for his Wolverhampton MA, previously a very under researched area about which little was known.
October	4th	<i>`British League of Help`</i> by Dudley Giles. Nearly 90 towns, cities, and organisations in the UK, Australia, Canada and Mauritius signed up in the period 1920-1922 to 'adopt' a village, town or city in the Devastated Zone of France. Some of these adoptions lasted only a few years, some (like Sheffield's adoption of Bapaume, Serre and Puisieux) survived until after WW2
November	1st	<i>`Shell Shock and the History of Psychiatry`</i> by Jill Brunt. Based upon sessions on this subject presented to students at Northern College, Barnsley
December	1st	TBA

Issue 75 - list of contents + WFA Webinars

- 2 Branch Meetings Calendar
- 3 ` Contents Page + WFA Webinars
- 4 Secretary`s Scribbles
- 5 Committee Proposals
- 6 Branded Goods
- 7 VHS tapes available
- 8 -9 Mike Tipping - May`s Speaker
- 9 - 10 Trench Mapper
- 10 - 14 Falklands War Memories - Forty Years On
- 14 - 28 April Meeting
- 29 - 32 The ANZAC on the Wall
- 33 - 35 The Man from Brindabella
- 35 - 38 The Washington Treaty

May 2022 WFA Webinar (Planned Presentations)

WFA ZOOM MEETINGS For May, but please keep an eye on the Website and Facebook pages as sometimes there are amendments during the month Follow these links for registering (please note dates and times

09 MAY 2022 Analysing the Enemy: Major James Cuffe and Third Ypres - by Dr Jim

Beach <https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/events/online-analysing-the-enemy-major-james-cuffe-and-third-ypres/>

23 MAY 2022 The Aisne Again - the essence of

Blitzkrieg? <https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/events/online-the-aisne-again-the-essence-of-blitzkrieg/>

ALSO DON'T FORGET THE PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE

1917: The Darkest Year? - The 10th President's Conference : 21 May 2022

<https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/events/1917-the-darkest-year-the-10th-presidents-conference-21-may-2022/>

Mark Macartney will be having a Branded Goods stand at the Presidents Conference with a select few items with bags and clothing not available, everything else below will be on display for purchase at the Conference - avoid postage, Mugs-Lapel Badges - Ties - Baseball Caps - Bookmarks - Mousemats - Fridge Magnets - Coasters

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



Secretary's Scribbles

Dear Members and Friends,

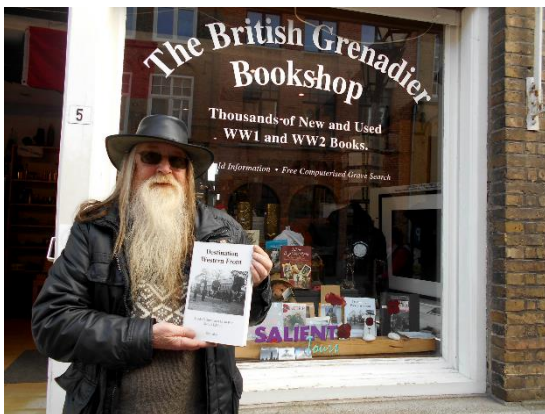
Welcome to the May 2022 edition of our Branch Newsletter....and a bumper edition it is to....thanks to all our contributors.

On May 3rd we welcome Nottingham lad Mike Tipping to the Branch to give his presentation....`Finding Deborah - How Deborah Found Me`.... A fascinating story about the tank D51 `Deborah` which was found by French farmer Philipe

Gorczynski on his land near Flesquies in November 1998 and the amazing connection of the tank with Mike. Having visited `Deborah` in Philipe`s barn some years ago - it is now on public exhibition in its own museum - I am really looking forward to this talk.

As most of you know this year is the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Campaign in the South Atlantic. One of our members, Rob Nash took part and Rob has contributed the first of two articles on his `adventures` with the Royal Engineers during the campaign. Yes, I know this is not WW1 stuff but for most of us this all took place in our lifetimes and it seems appropriate that we can read a first hand account from veteran who was there. Most of us, I think, didn`t listen more and ask questions when our Great War veterans were still among us. I certainly didn`t.

In addition to our normal raffle at the end of the meeting, I will be having a book sale table again. No fixed prices...take your pick...all we ask is a modest donation to Branch fundsand don`t forget the list of VHS tapes.....last chance to acquire or they will have to be disposed of. If you want any of them please let me know and I will get the tape(s) to you



If you look at the Calendar at the start of this Newsletter you will see that I have filled one of the gaps - June - with Roy Larkin coming up from Hampshire to give us a talk - more of a discussion, says Roy - on the cost of The Great War. For many of you who follow Great War pages on Facebook, Roy`s name and writings will be familiar. I have had a couple of long chats with him - he`s a fascinating character -who I am sure will provide us with an educational - and entertaining (his words)

evening.

Look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Tuesday

Anyway, that`s all for now,

Grant Cullen Branch Secretary

07824628638

Committee Meeting - Proposals for 2022

Your Committee met after February`s Branch Meeting and decided to canvas members to gauge support for organising the undernoted branch activities , outings etc.

Please let me know if you are interested in participating in any of the undernoted. Funds are available to support these if there is sufficient interest from members.

grantcullen@hotmail.com or 078824628638

- Book Club. Committee decided we should seek to restart this..
- Great Nottinghamshire History Fair - Mansfield 15th May. Branch to attend, sharing stand with WFA East Midlands branch
- 10th WFA President`s Conference, Birmingham, 21st May - members asked to register interest in organising subsidised transport or utilising car sharing.
- Cannock Chase visit. This was postponed from 2020. Look to be rearranged for this year
- November 11th 2022 - trip to London Cenotaph. Detailed planning required. Members asked to register interest in either Branch running a bus or a group train booking.
- Andy Rawson to plan walk / visit around remains of Redmires Camp , Sheffield where the Sheffield City Battalion trained prior to going on active service in WW1. Again, members asked to register interest.

Please let me know A.S.A.P. if you are interested in any of these events and we will plan accordingly....I am aware that some members have already expressed interest - thanks



BRANDED GOODS AVAILABILITY

New items are always being considered, so please check the Branded goods part of the shop for all items available.

Prices are inclusive of postage within UK (Branded Items Nos 1-11)

www.westernfrontassociation.com/shop/wfa-branded-items/?p=2

or call Head Office (Sarah Gunn or Maya Shapland) on 020 7118 1914

And the (Branded Clothing, Nos 12- 18) note new prices (under) effective from 1st July.

Order direct from supplier (West Coast Workwear) www.westernfrontassociation.com/shop/branded-clothing/
or ring (0800 169 2228 or 01704 873301)



1	Fridge Magnet	(£5)	59mm dia, front metal plate, high strength neodymium magnetic backplate, and plastic mylar front cover
2	Anniv' Coaster	(£8.50)	4" in diameter hand crafted slate. Individually polished, screen printed by hand and backed by a baize
3	Mousemats	(£6)	196 x 235mm fabric surface and are of high quality. They have a rubberised base layer
4	Bookmarks	(£2)	(dims 55 x 175mm) rich UV High Gloss Coating provides protection against stains and damage
5	Baseball Caps	(£8)	Lightweight 5 Panel cotton cap, adjustable with velcro rip-strip, one size fits all
6	Ties	(£11)	Length 142cm, width 9cm (at widest part), 100% Polyester
7	Lapel Badges	(£2.50)	25mm Dia. Die struck + imitation hard enamel, Silver Nickel Plating, Butterfly clutch pin
8	Mug	(£10)	11oz ceramic mug (95mm high x 85mm diameter) features the bold official WFA logo design (two sides)
9	Messenger Bag	(£27)	37 x 29 x 11cm, 100% Cotton. Full cotton lining. Zippered organiser section, Capacity:13 litres
10	Despatch Bag	(£30)	40 x 30 x 12 cm, (10) Washed Canvas, dual rear pouch pockets. Multiple zippered pockets. Capacity: 14 litres
11	Shoulder Bag	(£25)	40 x 28 x 18 cm, (10) (11) Polyester. Internal valuables pocket. Zippered front pocket. Capacity: 14 litres
12	Oxford Shirt	(£27)	Kustom Kit Short Sleeve Corporate Oxford Shirt. Easy iron button down collar, 85% cotton, 15% polyester
13	Breathable Jacket	(£71)	Russell Hydro Plus 2000 Jacket. Nylon taslon with PU Coating
14	Rugby Shirt	(£25)	Front Row Classic Rugby Shirt, 100% Cotton
15	Fleece	(£24)	Regatta Thor 111 Fleece Jacket, 100% polyester anti pill
16	T-shirt	(£17)	Russell Classic Cotton T-Shirt. 100% ringspun cotton
17	Sweat Shirt	(£22.50)	Gents Russell Jerzees Raglan / Ladies Fruit Of The Loom Raglan
18	Polo Shirt	(£20.50)	Russell Cotton Pique Polo Shirt. 100% cotton

As mentioned previously the widow of a deceased member of the WFA has kindly donated her late husband's collection of VHS video tapes - all boxed , all in good condition. Below is the catalogue of tapes - these are available for any member if they would like them...and still have a workable VHS player. All we as a branch seek is a modest donation to branch funds and any postage if applicable

BBC Series `The Great War`. This is a boxed set of 10 videos of this iconic series.

BBC Series 1914-1918 `The Crucible` - 2 videos

BBC Series 1914-1918 `Total War` - 2 videos

WH Smith Video - The Story of the Great War

WH Smith Video - The Battle of the Somme

WH Smith Video - Life in The Trenches

DD Video - Voices From the Western Front

DD Video - Forgotten Men - Human Experience of WW1

DD Video - Battles of Vimy Ridge

DD Video - The Tunnellers War

DD Video - Dying at Verdun

DD Video - Pozieres

BBC Video - Haig - The Unknown Soldier

The following tapes are of general military interest - not WW1

DD Video - Warriors of Naval Aviation

DD Video - Vickers Wellington

DD Video - Warriors of the Night - Fighters and Bombers

Story of the Spitfire

Story of the Lancaster

Story of the Hurricane

Dunkirk

Battle of Britain - 50th anniversary Tribute

Battle of Monte Cassino

Battle of Waterloo

Flying Legends - Duxford

RAF - Camel to Spitfire

RAF - Lancaster to Tornado

Last call.....So far we have had no interest in these....if no one wants them they will, sadly, have to be disposed of.



Mike Tipping

Our speaker on May 3rd

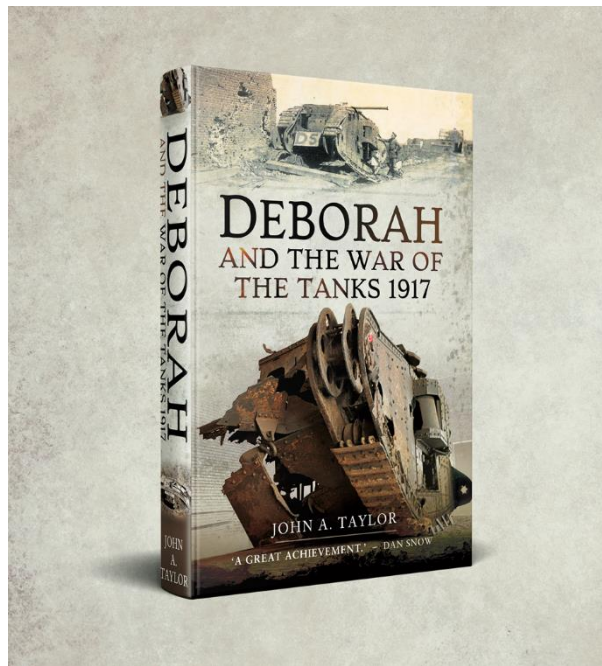
Mike`s biography

My Dad was in the print trade and it lead me in the same direction. Having gone to work with my dad during the six weeks school holidays, this helped me understand the trade from the early age of 14. I left school on the Friday and started a four year apprenticeship on the Monday - I have been in the trade ever since and have watched it change drastically over the years. I set up Chameleon Design and Print in 2006, having noticed a gap in the market. Most printers are only interested in ink on paper and when it comes to the complicated finishing or sourcing something special, they normally decline the job. This is where we made our mark, doing the unusual and the complicated. I enjoy the challenging jobs, the jobs which are different and going that extra mile to achieve the impossible.

We built the web site for John Taylor (see picture of John`s book below)

I Spent 4 years in the Territorial army, Mercian Regiment, where I made Lance Corporal

My hobbies are building precision scale models for clients all over the world miketippingmodels.co.uk



Finding Deborah - How the team that discovered Deborah D-51 went on to find me, and my journey to Deborah.....

So there I was the day after Boxing Day 2009, thinking it's all over for another year, then the phone rang.

"Mike have you got a copy of the evening post", said an excited voice, it was Pasco my friend. No I replied, ok I am coming round, why I said, I have something you need to see he replied. Well the 15 minutes it took for him to get to my house was like a life time, what was it he wanted to show me. The Nottingham Evening Post had run a double page article entitled Do you know this man Fredrick William Tipping, if you have any information get in touch with Rob Kirk from Sky news.....

Trench Mapper

The Western Front Association is delighted to announce a major new initiative which we are certain will be of great interest to everyone who has an interest in The Great War . We have launched an online portal which enables members and non-members to use our new 'TrenchMapper' to interact with (and also download) thousands of trench maps, images, and sketches that were created during or immediately after the Great War.

TrenchMapper covers mostly the British held sector of the western front, but we also have maps of Gallipoli and the UK, with hopefully other fronts to be added in future releases.

Thanks to an agreement with Imperial War Museums you can download maps for £4 per map - with two free maps available as examples. Members of The Western Front

Association can also download two maps for free every calendar month. The revenue from the sales of these downloadable maps will be used in supporting the work of both The Western Front Association and IWM.

The most innovative aspect of this is that you can use this free portal to see hundreds of maps for most 'front line' sectors of the front. At the moment, we have over 1,000 maps and images available, but this will rapidly grow over coming weeks and months. We aim to achieve an expansion of the available maps by asking members to help us to increase the number of maps and photos available on the portal from 1,000 to over 7,000.

This is a cutting-edge system that enables users to identify from a Google satellite image, street map, or topographical map the area of the front they are interested in. It is then easy to locate the maps (or mosaics of photographs) that appear at that point. The maps range from those that appeared in the Official History (and cover massive areas of the front), through to 1:40,000, 1:20,000 and 1:10,000 trench maps, and even a number of 1:5,000 maps. Mosaic images have also been built from RFC/RAF photos which show fine detail (trenches, craters, pill boxes, tanks, artillery barrages in progress). We also have German and Turkish maps available.

Using an 'opacity' slider it is possible to incrementally compare the maps and mosaic photos to what is on the ground 'now'.aa

There are lots of other 'bells and whistles' such as the ability to go to Google street view, measure distances from point to point and use advanced search functions. Not all functions will be needed by all users, but we do feel that the advanced options may well prove extremely useful to some members.

Remember, WFA Members can download two maps per calendar month for free.

Further articles and helpful videos are available on the website.

<https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/trenchmapper-public/>

MEMORIES OF THE FALKLANDS WAR – 40 YEARS ON!

40 years ago the whole of 38 Engineer Regiment RE was sitting waiting for the start of the Inter Squadron Boxing Contest when the RSM and CO climbed into the boxing ring and announced that 11 Field Squadron RE was warned for mobilization to the Falkland Islands.

We were a RAF Harrier Support Squadron, our primary role was to build Harrier Jump Jet flying sites, with landing pads, taxiway, hides, fuel bunds and runways of 350m. We'd exercised this role many times in the forests of England, Germany and Denmark. These flying sites require a massive amount of engineer equipment and stores. Using fleets of vehicles all the engineer stores, plant, vehicles, ammunition, rations, winter clothing were all loaded onto the Atlantic Conveyor. The plan was for the Atlantic Conveyor to set sail and the squadron would fly to the Accession Island to board the Landing Ship Logistical RFA Sir Bedivere and cross load the initial stores,

winter clothing, ammunition, rations etc. But with all great plans it never happened. We were put on board Sir Bedivere and immediately sent south with fleet and told the Atlantic Conveyor will catch up with the fleet and we'd use the helicopters on board the Conveyor to unload our stores directly onto land.

We received our orders to land on the second day of the landings, dig in and prepare a flying site for Harriers. The site was required so aircraft did not have to return to the carriers out at sea to refuel and could use the site to wait for missions in support of the land forces. Being aware of the air threat to the Sir Bedivere whilst we sailed south we had our welders in the ship's workshop make up stands with brackets to take 2 LMGs. Four double LMG stands were welded to each side of upper deck of the ship and the idea being we would fire tracer rounds at attacking Argentine aircraft, we did not think we'd be able to hit a fast moving jet with small arms, but we hoped to put the pilot off his aim.

We sailed into San Carlos at night to be greeted by HMS Antelope exploding and in the morning seeing her sink. Soon after first light we got our first air raid with jets coming very low over the hills to attack us. Our gun teams were soon in action and were credited with at least one kill. The aircraft had to slowdown when they came over the hills so they could select a target, making them a target for our gun teams.



RFA Sir Bedivere being attacked

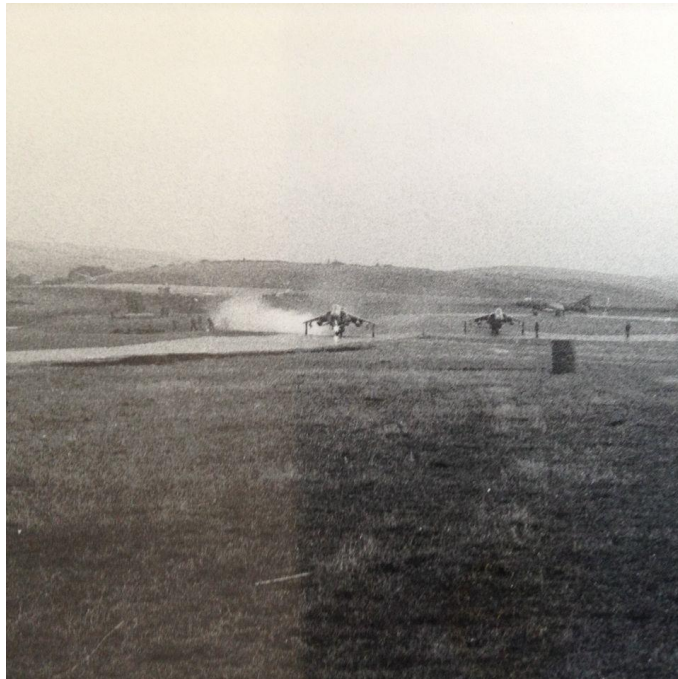
Several attacks came in during the morning. The Sir Bedivere was hit by a large (possibly 500lb) bomb which hit the bow and exploded harmlessly in the sea.

Thankfully we were soon on land and dug in. We were then given the devastating news that the Atlantic Conveyor had been hit in an air attack, but still afloat and it was planned to use tugs to drag her into the bay and beach her so we could recover as much equipment as possible. But sadly, she sank, and we had to do with the very limited stores and equipment we had. Also, we had no winter clothing, very little rations etc.

The only suitable area for a flying site would not have been used on peacetime exercises as it was very boggy in areas. But we managed with the limited stores we had and within 48hrs had both RAF and Navy Harriers using the site to refuel or as a mission tasking site.



Initial Flying Site San Carlos



Harrier Taking Off San Carlos



Laying Taxiway through a Bog



RAF Harrier Crashed on Landing



Navy Harrier That Came off Taxiway into the Bog

Once the land battles got underway and the flying site was operational the Squadron was re-tasked to support the infantry and marines in close support, clearing mines and booby traps.

When the Argentines surrendered we were moved over to Port Stanley where we started the job of clearing the masses of mines, booby traps and munitions. Then rebuilding the runway at Stanley for use by the RAF, initially for C130 Transports and Harriers, then for Phantom Jets that were sent to replace the Harriers.

By the time we got to Stanley most of the Squadron had some kind of foot-rot and other health problems from the very cold and wet conditions. We'd been living at times on very limited ration supplies and we were all extremely smelly. We managed to take over a couple of houses that required a lot of cleaning of human waste left by the out-going/evicted occupants, but we soon had the peat stove/boiler going and we all managed to get a bath in the first 24 hours, hot food and the joy of dry socks.

Forty years on and we are having a reunion in June in Ripon where we were based in 1982. It's going to be great to see the lads (the youngest will be 58) again after all this time:

A GENERATION (1917) J.C. Squire

But now all memory

Is one ironic truth,

We look like strangers at the boys

We were so long ago;

As some of the last of the Task Force troops to leave the islands we were flown home in C130's transports, a flight of 29 hours. To be met by our nearest and dearest. My wife Anne had a lot to deal with whilst I was away. We had three young children: 5 and a 3 year old and when I set sail for the south a 5 day old baby boy. As she said, "Well you just get on with it and do your best".

Rob Nash, Chesterfield WFA Member



April Meeting

For our meeting on April meeting we had a first time visitor to the Branch, Dr Jane Flynn. She is a teacher, historian, and writer with research interests in myth, memory, national identity, and the visual representation of work and war. She is the author of, *Soldiers and their Horses: Sense, Sentimentality and the Soldier-Horse Relationship in The Great War* (Routledge: 2020). She brings a lifelong passion for horses to her work. All talks are drawn from material

included in her book *Soldiers and their Horses*

"Soldiers and their Horses - Horses and their Soldiers" Sympathetic Consideration and the Soldier-Horse Relationship, 1914-1918. The War Office may only have seen a homogenous mass of men and horses, of numbers killed and the cost of their replacement, but to their 'owners' the horses were as much a part of the life of their units as their fellow men. Many soldiers fervently believed it was their horses to whom they owed their mental and physical survival.

Dr Flynn backed up her slides by quoting extensively from unpublished diaries and memoirs (these are in the care of the IWM) of men who found themselves working with horses - some by choice - others, for whatever reason, being allocated after being recruited to work in the care and good order of their equine charges.

Soldiers and their Horses - Horses and their Soldiers



Compulsory Horse Purchase

‘Impressed horses are sent by owners, or fetched by collecting parties ... and thence despatched to the stations at which they are required’.

Remount Regulations, HMSO, 1913.



‘It wasn’t just men leaving Belper in those first few days of the war. Some of the best horses in the district left on 9th August, after the Army made compulsory purchases over the previous three days’.

Mobilization

‘Impressed horses are sent by owners, or fetched by collecting parties ... and thence despatched to the stations at which they are required’.

Remount Regulations, HMSO, 1913.



Horses lined up for purchase. Courtesy of The Museum of the Horse, Tuxford.

HORSES FOR THE ARMY

The subjoined communique from the War Office was issued from the Press Bureau last night:—
It would help the Remount Service if gentlemen who still have horses at grass would get them up and condition them, and inform the War Office or local remount officers when they are fit.

Remount Regulations - Classification and Impressment

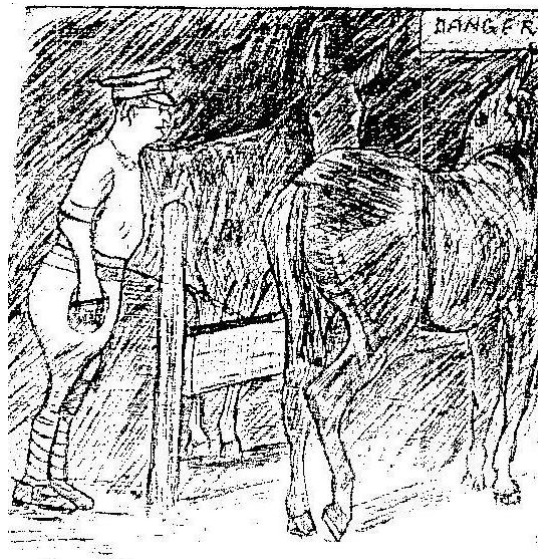
- Purchasers are not to enter the stable without the owner's permission. If this is withheld then a senior officer e.g. the deputy assistant director of remounts (or similar) will be sent to explain the need for classification to the owner.
- Should permission still be withheld, the search warrant, allowed under section 114 of the Army Act, will not be applied for without reference to the War Office.
- The classification should aim at being a complete census of horses fit for military purposes, but not more than fifty per cent of the horses in any stable are to be *allotted* for impressments, unless the command is unable to find otherwise the horses required, and allotment must be distributed equally so far as possible among the owners of fit horses in the area.
- Tact and diplomacy must be displayed towards owners.

Mobilization - The Horse Purchasers

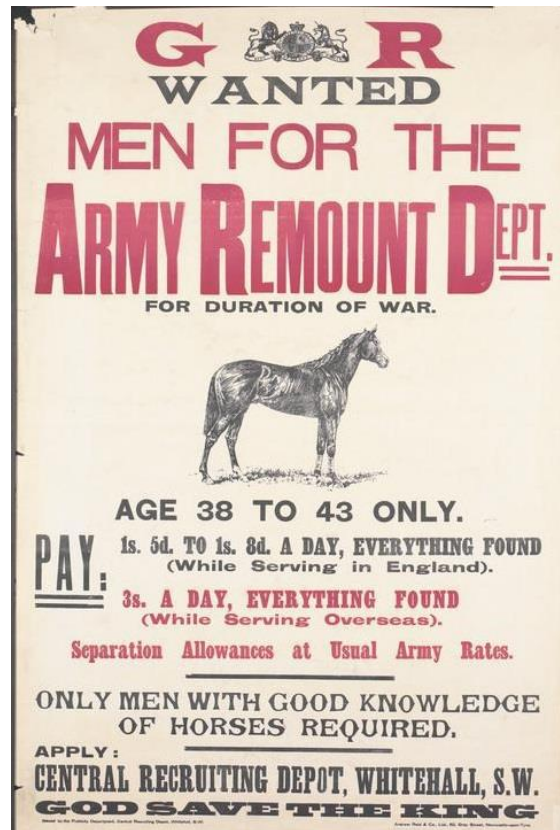


‘Melton is not just now rich, or busy, or gay; and hunting just now has all but ceased to be a form of sport. The masters themselves have said it. ... It could hardly be so looked upon when hunting men had joined the colours in thousands; and when the Remount Department had swooped in the first days of the war on the 15,000 and more hunters which were in condition and ready for service. ... Things are not yet so serious as to demand the abandonment of the Hunt steeplechases in the spring. Meanwhile Melton must go quietly along, doing its best with its remounts, its pork pies, its two more than usually busy mills, and the soldiers who fill the lodgings usually occupied in winter by grooms and gentlemen’s gentlemen’.

Recruitment - ‘Learning to Like Horses’



‘Danger!’



Riding School - 'Horses are more valuable than men!'



Daily Life - 'Horses First'



In the Field - 'Ownership' and Responsibility



'Royal Artillery are sheltered near a ruined church in Ytres, 18th January 1918.'
McLellan D., Second Lieutenant, Ministry of Information, IWM Q008446.

The Soldier-Horse Relationship - Horses as a focus for 'Sympathetic Consideration'



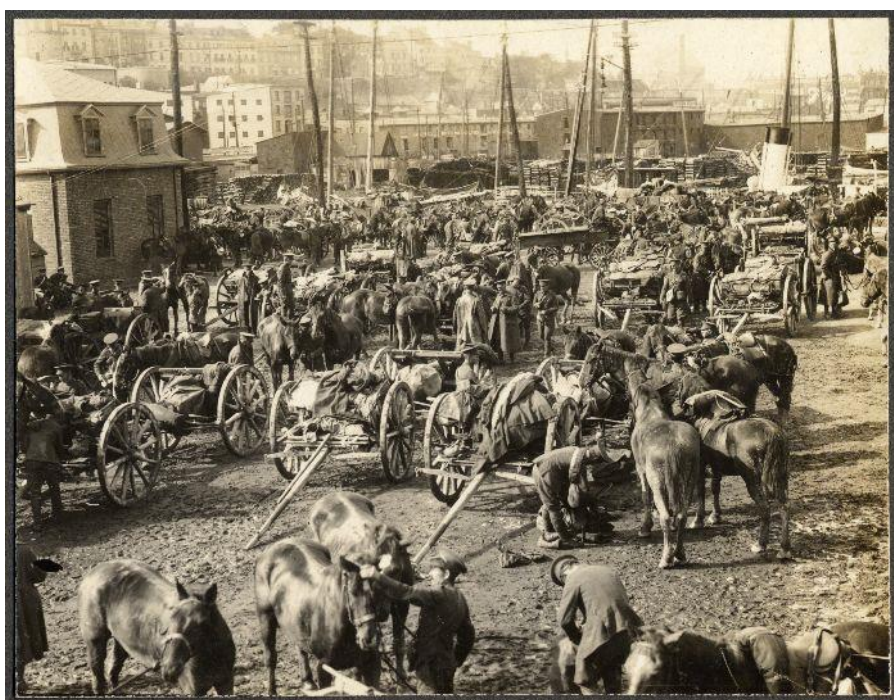
I am anxious to get out of this, half my men are sick, partly from fright. It is either shells or bombs and I expect we shall get all the animals wiped out as yet.
R.G. Flowerdew (Sergeant, Machine Gun Corps.)

The most important feature of the present war in its relation to the production of neurosis is that the training in repression normally spread over years has had to be carried out in short spaces of time, while those thus incompletely trained have had to face strains such as have never previously been known in the history of mankind. Small wonder then that the failures of adaptation should have been so numerous and severe.

W.H.R. Rivers, 'The Repression of War Experience', *The Lancet*, 1917.

I lost pals. There were quite a few killed and lots of horses. ... Horses, parts of horses all over the place. And we'd all that to clear up. It were terrible some of it.
T.E. Kirkby (Driver, Royal Field Artillery.)

War - From the Horse's Perspective - Causes of Physical and Mental Deterioration



- Loud and sudden noises
- Unfamiliar sights and smells
- Frightening experiences
- Changes in routine
- Changes in feeding
- A new yard/environment
- An unfamiliar “owner”/rider/driver
- A nervous or frightened “owner”/rider/driver
- Illness, injury, and wounding
- Separation from other horses - esp. pair bonds
- Transportation - by sea, rail, and road
- Inability to express natural behaviours - e.g. grazing

‘Horses undoubtedly suffer from nervousness due to shelling or bombing. When bombing was in progress at night, there was always a certain amount of unrest and nervousness on the picket line. One V.O. went so far as to say that a great deal of loss of appetite and consequent loss of condition on the part of the horses could be put down to “shell shock” of some kind or description’.

G.L. Reid (Officer, Royal Engineers, Cavalry Brigade.)

Horses and their Soldiers - Horses and Mules as Named Individuals



‘I called them Jimmy and Jack, and each one had their eccentricities’.

‘Unlike a horse a mule can never be trusted. He always seems to regard men as his most deadly enemy, and will watch and wait patiently for weeks to get ‘one in’. A kindly treatment, of course helps, but it might be answered with the most diabolical treachery at a most unsuspected moment’.

‘Jimmy simply intended to go home, and to work no more in the Arsenal!’

‘Jack had a nasty habit of scratching his ear with a hind foot while I was grooming him, as if to remind me of his sphere of activity’.

Private W. Pratchett, RASC Horse Transport.

Mutual Reliance in Adversity - “He took care of me”



When I decided to stay there was a lot of shelling going on and I tried to get my horse to follow the other horses, but he would not leave. ... When one realizes that a horse is terrified of shellfire, they must have a lot of confidence in a man, or whatever feeling you want to call it.

J.R. Johnston (Driver, Canadian Horse Transport.)

My mare Kitty, took it in her stride - no doubt after the two years she had already then faced belching gun and bursting gun she'd become inured, maybe already partly deaf, poor Kitty.

J.T. Capron (2nd Lieutenant, Royal Field Artillery)

A fellow soon becomes attached to his saddle horse and the feeling is very mutual, as I sometimes think the horse has the better sense of the two ... I believe my saddle horse knew more than I did, and it is one of the reasons I lasted as long as I did. He took care of me.

J.R. Johnston (Driver, Canadian Horse Transport.)

‘Winning’ and ‘Losing’ - “A Good Horse is a Treasure”



Death and Wounding - “The Tragedy when Casualties Occurred”



The End of the War - Demobilization



“ Who'll give me another half-guinea ? ”

In December 1918, *The Times* reported on what it described as a ‘ticklish problem’:

Enumerating some of the difficulties of dispersal, the speaker said there were conflicting interests to be considered. They wanted to sell the horses as quickly as they could, to save expense and to release men, but if they flooded the market they would not get a tenth of the value. There were the conflicting interests of the horse-user, the horse-breeder, and those who wanted the horse either to be destroyed or brought back to this country to escape slavery in foreign lands.

‘Army Remounts, 750,000 Horses Released, Methods of Dispersal’
The Times, 11th Dec 1918.

The Leicestershire Yeomanry - Enter Songster!



Remembrance and Recovery - Human and Equine Veterans of The Great War

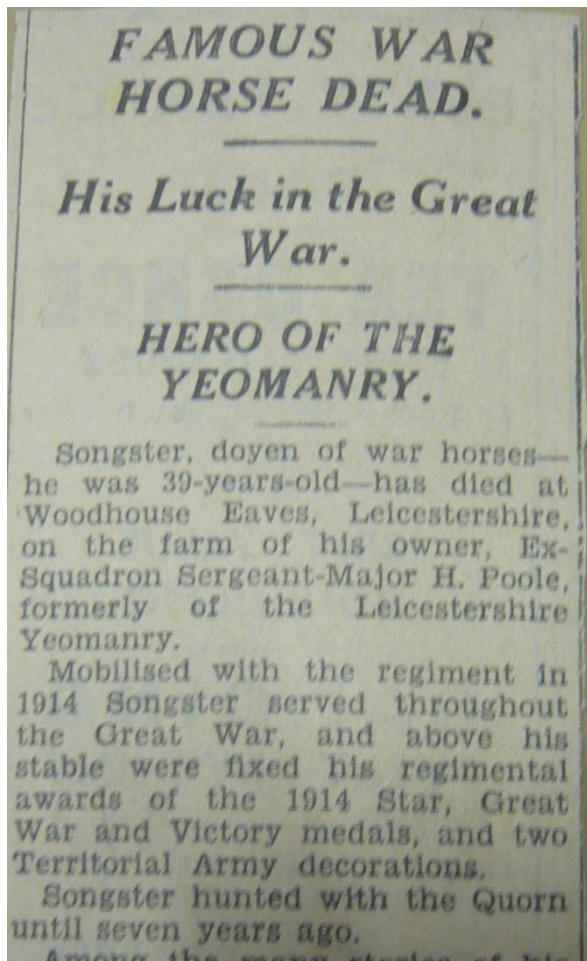


‘This picture, taken at Houghton Park camp in 1934, shows all who were left of the Leicestershire Yeomanry who served during The Great War and were still serving.’

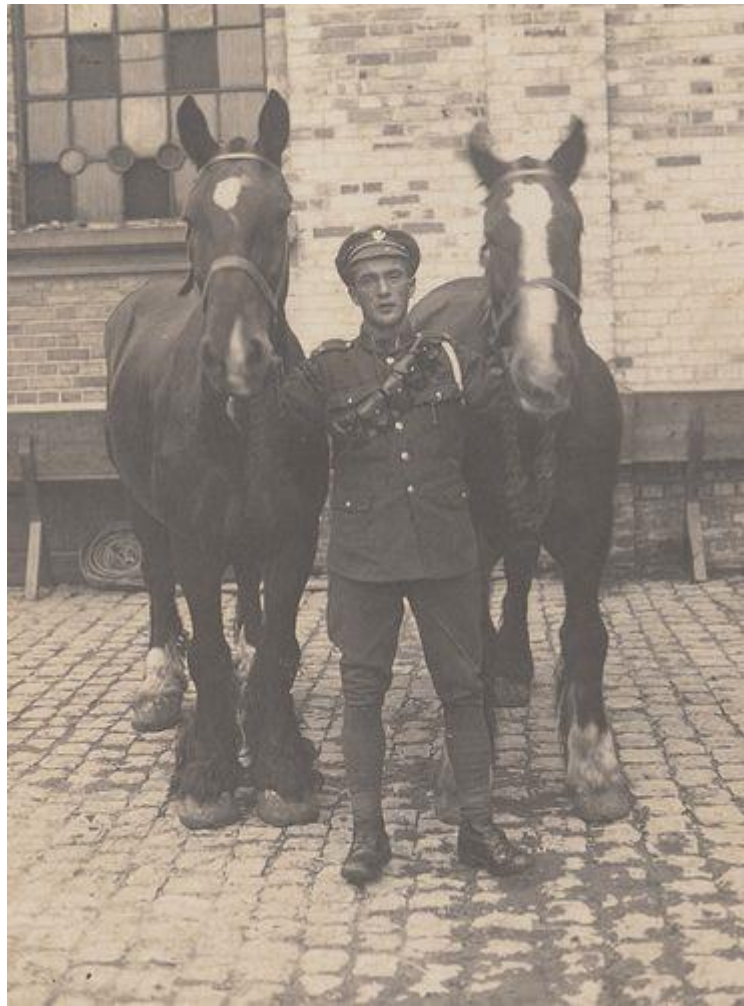
The Fortunate Few - Human and Equine Veterans



Remembering Songster - "Loughborough's very own War Horse."



Thank You!



Dr Jane Flynn

soldiersandtheirhorses.com

I came across this on Facebook a week or so ago.....very moving

April 25th is a very special day its Anzac day here's the story of
THE ANZAC ON THE WALL



I wandered thru a country town, 'cos I had some time to spare,
And went into an antique shop to see what was in there.
Old Bikes and pumps and kero lamps, but hidden by it all,
A photo of a soldier boy - an Anzac on the Wall.

'The Anzac have a name?' I asked. The old man answered 'No'.

The ones who could have told me mate, have passed on long ago.

The old man kept on talking and, according to his tale,
The photo was unwanted junk bought from a clearance sale.

'I asked around', the old man said, 'but no-one knows his face,
He's been on that wall twenty years... Deserves a better place.
For some-one must have loved him, so it seems a shame somehow.'

I nodded in agreement and then said, 'I'll take him now.'

My nameless digger's photo, well it was a sorry sight
A cracked glass pane and a broken frame - I had to make it right
To prise the photo from its frame I took care just in case,
Cause only sticky paper held the cardboard back in place.

I peeled away the faded screed and much to my surprise,
Two letters and a telegram appeared before my eyes
The first reveals my Anzac's name, and regiment of course
John Mathew Francis Stuart - of Australia's own Light Horse.
This letter written from the front... My interest now was keen
This note was dated August seventh 1917

'Dear Mum, I'm at Khalasa Springs not far from the Red Sea

They say it's in the Bible - looks like a Billabong to me.

'My Kathy wrote I'm in her prayers... she's still my bride to be

I just can't wait to see you both, you're all the world to me.

And Mum you'll soon meet Bluey, last month they shipped him out

I told him to call on you when he's up and about.'
'That bluey is a larrikin, and we all thought it funny
He lobbed a Turkish hand grenade into the CO's dunny.
I told you how he dragged me wounded, in from no man's land
He stopped the bleeding, closed the wound, with only his bare hand.'
'Then he copped it at the front from some stray shrapnel blast
It was my turn to drag him in and I thought he wouldn't last.
He woke up in hospital, and nearly lost his mind
Cause out there on the battlefield he'd left one leg behind.'
'He's been in a bad way Mum, he knows he'll ride no more
Like me he loves a horse's back, he was a champ before.
So Please Mum can you take him in, he's been like my own brother
Raised in a Queensland orphanage he's never known a mother.'
But `struth, I miss Australia, Mum, and in my mind each day
I am a mountain cattleman on high plains far away.
I'm mustering white-faced cattle, with no camel's hump in sight
And I waltz my Matilda by a campfire every night
I wonder who rides Billy, I heard the pub burnt down
I'll always love you and please say hooroo to all in town'.
The second letter I could see, was in a lady's hand
An answer to her soldier son there in a foreign land.
Her copperplate was perfect, the pages neat and clean
It bore the date, November 3rd 1917.
'T'was hard enough to lose your Dad, without you at the war
I'd hoped you would be home by now - each day I miss you more'
'Your Kathy calls around a lot since you have been away
To share with me her hopes and dreams about your wedding day.
And Bluey has arrived - and what a godsend he has been
We talked and laughed for days about the things you've done and seen'
'He really is a comfort, and works hard around the farm,
I read the same hope in his eyes that you won't come to harm.
McConnell's kids rode Billy, but suddenly that changed.
We had a violent lightning storm, and it was really strange.'
'Last Wednesday, just on midnight, not a single cloud in sight,

It raged for several minutes, it gave us all a fright.
It really spooked your Billy - and he screamed and bucked and reared
And then he rushed the sliprail fence, which by a foot he cleared'
'They brought him back next afternoon, but something's changed I fear
It's like the day you brought him home, for no one can get near.
Remember when you caught him with his black and flowing mane?
Now Horse breakers fear the beast that only you can tame,'
'That's why we need you home son' - then the flow of ink went dry-
This letter was unfinished, and I couldn't work out why.
Until I started reading, the letter number three
A yellow telegram delivered news of tragedy,
Her son killed in action - oh - what pain that must have been
The same date as her letter - 3rd November 1917
This letter which was never sent, became then one of three
She sealed behind the photo's face - the face she longed to see.
And John's home town's old timers - children when he went to war
Would say no greater cattleman had left the town before.
They knew his widowed mother well - and with respect did tell
How when she lost her only boy she lost her mind as well.
She could not face the awful truth, to strangers she would speak
'My Johnny's at the war you know, he's coming home next week.'
They all remembered Bluey he stayed on to the end.
A younger man with wooden leg became her closest friend.
And he would go and find her when she wandered old and weak
And always softly say 'yes dear - John will be home next week.'
Then when she died Bluey moved on, to Queensland some did say.
I tried to find out where he went, but don't know to this day.
And Kathy never wed - a lonely spinster some found odd.
She wouldn't set foot in a church - she'd turned her back on God.
John's mother left no Will I learned on my detective trail.
This explains my photo's journey, of that clearance sale.
So I continued digging, cause I wanted to know more.
I found John's name with thousands, in the records of the war.
His last ride proved his courage - a ride you will acclaim

The Light Horse Charge at Beersheba of everlasting fame.
That last day in October, back in 1917
At 4pm our brave boys fell - that sad fact I did glean.
That's when John's life was sacrificed, the record's crystal clear
But 4pm in Beersheba is midnight over here.....
So as John's gallant spirit rose to cross the great divide,
Were lightning bolts back home, a signal from the other side?
Is that why Billy bolted and went racing as in pain?
Because he'd never feel his master on his back again?
Was it coincidental? same time - same day - same date?
Some proof of numerology, or just a quirk of fate?
I think it's more than that you know, as I've heard wiser men,
Acknowledge there are many things that go beyond our ken
Where craggy peaks guard secrets 'neath dark skies torn asunder,
Where hoof-beats are companions to the rolling waves of thunder
Where lightning cracks like 303's and ricochets again
Where howling moaning gusts of wind sound just like dying men.
Some Mountain cattlemen have sworn on lonely alpine track,
They've glimpsed a huge black stallion - Light Horseman on his back.
Yes sceptics say, its swirling clouds just forming apparitions
Oh no, my friend you can't dismiss all this as superstition.
The desert of Beersheba - or windswept Aussie range,
John Stuart rides on forever there - Now I don't find that strange.
Now some gaze upon this photo, and they often question me
And I tell them a small white lie, and say he's family.
'You must be proud of him.' they say - I tell them, one and all,
That's why he takes - the pride of place - my Anzac on the Wall.

By JM Brown

HE CAME FROM BRINDABELLA

He came from Brindabella, in the sticks of New South Wales
A young lad with a big heart and he'd heard the soldiers tales
Of a war being fought across the world, in Belgium and in France
And larikin that this young man was, he thought he'd take his chance.
The King had called for all young men, to help seal the enemy's fate
He was 18 now and he wanted to fight, and to go with all his mates.
They joined the Army at a country fair, the recruiting stand stood out
The sergeant said "Come on me boys, be proud to wear a slouch"
His mates stood with him in the queue all waiting their turn to sign
To put their names to a long, long list, and their lives upon the line,
But this was 1916 now and the war had raged so long,
These boys thought they might miss out, they'd soon know they were wrong.
The journey to war seemed endless and the young men trained to fight.
Their drills were now precision and they believed that they were right
To face the German Army, the slaughtering, murdering Hun
And to give him back his medicine with bomb, bayonet, and gun.
These Diggers must not fail at all and allow the Germans through
To stand as tall as an ironbark tree, and stick to their mates like glue
The pride they had in their friends and corps they took to battle there
And they came upon a one road town, on a ridge, called Pozieres
No buildings stood to mark the place where people had lived and died
And that one long road, through a one horse town, would cause grown men to cry,
As the shells landed and the earth was torn and the bullets whistled round
He cried and screamed out for his Mum, and his body hugged the ground
He had seen the shell-bursts and heard the noise of battle weeks before
But this God forsaken part of France was shaking to him the core.
He looked around to see his mates and to see if they'd seen him,
But none cared about his tears and screams, they were all consumed within
This battle raged through day and night and the noise just never stopped
On the fourth day of the shelling was when the big one dropped
The crash and howling, flash and boom, the tumult in the air
Then all at once the mud came down, and bodies were everywhere.
He saw some headless faceless men where his mates had stood before
He could hear no noise and make no sense of the sights that he just saw
And they were all gone except for him, alone now in this trench
Then he looked around and took a breath and then began to wretch
The sergeant shouted, "Stand your ground" the bastards are almost here"!

And the young larrikin grabbed his gun and hate overcame his fear
His sights were set, his heart beat fast, and he took a careful aim
His mates were dead around his feet and those Germans were to blame
“You might want Pozieres” he thought, “and you can give it your best shot”
“but if you think that we Australians run, I can tell you, WE WILL NOT”
He blazed away like a man possessed, and took his targets down
And slowly, one by one they fell, until they turned around
The Diggers kept their firing up at the Germans on the run,
Their rifles were hot and bullets few but they knew they had won
They would no doubt return to try and take the town again
But the Diggers held the ground now, having paid for this small gain
Their losses had been so high and the price of victory no less
The young man stood and cried again as he helped to clear the mess
His fight had been horrendous and he knew he’d lost his friends
And he felt a strong arm around him as his knees gave way and bent
The sergeant said “No worries mate, it’s been a hard won fight,
those bastards came close to winning but we held the line tonight”
He held the young boy in his arms, as he cried out for his Ma
The kid was only 18 and he had never been away so far
Just one trip into Sydney before he came to the war
And now he sat here in the mud, a man, a boy no more
His innocence just disappeared on Pozieres ridge that day
But his luck would hold for two more years until he sailed away
He came back home to New South Wales and the town he’d left behind
And he’d grown much older than his years, and the war had changed his mind
He was full of crossed emotions and confused by anger and pride
The worst of it all was the feeling of loss about the Diggers he’d seen die
The town was nice but it wasn’t the same as it was when he had gone
His former life had been stripped away and he felt sad and so alone
They gave him medals for his chest and called him a hero true
He’d come back a sergeant smart and strong, Aussie, real true blue
His uniform so pressed and smart and people cheering in the street
And the ghosts of his Digger comrades walked with him on silent feet
His memories wouldn’t leave him for the rest of his days on earth
And for the next 60 bloody years, he knew war was a curse
At his death in 1976 the papers wrote of Pozieres
And maps showed where that one-road town had been for all those years
Where a fellow from Brindabella, had fought that bloody battle

Where he'd seen death and blood and guts, and heard machine guns rattle
And how proud this old warhorse was in his slouch hat and uniform
But they missed the bloody point my friend, he'd grown to hate that war
It had taken away his youth back then and he'd lost his innocence
In those fields in France and fighting there for the world and its defence
And he came back home to Australia, to a land he loved and missed
Where his life would now continue, where his skin would be sun-kissed
But the hatred that grew inside him for the killing and the death
Stayed with that proud old Digger, until he took his final breath.

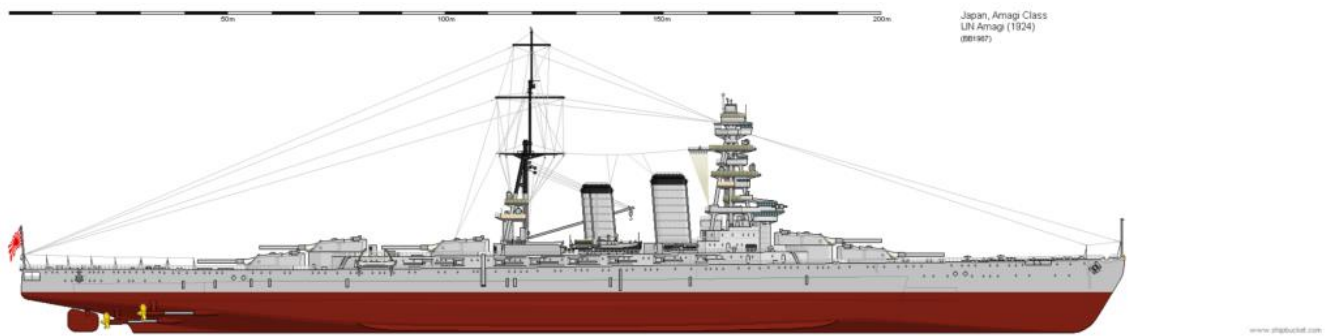
XX

The Washington Treaty

It is a century since the world's leading powers negotiated the 'Washington Treaty'. This agreement of 6 February 1922 - called the 'Five Power Treaty' at the time - required signatories to scrap numerous ships, including some as yet unfinished, dictated strict limits to naval armaments and imposed a ten-year 'holiday' on capital ship construction.

It was first time naval armaments had been limited by international agreement rather than the usual framework of political debate, national priorities, economic strength and industrial capacity, which had broadly constrained the pre-war Anglo-German naval race. That begs a question - why did some of the world's most powerful nations come together, just then in 1921-22, to agree?

The answers, however, are not hard to find. The warring nations were emotionally and financially exhausted. The pre-war international order had gone and the diplomatic landscape was very different from what it had been in 1913. This had not, however, reduced implicit tensions between the major powers. Although relations between Britain and the United States were excellent, Congress had authorised a massive naval build-up in 1916, mainly directed at Japan but implicitly challenging the Royal Navy's superiority. The general programme became a sticking point in early 1919 when British and United States delegates met in Paris to discuss a peace treaty with Germany and discussion turned to post-war power balances and relationships. The US build-up inevitably triggered a naval race with Japan, who responded with a major building programme involving capital ships of unprecedented size and power - and this despite Japan having a gross national product only about a tenth that of their rival.



Japanese battlecruiser Amagi, one of the new capital ships of unprecedented size and power planned by Japan for completion in the early 1920s. Via Shipbucket, Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International license.

Britain's problem was penury. War's end saw wholesale demobilisation. Older ships were swiftly put into reserve or sold, and as early as 1919 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Austin Chamberlain, pressed to cut the Royal Navy to just 15 capital ships for financial reasons. The Prime Minister, David Lloyd-George, was also opposed to capital ship programmes and refused to authorise new construction, anticipating an international arrangement might be made. He was not the only politician thinking along these lines. In the United States, proposals for further expansion to match Japan's build-up were floated. However, there was little political appetite to extend the 1916 plan, particularly as the US economy crashed into depression in 1920-21 when the brief post-war boom ended. That brought a 17-percent drop in gross domestic product over 14 months, and in December 1920, Congress failed to pass a vote that would have enabled further funding of the 1916 programme. Idaho senator William Borah then introduced a motion calling on the US, Britain and Japan to cut their naval construction programmes by half - this on the same day that Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels was giving testimony to the House Armed Services Committee in favour of the 1916 programme.

By this time the US had a new President-elect, Warren Harding, voted in on a platform of fiscal cuts.

This mood was generally shared among the major powers. As early as January 1921 the Japanese Prime Minister, Hara Takahashi, declared that while Japan did not intend falling behind, they would 'gladly' enter into an arms limitation agreement. The point was tacit admission that their naval build-up was unaffordable. Japanese naval spending had soared from 83 million yen in 1914 to 484 million in 1921, absorbing about a third of Japan's fiscal budget. But by then the wartime prosperity bubble had collapsed. The battleship *Mutsu* - approaching completion as negotiators gathered in Washington - was partly funded by public subscription, and work was under way on her successors; but Japan could not really afford the programme. A disarmament conference offered a negotiated way out.

The pressure for a conference grew that year. By 1921 Britain was confronting its own economic crunch, which came on top of the wide range of post-war issues the Lloyd-George administration had to tackle, including the Irish civil war and Lord Rothermere's loud 'anti-waste league'. Other trouble brewed across the Empire. The issue, as the Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon remarked during the Imperial Conference of mid-1921, was 'to keep what we have obtained'. The problem, as always, was less the cost of major government programmes as meeting interest costs on the loans

raised to fund them; Britain had emerged from war with crippling debt. Interest alone was around a million pounds a day.

Lloyd-George set up a Committee on National Expenditure under Sir Eric Geddes to find efficiencies: and to them, defence spending was a soft target. The cost was ceding naval superiority to the United States, but one the Lloyd-George government was prepared to accept. However, a treaty offered potential for negotiated parity.

In March and again in April 1921, Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty, Arthur Lee, made explicit that Britain was ready to discuss naval disarmament with the United States.



The US delegation to the Washington conference, on the steps of the State-War-Navy Building, Washington, D.C., in November 1921. Those present include: Admiral Robert E. Coontz, USN Chief of Naval Operations (left end of second row), Rear Admiral William V. Pratt, USN, directly behind Coontz). US National Archives, Catalog #: 111-SC-80628

Harding did not act until early July, when he asked the State Department to canvass opinion among the 'Principal Allied and Associated Powers' for an international disarmament conference. The conference turned out to be more wide-ranging: the naval race with Japan was tied up with power balances in Asia, and many other issues remained to be dealt with. So the conference became far broader than simply a naval discussion. Harding had official invitations issued in August, drawing in nine world powers: besides the United States, Britain and Japan there were France and Italy, Belgium, China, Portugal and The Netherlands. Alongside the naval treaty and other agreements associated with warfare, the diplomats had the task of re-defining world power balances and treaty arrangements in what was then called the 'Far East'.

The conference was due to begin on 11 November 1921, but was delayed a day so that diplomats could attend memorial services. The conference continued until 6 February 1922, producing produced multiple treaties that shaped the early inter-war power balances. These included a Four Power Treaty replacing the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the Five Power Treaty on naval arms limitation, and a Nine Power Treaty that pledged independence for China. The naval treaty was signed by Britain, the United States, France, Italy, Japan - and, separately, Britain's self-governing Dominions, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and South Africa. It was one of the key results of these discussions and became 'the' Washington Treaty.