

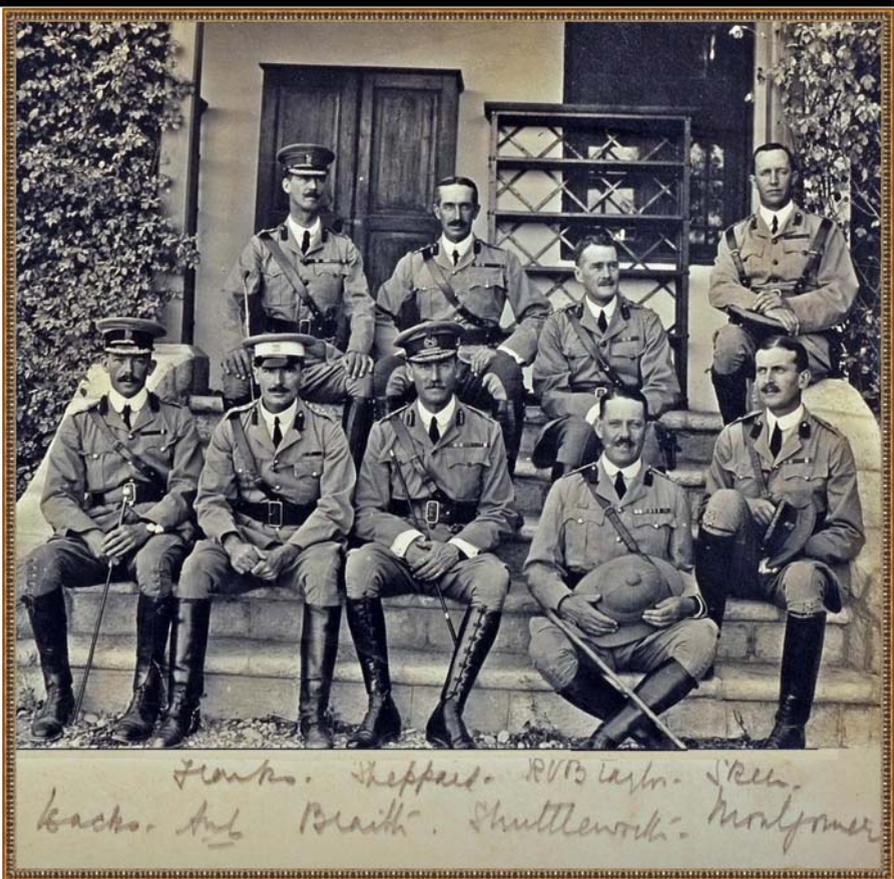


THE WESTERN FRONT
ASSOCIATION

Lancashire North Branch

Despatch

Issue 9: May 2012



The above group photo is of the staff at the Staff College, Quetta, India in 1913. According to Simon Robbins in his book "British Generalship on the Western Front 1914-18" such men and other officers with a Staff College background were the backbone of the BEF in the war years and enabled the war to be fought. The article at Page 7 describes how the photo came to light and outlines how the group produced a Field Marshall, a General, a Lieutenant General and 4 Major Generals!

Despatch contains, inter alia, the unique (?) story of a Jerseyman who lies in the Argonne, a contemporaneous "War Horse" story, unpublished war poems, a thought provoking post card and a review of the book that challenges the conventional thinking about Germany's initial war plan. Also the Editor has received an interesting letter in response to an article in last November's Despatch.

Editor's Musing (+S)

It was not until producing Despatch during last month did I realise the 100th anniversary of the Royal Flying Corps coincided with the airing of Annie Macdonell's touching poem/prayer (Page 10) for her son which could apply to all airmen then and since. The Daily Telegraph (9th April, +S) also ran a story close in time and space to Captain Macdonell's perilous flight on 20th June 1915 over Lille.

Next month will be the 10th Issue of Despatch and this caused me to look back to my thoughts for the newsletter at our December 2007 AGM. 12 or 16 pages per Issue I postulated; items of interest from other Branch Newsletters (as fillers?); "Speakers Corner" a brief paragraph. Thanks to contributions actuality has been somewhat different in width and, hopefully you will agree, quality. Your input/contribution to make Issue 10 special would be very welcome.

MORE INFORMATION FOR ARTICLES WHEN:

(+P) : photos, maps in Photo Gallery,

(+S) : supplementary information report

See our website www.wfanlancs.co.uk and look against this Despatch

TAPS FOR A JERSEYMAN: **Barrie Bertram (+P)**

At American war cemeteries throughout the world, the end of each day is marked by the playing of "Taps", a bugle call that can be likened in its purpose to the British "Last Post" or "Sunset". This occurs at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery at Romagne sur Montfauçon, some 30 miles to the northwest of the French fortress city of Verdun, and although it may seem incongruous if one has not been there, the live bugler has long since

been replaced by a recording, with loudspeakers strategically concealed in trees and other vantage points. Yet, the melancholy notes effectively carry across the white headstones of more than 14,000 American Great War dead, and they are a fitting daily tribute to these men who came to serve in France from every state of the United States of America.

And from Jersey too! For, in Block D, Row 25, Grave 25, there is one Sergeant Horace Robert Champion who served with the 127th Infantry Regiment that formed part of the 32nd US Division. He was killed in action on the 10th October, 1918 when his Regiment fought to take the strategic Heights of Romagne, during the fierce battles that faced the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in the months before Armistice and the cessation of hostilities. His entry in the American Battlefield Monuments Commission database records that he was from New Jersey. But by researching the early-1919 issues of the Jersey Evening Post (JEP) I found a reference to his death, along with a comment from his grieving Jersey family that he had been in the US for some six years.

Horace Robert, or Robert Horace according to the parish of St Helier's Baptism Records, was born on the 15th October, 1891 to William Stephen Champion and Louisa Jane Champion (née de la Haye) who lived at 37 Town Mills, his father being a coal merchant. Yet, there is a small twist in the tale with the discovery of a Jersey-born Able-Bodied Seaman Robert Horace Champion in the Royal Navy service records at Kew.

These records show that, having been employed in civilian life in Jersey as a baker, Horace had joined the RN as a Boy, 2nd Class on 1st October, 1907, stating his year of birth as the 15th

October, 1890, given the service number 239759, and committing to serve until his “30th birthday” in 1920. However, as was revealed in his naval record, he never reached that date, since on 5th August, 1912 he was reported as having gone “on

aboard the cruiser **HMS Venus.**

The act of going “on the run” appears to have been out of character even though he had “enjoyed” a 14 day stay in the cells whilst previously serving on HMS Duncan, a pre-Dreadnought battleship. He had a few days start on the Navy, with HMS Venus anchored in Stokes Bay off Portsmouth, having gone on leave with the rest of the Port Watch on the 30th July until the 5th August. It would have certainly been easy to find a US bound ship leaving Southampton at that time, while HMS Venus would weigh anchor in the early hours of the 6th August to head northwards to the Firth of Forth. This was obviously consistent with the subsequent statement from the family in 1919.

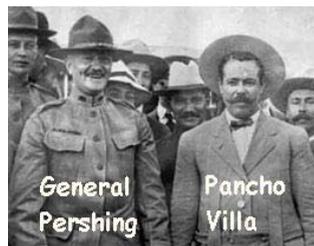
Although enquiries were put into train via the JEP, nothing initially emerged from Jersey, although I was able to find a relative there who sadly could offer nothing of note. Similarly, an enquiry to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in St Louis, MO eventually came back with a quote of \$60 to copy his papers! Unfortunately, it was ‘buying a pig in a poke’ as the number of pages was not identified, and the Archive had suffered in a fire in 1973, so that his record needed to be chemically treated first! The price tag was fundamentally more than I was prepared to pay.



But, I discovered that the JEP is seen far and wide, for, contact was made by a gentleman in Camden, New Jersey, who had picked up on my enquiry, as he is looking into the Great War dead from that city. Horace is one of those men! As a result, I received the images of an index card recording some of Horace’s details which are listed below:

Date	Event
5 Jan 1916:	Enlisted Fort Slocum, NY
5 Jan 1916:	To ‘I’ Coy, 17 Inf Regt
23 Feb 1916:	Promoted Corporal
7 April 1917:	Promoted Sergeant
1 Aug 1917:	Prom Sup(ervisory?) Sergt
17 Aug 1917:	Reverted to Sergeant
21 Aug 1917:	To 1 Coy, 1 Inf Trg Bn
12 Jan 1918:	To France (Depart USA?)
27 Mar 1918:	To 10 Coy, 1 Inf Trg Regt
1 May 1918:	Promoted First Sergeant
31 Aug 1918:	To ‘M’ Coy, 161 Inf Regt
8 Sept 1918:	Reverted to Sergeant
8 Sept 1918:	To ‘D’ Coy, 127 Inf Regt
10 Oct 1918:	Killed in Action, Romagne

Horace’s enlistment in the US Army took place fifteen months before that nation’s entry into the Great War, and my contact subsequently advised that the 17th Infantry Regiment, of which Horace was a member on joining the US Army, had been part of the US’ Mexican (or



Punitive) Expedition sent to deal with Pancho Villa after his Columbus raid in

March, 1916. Commanded by General (Black Jack) John Pershing, the Expedition was unsuccessful, and the US

forces returned as involvement in the Great War was imminent.

However subsequently, another piece of information reached me from a gentleman in Jersey. Having seen my JEP item, he had seen Horace's name in Jersey's property transaction database. It appears that when Horace's father died in 1914, the estate was shared between Horace and his siblings, and in Horace's case, he became the recipient of the 'Cottage au Milieu' on Bagatelle Lane in St Saviour. However, Horace was not in Jersey to parade before the Bailiff at the Royal Court, instead, he was to be found in the west Texas town of El Paso (and probably in Rosa's Cantina!) for, on the 29th December, 1914, he had visited an Attorney to attest as to his identity! Subsequently after news of his death reached Jersey in 1919, the cottage was very quickly sold with Horace's eldest brother receiving the money. It is unclear whether a will existed, and if it did, whether the sale of the cottage was in accord with that will, and whether the proceeds went to the right person! Perhaps I should have ordered those NARA records, if so, are there any buddies out there who could spare me a dime?

Even with just these few scraps of information, it does appear that Horace Champion's brief military career was unusual, if not almost unique, for a Briton. Given that he had become a man of property, one may also wonder what his post-war plans were? A triumphant return to Jersey perhaps? If so, would the Navy have still wanted their pound of flesh? Sadly, for him and for us, we shall never know.

Incidentally, I later came across the book "To Conquer Hell" by Edward G Lengel which looks at the American Meuse-Argonne campaign in the last few

months of the Great War. Well written, it is a surprisingly good "warts and all" account of the AEF's struggles, and has a set of very clear maps. I shall put it to good use next September when I again visit the Meuse-Argonne and look at the battlefields there with Horace very much in mind!

HE GAVE HIS LIFE TO HIS COUNTRY
HIS SOUL TO HIS GOD PEACE TO THE
HERO - Pte M G O'Brien, Royal
Newfoundland Regt

WAR HORSE (+S)

After the hype, fantasy and thrilling cavalry charge in Spielberg's "War Horse", Channel 4's "War Horse: the Real Story" was a more realistic and sober portrayal of the role of horses in WW1. Readers may feel the following contemporaneous article about War Horses which appeared in The War Illustrated on 27th November 1915 written by **Colonel the Right Hon. MARK LOCKWOOD, CVO MP**, who subsequently became a Vice President of the RSPCA, is worth a read.

The article also includes 2 photos from the Mills albums when he served with the 18th King George's Lancers in WW1 (see next article on Page 7).

HOW THE HORSE IS CARED FOR AT THE FRONT

The Magnificent Work being Done in France for Britain's War-horses

Since the beginning of the age of chivalry when first Knights spurred into battle, the horse has been always associated with the romantic pageantry of warfare. Until the last few months to think of war was to conjure up stirring visions of reckless cavalry charges of

foam-flecked chargers “clothed with thunder” and to imagine the thudding of hoofs, and the fierce shouts, of maddened men on no less maddened steeds; Of late the opinion seems to be held among civilians that horses are no longer a very important factor in the success of a campaign; this is a fallacy.

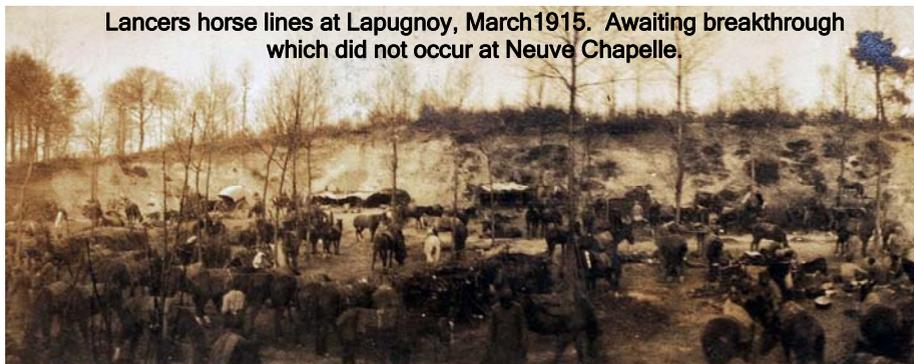
The Horse's Nameless Terror

Although it has been proved that motor traction can replace the horse in many ways, it must be remembered that good roads and country where the “going” is easy are essential for motor-transport; and these conveniences, of course, are not always accessible at the front. Therefore, in addition to cavalry - soon to

General Joffre, Sir John French, and the other leaders as they have been to every commander since the very earliest campaigns, when horses were used to drag chariots and to carry loads, and the time of Xenophon, whose “Guide for a Cavalry Commander” provides the first detailed evidence of the existence of squadrons of horse-soldiers.

So, regrettable as it is, the war-horse must still know the nameless terror of the battlefield, and suffer, and be maimed and killed for the benefit of Man. What, one wonders, does the horse think of it all. Imagine the terror of the horse that once calmly delivered a shop man's goods in quiet suburban streets as, standing hitched to a gun-carriage amid the wreck and ruin at the back of the

Lancers horse lines at Lapugnoy, March 1915. Awaiting breakthrough which did not occur at Neuve Chapelle.



play a greater part in this war thousands of horses are necessary for drawing guns, ammunition wagons', ambulances; and for transporting food and other essential supplies for the troops over bad roads and broken country.

The foregoing is not written in advocacy of the use of horses, at the front, or of the extension of their present spheres, for every animal lover, will welcome the day, if that day ever dawns, when it will no longer be imperative to utilise and sacrifice horses on the field of battle. As circumstances are, however, horses are almost as necessary to

firing-line, he hears above and all around him the crash of bursting shells, he starts, sets his ears back, and trembles; in his wondering eyes is the light of fear. He knows nothing of duty, patriotism, glory, heroism, honour - but he does know that he is in danger. At the crack of the whip he gallops into the open, amid the smoke and fumes nearer the din of battle. Possibly he neighs wildly; he may even go temporarily mad, for chargers have been known to fight fiercely with their teeth and hoofs. Then a sudden sharp pain and he falls wounded; or, a rending pang, and he is dead.

"Horse First; Man Afterwards"

Although, unhappily, the time has not yet come when horses are recognised as deserving of protection under the Red Cross flag, war-horses are at last coming into their own; for, with the splendid Army Veterinary Corps (AVC) to look after them, they are within sight of being more generously treated by Authority. In all the many branches of the Army there is no department that deserves more credit, or shows more astonishing foresight in the preparation, alleviation of suffering, and general superintendence of the animal than does the AVC. and the Remount Department.



Mills with "Gentle Lady" & "Kim"

From the beginning, of the war until October 16th only, the AVC had, I believe, already treated no less than 27,000 horses, and succeeded in saving the lives of many that would, even in times of peace, have been condemned as incurable. The horses are treated with as much care and skill as are shown to wounded soldiers, and are given an anaesthetic before being operated upon by the surgeons.

High tribute is also due to that splendid organisation the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Working under, the supervision and at the request of the War Office, the Society is rendering reliable relief to the suffering animals. The RSPCA has built many

hospital stables for thousands of horses at various points at the front; it has supplied motor-lorries and medicaments of all descriptions, and all are most satisfactory. In short, one who inspected the horses in France would not observe a single instance of neglect throughout the many thousands that are being used.

In one of the healthiest parts of France the Convalescent Horse Depot is established, and covers an area of no less than twenty miles. Here, under the careful supervision of officers of the AVC, they run to grass in well-sheltered paddocks, and so a large number of horses are saved and soon are well enough to return to active service.

The Starting of the AVC

Prior to, and during the South African War, there was no satisfactory organisation for the care of horses on active service. The experience of the South African campaign showed clearly the disadvantages of the old system, and in 1903 the Army Veterinary Corps was established. In this new corps a complete personnel was appointed. The veterinary surgeons had the assistance of trained non-commissioned officers and men to carry out, in an efficient manner, the work hitherto attempted by the farriers. The commissioned officers of the corps are qualified veterinary surgeons who have passed four years at a veterinary college or university.

At the numerous places throughout Northern France where the AVC horse hospitals are situated more help of various kinds is needed. I can assure all those who have subscribed in answer to the Duke of Portland's appeal on behalf of the RSPCA Fund that nothing could be of more benefit to horses at the front than this fund. The Society is the only one

recognised and authorised by the Army Council to collect funds for our horses with the armies. Its aim is to augment the supply of horse hospitals, horse shelters, medical stores, hospital and stable requisites such as rugs, woollen bandages, head collars, halters and to provide horse-drawn ambulances and motor-ambulances, which are very badly wanted to convey from railway stations horses kicked and lamed en route, and horses not injured severely enough to necessitate their being destroyed, but: suffering from wounds that prevent their walking from the station to the convalescent farms. Motor-lorries are needed for the rapid conveyance of fodder from the base hospitals, where the stores are kept, to the convalescent farms and hospitals miles away. With the advent of winter, the horses will be unable to graze, and so there will be more feeding to be done.

Until the time comes when the Red Cross of Geneva protects human and animal combatants alike, we, who have made laws to protect animals in peace time, must take all care to protect them also in war time. The horses of the British Army are an integral part of the British Army itself, and the care which the soldiers give to their horses shows that they value their co-operation and their friendship. We all want to help the men who are fighting for their country's honour, and, having helped them to the best of our ability, we must continue to see that their horses are not neglected."

A SILENT STRING IN MEMORY'S
HEART IS DEEPLY TOUCHED TODAY -
Richard Talbot served as Pte J Allen,
Norfolk Regt Age 49

STAFF COLLEGE QUETTA 1913: Terry Dean

In 2008/09 when doing research for "Several Battalion Commanders" I had failed to find any descendants of the 5 Lieutenant Colonels who commanded the 17th Lancashire Fusiliers in WW1. Mills was one of the Commanders and, last November, as a result of my attendance at a WW1 Study Day at Birmingham University I met his grandson Sebastian Mills. Sebastian kindly gave me a copy of his grandfather's WW1 album and I showed some photos at our meeting last December. Remarkably Mills had annotated names on many photos which make them a priceless resource.

Sebastian has since given me a copy of all his grandfather's albums covering the period 1893 to 1939 and that for 1908-1913 includes a photo taken in 1913 at Quetta when Mills was Adjutant and Quartermaster of the Staff College whilst serving with the 18th King George's Lancers.

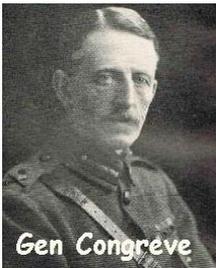


He is seated 2nd from left on the front page of this Despatch and with Issue 3 (May 2009) also having him on the frontispiece after winning the 1913 Cavalry Tournament he has starred twice on the front of Despatch.

When browsing the albums received from Sebastian I recognised 3 faces on the Quetta photo (Mills, Franks and Montgomery). With Mills annotations and the 1914 Army List I easily identified the others. It took somewhat more effort using Army Lists, Who's Who, Ancestry,

John Bourne's "Great Work" and Google to uncover information on their careers. The following career summaries start with Franks at the top left of the front photo and progresses round the group clockwise.

"Franks" (brevet Lt. Col.): Major General Sir George McKenzie Franks, Royal Garrison Artillery, 1868 - 1958. As a Captain he was Mentioned in Despatches for his role at Omdurman in 1898 when his horse was killed. He was a Professor at the Staff College Quetta. From August 1914 was with the BEF in France. In February 1915 he commanded No1 Heavy Artillery Reserve Group and from October 1915 was GOC Royal Artillery in 2nd Army and developed principles for counter battery work which remained for the rest of the war. He masterminded the artillery for Plumer's 2nd Army at Messines in 1917. From July 1917 he commanded 35th Infantry



Division being removed from post on 25th March 1918 when he refused an order from Lt. Gen. Congreve to return to positions at Bray after retreat to the Ancre had commenced. From 1918 - 20 he was Inspector/ Director of Royal Artillery. After commanding at Kohat and Meerut District in India he retired in 1928.

"Sheppard" (brevet Lt. Col.): Major General Seymour Hulbert Sheppard CB CMG DSO, Royal Engineers, 1869 - 1957. Served on NW Frontier, India from 1897 and when Captain in September 1902 was awarded the DSO for "services during Malsud - Wazuri operations". He was GSO 2nd Grade at Quetta from January 1913 to September 1914. He

served with the East African Expeditionary Force from Oct 1914 to Jan 16 and was Brigadier General from February 1916. The WFA website carries an article regarding the Rufiji River Crossing when Sheppard commanded. From January 1919 he was Major General at No1 Division, Peshawar (3rd Afghan War). 1921-22 he commanded Royal Engineers in India and retired 1922. He was Colonel commanding REs from 1933-40.

"Taylor" (Major temp Lt. Col.): Brigadier General Reginald O'Bryan Taylor CMG, 19th Lancers, 1872 - 1949. Served in the Boer War and was GSO 2nd Grade at Quetta from January 1912. He arrived France in November 1914 as Brigade Major in the 1st Indian Cavalry Division. Appointed Brigadier General in August 1915 and commanded 187 Infantry Brigade (2/3rd West Riding) in 62nd Division. He took part in the 3rd Afghan war (1919) and in retired 1921.

"Skeen" (brevet Lt. Col.): General Sir Andrew Skeen KCB KCIE CMG, 24th Punjabis, 1873 - 1935. Served on the North-West Frontier of India from 1897 - 98. Was in China in 1900 and East Africa from 1902 - 04. He was GSO 2nd Grade at Quetta from January 1912. In 1915 he



was Chief of Staff to Birdwood's Anzac Corps at Gallipoli and Bean's Official History describes him as an "invincible

optimist" and "chief power upon the corps staff". In 1916 he was Director of Military Operations in India and in 1917 Deputy Chief of Staff in the Indian Army. He took part in the 3rd Afghan War in 1919 then held various command positions in India

until 1924 when he became Chief of the General Staff in India. He retired in 1929.

"Montgomery" (Major, temp Lt. Col.):
Field Marshal Sir Archibald Armar Montgomery-Massingberd GCB GCVO KCMG, Royal Field Artillery, 1871 - 1947.
The most well known face on the photo. Served in India from 1892 and then in the 2nd Boer War being Mentioned in Despatches. He then held staff positions in England before appointment to Quetta in February 1912. A staff officer when the BEF went to France in 1914 he was Chief of Staff at IV Corps from October 1914 and held the same position with 4th Army from February 1916. In 1918 he was effective Deputy Commander of 4th Army. After WW1 he held various senior positions before becoming Chief of the Imperial General Staff in February 1933. Made Field Marshall in June 1935 and retired in 1936.

"Shuttleworth" (Major, temp Lt.Col.)
Colonel Allen Robert Bentham Shuttleworth, Yorkshire Light Infantry & Indian Army, b 1873. Was Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General in 1913 and could be regarded the "Dark Sheep" of the group in "only" progressing to Colonel. Previously he had served on NW Frontier and as Asst Sec in the Army Dept, India. In November 1914 he was DAA & QMG in Mesopotamia and Mentioned in Despatches in April 1916. Deputy Director Supplies and Services in the East Indies, he retired in 1929.

"Braith" (temp Brig-Gen): Lieutenant-General Sir Walter Pipon Braithwaite, Somerset Light Infantry, 1865 - 1945. Commissioned in 1886 he quickly saw service in Burma and during the Boer War served as a staff officer. A series of staff appointments followed when he had contact with senior figures including Henry Wilson and Haig. He became Commandant at Quetta in 1911 and in

August 1914 became Director of Staff Duties in the War Office. He went with Sir Ian Hamilton to Gallipoli as his Chief of Staff. Following the failings there he was recalled in October 1915 with Hamilton and appointed GOC of 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division. He turned it into one of the best divisions in the British Army and afterwards commanded firstly XXII then IX Corps. After the Armistice Haig commissioned him to report on staff work during the war. He organised Haig's funeral in 1928 and retired in 1931.

"AM" (Captain): Major General Sir Arthur Mordaunt Mills DSO (& 2 bars), 18th King George's Own Lancers, 1879 - 1964. Commencing his military career with the Royal Sussex Militia in 1900 he served with the Devon Regt during the Boer War then joined the 18th Lancers. In December 1914 he arrived in France and in April 1916 commanded the 17th LFs having spent a short period as 2nd I/C of 14th Gloucesters. Awarded the DSO in January 1917 he gained two bars after rejoining the 18th Lancers, the last in Palestine. He was ADC to King George V from 1933-35 and Military Adviser in Chief, Indian State Forces from 1935 until his retirement in 1939.

"Isacke" (Brevet Lt. Col.): Major General Hubert Isacke CB CSI CMG, The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regt.), 1872 - 1943. Entered the Army in 1892. Served with the Malakand Field Force 1897 -98 then in the Boer War. GSO 2nd Grade in the War Office 1910-12 then at Quetta. In 1914 he was with the Meerut Division in France and 1915-16 was GSO 1st Grade with 14th Division. He was Brig.-Gen. General Staff, India from 1916-20 then Brigade Commander to 1923. A District Commander in India to 1927 he then commanded the 56th London Division until his retirement in 1931.

Clearly the above staff from Quetta made a significant contribution to the army's "backbone" as described by Robbins on Page 1. It would be interesting to know what contribution Costello, Tobin and the other 45 students on the course at Quetta similarly made.

Their photos appear on another annotated photo in the Mills album. When time permits I might spend some time finding out and report further. Alternatively would a reader of Despatch like to volunteer for the interesting task, my contact details are on the back page?

**THE MACDONELL'S WAR POEMS:
Terry Dean**

In the multitude of letters and papers in the Liddle collection which was the basis of my presentation "Macdonell's Multi-Continental 3 Dimensional War" were apparently 3 poems. Later I realised that 2 of them were actually drafts of the same poem written by Macdonell (Mac). The other (across) was a hand-written poem/prayer from his mother, Annie and is included in my presentation. On 20th June 1915 Mac had survived a perilous flight over the German lines..



6 days later Mac sent his mother the above photo of himself standing in front of his repaired Voisin and described the damage by reference to crosses he had marked on the upper wing. Shortly after Mac, then aged 40, felt "flying was not for him and wished to be in a combatant branch of the services"

For Dear Dan

*Lord guard and guide the men who fly
Through the great spaces of the sky,
Be with them traversing the air
In darkening storms or sunshine fair.*

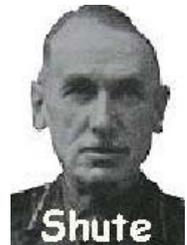
*Thou who dost keep with tender might
The balanced birds in all their flight,
Thou of the tempered winds be near
That, having thee, they know not fear.*

*Control their minds, with instinct fit
What time, adventuring, they quit
The firm security of land:
Grant steadfast eye & skilful hand.*

*Aloft in solitudes of space,
Uphold them by Thy saving Grace,
O God, protect the men who fly
Through dangerous ways beneath the sky.*

Annie Harrison Macdonell

After leaving the RFC he served with the Highland Light Infantry in Mesopotamia and was wounded in the attempts to relieve Kut. After recovering from his wound he attended the Senior Officer's School and from May 1917 served in 32nd Division under Major General Cameron Shute. He hated Shute and his letters express concerns



about politicians, strikers and shirkers at home.

I judge Mac wrote the 2 drafts of his poem in the second half of 1917 and it is a pity he did not choose a title. The best

draft (I believe) is below and my thought for a title is "**Entreaty for Victory**". Any comments or better suggestion please write to the Editor.



*While in the trembling balance hangs our Nation's fate
Watch well - the Peaceful foe that lurks within our gate
Watch well - the clever scribe self-righteous and intent
To urge the German's rights, and not his detriment
The earnest 'Pacifist' whose academic mind
Would chain the fate of Nations, and subdue mankind
With little narrow rules, committee made, in peace
To bind the striving Races and bid Wars to cease.*



*Who trade in subtle words prating of Right and Law,
While the red spectre stands beside, whose name is War.
The foemans' willing friend, and what so 'ere betide
Eager to hear his case, perchance to take his side.
Laws made in sluggish peace that warring hosts, disdain
"Banning the use of bombs from any aeroplane".
"Nor shell a town unfortified", while daily we
Just like our foes, do it from stern necessity.*

*Piously glad to win through those who strike the blow,
Wringing the hands with tears over our brutal foe,
Harking to Teuton's lie, as naked truth they twist
Our foes get backing from your sentimentalist
From pulpit, and in print, rising each day we see
Some maudlin wail for peace, instead of Victory.
While through this weaksouled babble mockingly there runs,
The hollow deep-voiced warsong of the German guns.*



*We shoot not prisoners - no, nor captured wounded maim -
For as a Nation we have learned "to play the game"
Nor do we maltreat women, but, this war must be
"War to the knife" for us, and waged relentlessly.
Waste then no tears today 'ore any fallen "Hun",
Time there will be for pity, once we the day have won.
With shot and naked steel, with nerve and brain proclaim
The fierce determination of our Nations aim.*



*Is our cause just? - Enough - now deeds not words decide -
Fight on, strike hard - if God is on our side.*

Ian Harrison Macdonell. (He changed his name from Dan to Ian in 1916)

A Favourite Postcard: Andrew Brooks

In 1994 I gave a talk to the Durham W.F.A. on Conscientious Objectors (C.O.) in WW1 and I used slides of picture postcards to illustrate the talk. This card is one of a small collection concerning Recruitment, the Derby Scheme, Military Tribunals and C.O.s that I formed during this period.

Drawn by Donald McGill, who was of course more famous (infamous?) for his saucy seaside postcards, this particular card makes fun of the question that was usually put to all C.O.s by members of the tribunals set up by the Military Service Act of 1916. The heading in the newspaper held by the mother reads 'The Tribunals More Conscientious Objectors.'

Accounts of the tribunals were reported in all local newspapers and in many the objectors were named. Of course many went before the tribunal because of their work and most were granted a period of time before they might be called to the colours at some later date. Men who did not satisfy the tribunal with their reason for not being called up for service could appeal to a County Tribunal and finally a National Tribunal.

The title of the card 'Would you let a German kill your Mother' was a milder form of the question asked by the more militant members of the tribunal!



THE PATH OF DUTY LEADS THROUGH
DEATH TO LIFE ETERNAL - Pte H W
Tyler, Royal Inniskilling Fus

MUSEUM REPORTS

King's Own Royal Regiment Museum, Lancaster: Peter Donnelly

It's been pretty quiet on the Western Front as far as the King's Own Museum in Lancaster has been concerned with attention turned elsewhere. The year opened with 'The King's Own - The National Service Years' exhibition in the ground floor of the City Museum. So popular was the exhibition and lunchtime

lecture, attended by over sixty people, work has taken place to re-organise the exhibition so it can feature in the King's Own gallery and by the time you read this the exhibition will be open!

The January exhibition created so much interest that it has resulted in more than 400 photographs being added to the collection, along with some interesting objects including a pair of plastic rickshaws and a six piece tea set from Hong Kong.

When not been busy with the National Service era attention has been drawn as far back as 1680 with an officer's commission from the first day of the regiment, however the four figure price tag was well in excess of what the

museum is able to pay for a single document. The museum is about to start fund raising for a large collection of medals, (more than two hundred medals to over ninety soldiers of the King's Own) so that must take priority over everything else at the moment.

Items from the museum's collection are always being added to our website, almost every cap badge, shoulder title and sweetheart badge has been photographed and added - so it's well worth a look to see what we have:

www.kingsownmuseum.plus.com

King's Regiment (New Museum of Liverpool): Karen O'Rourke (Curator)

The New Museum of Liverpool opened in two phases in 2011. The first phase featuring the *From Waterfront to Western Front* exhibition about Liverpool and the First World War opened in July. There were some teething problems, mainly due to the unexpected visitor numbers in the first few weeks after opening. In fact the number of visitors in general has far exceeded expectation.

The forecast for the museum was that we hoped to have 750,000 visitors in the first year. This figure was reached in just over six months. We are now rapidly heading

towards our one millionth visitor and just three quarters into the year. The *From Waterfront to Western Front* exhibition

has been very well received. We have provided an area near the end of the display where people can leave remembrance messages or simply respond to the exhibition and the feedback from these messages has been very positive.

To supplement what was said in the last Despatch the central area of the display focuses on the battles for Guillemont Village. This was a key period for the people of Merseyside when, in just six weeks, fourteen battalions of the King's regiment took part in five battles to capture the tiny village of Guillemont with a loss of thousands of King's Regiment men. There is also an area on this gallery where the visitor can sit and reflect on the lives lost or altered because of the war.

In the display, we use objects both from the regional history and King's Regiment collections. We also use original interview extracts and actors reading from original documents. The aim was to tell the majority of the story in the 'own words' of the people who were there.



New Gallery © Mark McNulty

The second phase of the museum was opened in December by HRH the Queen and Prince Phillip. The Queen toured the

museum, finishing at the new *City Soldiers* gallery, where she spent a little more time. As the Colonel-in-Chief of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, into which the King's have amalgamated, she had a particular interest in the gallery.

The new gallery covers the history of the regiment from the raising of the 8th Regiment of Foot by James II, through to recent campaigns fought by the Duke of Lancaster's. As well as traditional displays, visitors can try on versions of some of our hats and helmets, they can find out how to identify medals, listen to extracts from soldiers diaries and search for their relative on our First World War database.

At the end of March the first event was held in the new venue. Hopefully it will be the first of many successful days. Visitors could speak to our experts about researching their First World War ancestor. They could take in a talk, with subjects ranging from Noel Chavasse VC to Bantam soldiers who were 'shot at dawn'. There were also local organisations represented, including the Western Front Association and the local Record Office and visitors had a chance to meet our own Tommy Atkins. Children could take part in craft sessions and all of our visitors could enjoy a choir who roamed the building singing songs from the musical drama *Bullets and Daffodils*. The Family History event, like all of our events, was free to enter. We do not yet have official numbers, but we estimate that 4/500 people came along and enjoyed the day. We have not yet agreed a full programme for the coming months, but there will be talks in June and July. Please have a look at our website for coming events - www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Editor's Note: I briefly visited the new gallery in March and was particularly impressed by the use of touch-screen technology to give information, especially on medals.

Liverpool Scottish Regimental Museum Trust, November 2011 to April 2012: Ian Riley



Our archive is now firmly re-established in two offices off Dale Street in Liverpool, by courtesy of the very old-established Artists Club where we hope we are not causing too much inconvenience to our hosts despite a little gentle pre-paint wall-washing which prompted the arrival of three fire appliances in one of Liverpool's narrowest streets. The tiniest drop of water had penetrated a fire alarm break-glass box. There was a Monty Pythonesque moment when a fully kitted fireman entered an office, the gun-deaf occupants being until then oblivious to the shrieking alarm and intent only on cataloguing. Full marks to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service for a very impressive response and our apologies to all three clubs to which the alarm relayed.

Cataloguing of the archive has recommenced as has photography of items. I have a chest condition possibly

brought on by the dust storm from pipe music manuscript books unopened since General Gordon defended Khartoum. Certainly there is a risk of being the last victims of the Spanish Influenza when peering into mouldered tune books last used in 1918. The photography has now captured nearly 50,000 images and the descriptive file names are challenging the limits of Windows XP.

A considerable amount of work has been done by volunteer Mike Parsons in reorganising the Museum Trust website to accommodate the possibility of it eventually becoming a virtual museum. Large chunks of text have been re-ordered in a more rational way and my more lurid colour schemes (of which I was inordinately proud, having based them on his lifetime experience of the roller blackboard and a psychedelic box of Cosmic Anti-Dust Chalk) are soon about to yield to a more modern and subdued grey sub-fusc, arranged with logic and no longer a celebration of eccentric and bolt-on late-night authorship. What fun we had at the happy dawn of the popular Internet with a packed compositor's case of fonts and the wild palette of an Impressionist! The new website remains to be proof-read (all 150 pages) and editing to be brought up-to-date but should be available by the end of May. The new site will carry images of all the pages of the very fine Liverpool Scottish illuminated Roll of Honour for WW1 and the pipe tunes should still skirl alarmingly from your speakers www.liverpoolscottish.org.uk

We have also been involved in the preparation of a Liverpool Scottish display case at the Museum of the Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons) at Fort George near Inverness. This has involved liaison trips to Edinburgh. They are currently

redesigning and refurbishing and hope to reopen at the Fort in the autumn of 2012.

The backlog of queries that had reached nearly one hundred whilst we were on the move last year has now been worked down to about ten queries outstanding (having had a further thirty drop in during the clearance) and we are hoping that the ability to reply more promptly will be reflected in donations received.

"THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS
AS EAGLES" ISAIAH XL. VERSE 31.
R.I.P. - Flight Sub-Lieutenant M N Baron
RN. Royal Naval Air Service

Fusiliers Museum: Mike Glover (Curator)

Salford and the Fusiliers

Introduction. On 1st December 2009, thousands cheered the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (2RRF) as it marched through Swinton on its way to a civic reception at Salford Town Hall. The march celebrated the end of a successful tour for 2RRF in Afghanistan and commemorated the seven fusiliers who had died during the operation. Sadly this including Fusilier Simon Annis from Irlam. The march reinforced the Fusiliers as Salford's infantry regiment and confirmed a link that went back to 1873.

Regimental Recruiting Area. Salford first came into the Fusilier family at the beginning of the 1870s when as part of the reorganisation of infantry regimental recruiting areas the 20th Foot, the East Devonshire Regiment, found its self relocated from Exeter to a new depot at Bury in the heart of industrial Lancashire. On arrival the Regiment was allocated a recruiting area which included the towns of Bury and Rochdale and the City of Salford. This was a densely populated

area which was to prove fertile ground for recruiting particularly during the early part of the 20th Century. In 1881 the East Devonshire Regiment had the honour to be renamed thus becoming arguably Lancashire's most famous regiment, the Lancashire Fusiliers.

The "Shouting Fusilier". The first physical evidence of the relationship between the Fusiliers and Salford came in 1905 with the unveiling of the statue of the "Shouting Fusilier" on the junction of Oldfield Road, (A5056) and Chapel Street (A6). The statue was designed by George Frampton RA, who was also responsible for Peter Pan in Hyde Park. It commemorated the many townsmen of Salford and particularly the Volunteer Active Service Companies who had served in South Africa during the Boer War. The memorial specifically commemorated the battle of Spion Kop fought on 24th January 1900 during the campaign to relieve Ladysmith. Later this year it is planned to rededicate the memorial to symbolise the completion of the Chapel Street regeneration scheme.

South Africa. Spion Kop one of the hardest fought battles during the Boer War, 1900 to 1902, As part of a Lancashire Brigade, the Lancashire Fusiliers captured the feature know as Spion Kop at night only to find that it lay open to the enemy's guns by day. The exposed plateau was a death trap and through that long day, 300 British casualties were inflicted by accurate Boer rifle fire and field artillery. The Lancashire Fusiliers suffered 30 per cent casualties including two thirds of their officers. Unable to dig trenches in the rocky ground, almost all the dead were killed by single rifle shots to the head; such was the skill of Boer marksmanship. Although the cost was high, Spion Kop and the Lancashire Fusiliers' later

successful attack on Pieter's Hill led to the subsequent relief of their beleaguered comrades besieged in the town of Ladysmith. Such gallantry was recognised by the award of the primrose hackle to be worn on the left side of the headdress as a battle honour, the Regimental motto of "Omnia Audax", "Audacious in everything" and the Red Rose of Lancaster to be borne on the Regimental Colour.

The Great War. Clearly the biggest impact on Salford was the First World War and today there is a fine stone cenotaph twenty feet high surmounted by a Sphinx situated on the Crescent opposite Salford University. This is dedicated to the eleven battalions of Lancashire Fusiliers raised in Salford in

World War 1. These include six Territorial battalions from the 7th and 8th Battalions and five New Army battalions including the 15th, 16th, 19th, 20th and 21st Battalions locally



known as the "Salford Pals". It was the Salford Pals that fought bravely as part of the 32nd (Salford) Division in the Battle of the Somme in 1916 suffering heavy casualties. There is a memorial to the Salford Pals erected in the village of Authille in France on the battlefield where many of them fell.

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

**The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment:
Lancashire Infantry Museum: Jane
Davies (Curator)**

The Museum of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment changed its name to the above on 1st April 2012. Sooner or later it was appropriate to include the present regimental title in the museum designation and adding the term "Lancashire Infantry Museum" reflects the Regiment and its forebears links to the County. Many of the forebears had "Lancashire" in their title (e.g. The East Lancashire Regiment).

Three other matters to report are:

New website: Over the past few months a new website has been developed and configured in line with the museum's new name. See:

www.lancashireinfantrymuseum.org.uk

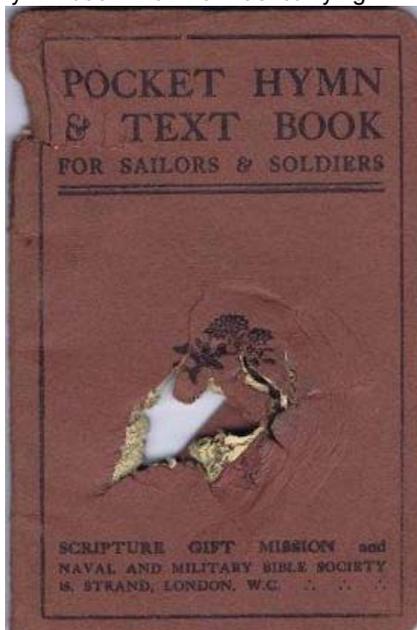
Scanning of Regimental Journals etc:

This work is now well advanced and as well as preserving the invaluable records for the future it facilitates searches within the documents which were hitherto impractical. For example, a search of all the Lancashire Lad Journals (Loyal North Lancashire Regt.) from 1885 to date re Lt. Col. Ord, who was the subject of a report in last November's Despatch, took less than 5 minutes and produced over 100 "hits" revealing, inter alia, he joined the Regiment on 11th July 1910 and he gained the rank of Lieut. Col. when commanding the Home Guard in Preston during WW2. Consideration is to be given to making the journals etc accessible to the public.

Preston Passion and 27686 Pte John (Jack) William Hargreaves, 8th (Service) Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment

On Good Friday the BBC aired 'The Preston Passion'. Amongst the stories told was that of the Preston Buffet, a

service run by the women of Preston at the Railway Station. The Preston Buffet operated during both world wars with the women ready to dispense cups of tea and food to passing Service personnel. The story told focused on that of a soldier from WW1 who had been killed by a bullet which had pierced the bible and hymn book that he was carrying in his



breast pocket, killing him instantaneously. What many viewers probably didn't realise was that the story was based on the death of Private John (Jack) Hargreaves of the 8th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

Private John Hargreaves, known to his family as Jack, joined up in August 1916. Before the war he had been a railway porter working at Farnworth station. He had initially joined the 4th Battalion but in January 1917 he was transferred to the 8th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment where he became a Lewis gunner. According to battalion records, Hargreaves would have taken part in the successful capture of Messines and

Wytschaete Ridge in June. He would have gone to Ypres where he would have been shelled and subjected to mustard gas for the first time. At the end of July, in appalling weather, Hargreaves would also have been involved in the attack of the German line of defences along Inverness Copse, Glencorse Wood and Westhoek Ridge.

On 4th October the 8th Battalion moved to the Givenchy sector. They held a line approximately 8,000 yards long. It was here on the 27th October 1917 that Private Hargreaves was killed in action, shot through the heart. All that is noted in the Regimental History for this period is 'During the seven weeks in which the Division was holding this front, nothing of importance occurred to put on record. No operations of any magnitude were undertaken and the work of the units in the line consisted in denying No-Mans-Land to the enemy by means of active patrolling every night'. Maybe Hargreaves was shot during one of these patrols?

It must have been devastating news for Private Hargreaves mother. She also had her husband (also called John) serving with the Cheshire Regiment and another son, Bob serving with the Royal Welsh Regiment (both of whom survived the war). Amongst John Hargreaves articles returned to the family were four religious books and a letter. All have a jagged hole running through the middle. The hole must have been caused by the fatal bullet. The letter was from Jack's sister, Lizzie, in which she implores him to return home safely as she misses him. The prayer books and letter can now be seen in the Lancashire Infantry Museum, Fulwood Barracks, Preston.

The popular impression of a soldiers experience on the Western Front is characterized by the hardships of trenches, mud, machine-guns and attacks across No-man's land. Similarly it is all too easy to associate stories of Prisoners of War (POWs) and servicemen escaping captivity with the Second World War, as popularized in films like *The Great Escape*. Often overlooked is the experience of First World War POWs.

A search of the records of the Manchester Regiment Archive reveals an account of the unique experience of Oldham soldier Private Thomas Lever, who spent over two years as a prisoner of war before escaping captivity and returning home. His story reminds us that the soldier's experience of the First World War stretched beyond the trenches of the Western Front while the story of POWs held in captivity, and escaping home, was not confined to the Second.

Interviewed by the Oldham Evening Chronicle, on his return home in June 1917, he gave a graphic account of the hardships a British POW faced. After being captured at Mons in August 1914 Lever and the other prisoners, wounded and unwounded, were marched to Cambria, where they were transported to Germany. As a recently captured prisoner, British soldiers were subjected to the greatest animosity of the German people, both military and civilian, who Lever recalled spat in their faces as they went to their first camp. In all he was held in eight different camps and witnessed similar brutality towards prisoners in each, observing that on the slightest pretext German guards would, "*strike you*

LIVE THOU FOR ENGLAND AS I FOR
ENGLAND DIED - Pte W H Cross, Royal
Inniskilling Fus

with the butt of a rifle, and have even used pieces of piping to beat prisoners with."

While in captivity prisoners of war could be ordered to work in agricultural estates, factories or as Lever did on the moors on irrigation work. Punishment for refusing to work was cruel, as Lever experienced. After refusing to work in a mine Lever was imprisoned for eleven days spent nine of those days in a dark cell with only bread and water. Likewise daily life was harsh. Lever observed that not only was the rule regarding adequate

insight into the wider context of the impact of war. In particular his observations on the state of the German population provide an indication of the contribution of the Allied blockade on Germany.

Clearly Lever didn't take too kindly to this situation and when the opportunity to escape arose he took it. The newspaper account of his escape offers an exciting description of Lever's breakout from captivity. In May 1917 while imprisoned at Herzlake. Lever and four others tunneled their way under the foundations



Working Party of British Prisoners

of the camp. An alarm was raised but they were able to avoid recapture and get clear. Finding shelter on the

surrounding moorland the fugitives made their way by night, swimming the local waterways and narrowly avoiding a

rest frequently overlooked he described the rations, with which the prisoners were supplied, as totally inadequate for the needs of the men.

On a wider historical note, during captivity Lever had the opportunity to observe the impact of the war on the civilian population. He observed that in Germany food was very short and civilian rations were low. So bad was this situation that the sentries would ask prisoners for some of their bread ration. Soap was almost unobtainable and Lever noted that the prisoners could not get better provisions allowed to them because the Germans had not got them. Lever's observation provides us with an

German patrol. They were able to get safely across the frontier to Holland. When Lever returned home to Oldham he received a hero's welcome. In recognition of his escape from a German camp, he was awarded the Military Medal 'for gallant conduct displayed in escaping from captivity'.

It is interesting to learn of the often overlooked experience of Britain's Great War POWs, particularly those such as Private Lever who escaped imprisonment to return home. His account offers an alternative view of a soldier's experience on the Western Front and emphasizes the many hardships which a British prisoner in Germany faced. In addition

Lever's observation of German civilian food shortages provides an understanding of the wider context of the impact of war on home fronts. A full account of Private Thomas Lever's story is viewable at the Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre, Ashton-under-Lyne, catalogue number MR4/3/2/34.

Museum of Lancashire inc. 14th / 20th King's Hussars; Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry: Stephen Bull (Curator)

Having reopened in November following a 1.7 million pound refurbishment the Museum of Lancashire enters a new and exciting phase, and one in which First World War related items and subjects are now very much to the fore. The main focus for 1914 - 1918 within the museum now is the new trench, designed by museum designer Gary Smith, but built by Paragon the

two Lancashire soldiers and a woman who witnessed a Zeppelin raid over the north west. With the museum free entry for at least the coming year visitors are already voting with their feet, almost 10,000 having come through the door in the first quarter - this being a similar number to the highest figures reached by the museum in the early 1990s.

The more discerning visitor will notice that one or two very significant objects in the trench area have been retained from previous displays, perhaps most notably the VC of William Young. This private soldier of the 8th Battalion East Lancashires was born in Glasgow, but later lived in Preston. The deed that won him the cross was performed near Fonquevillers on the Western Front, where, on 22 December 1915 he went out over the parapet to rescue his Sergeant. In retrieving the NCO he was hit with two bullets, but was able to make his own way to the dressing station



where he received attention to his chest and shattered jaw. Young got his VC in 1916 and returned to Preston a hero being formally acclaimed on the Flag Market in the

company who brought us the original ground breaking trench display in the London Imperial War Museum. Moreover technology as moved on and in addition to films of trench warfare, recruitment and women's work on flat screens, the display also integrates oral history recordings of

centre of town - however he died of his wounds, and the attempts to treat them, that August. His body was returned to Preston where he was buried in the New Hall Lane Cemetery.

Items either not seen before, or not displayed in recent years, include what is

believed to be the world's only complete and operative West Spring Gun; no less than four German machine guns captured by the Accrington Pals, Loyals, and King's Own Scottish Borderers; the uniform of RFC pilot Percy Addison; a 'bomber's waistcoat'; material relating to the 4th Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment; a selection of pistols; three Pickelhauben; and uniform of the South Lancashire Regiment. Six original and very striking recruiting posters are also included. It is hoped that some of these pieces may feature in future editions of 'Despatch'.

On Saturday, 10th March the museum was the focal point for Europeana 1914-1918, a project whose aim is to create a unique pan-European archive of private memorabilia from WW1. It builds upon both Oxford University's Great War Archive, and a series of German roadshows that have netted over 25,000 images for the new web site <http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en>. Preston was the venue for the first British roadshow during 2012 with others in Luxembourg, Ireland, Slovenia, Denmark and Belgium. More than 200 people visited the museum and more than 2300 images were taken of a wide variety of items, including letters, diaries, medals, autograph books, cartoons, pictures and trench art. This was a bigger public response than at any of the German National Libraries (including Munich and Berlin) in 2011. If readers of Despatch have any items they wish to contribute to the archive please visit the above website and add your story.

FORGET THEM NOT O LAND FOR
WHICH THEY FELL. MAY IT GO WELL
WITH ENGLAND STILL GO WELL -
Lanc Corp W J Macfarlane, Seaforth H

LT. COL. SIR GILBERT MACKERETH The End of the Story (?): Terry Dean

In last November's Despatch I reported the return of Sir Gilbert's remains from Spain.

On Armistice Day John Sloan proudly wore his



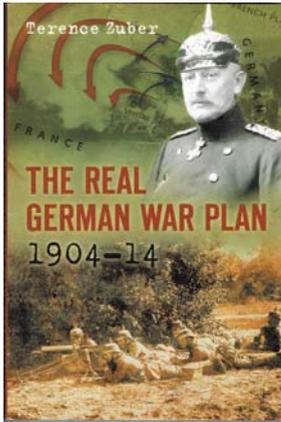
medals when he unveiled the Remembrance Stone over the last resting place of his first cousin's remains in the Gallipoli Garden in Bury.

Since then with some sterling help from ex-Salfordian Cathryn Clayton who now lives in Perth, Australia and the Western Australia News I was able to speak in March with Jeannette Bouilaud who is the step-daughter of Arthur Marlow MBE. Arthur Marlow was Executor and principal beneficiary from the Will of Nigel Watson, Sir Gilbert's brother-in-law. He may have known the whereabouts of Sir G's medals and other memorabilia.

Jeannette, who lives in Sydney, told me that her step-father died 5 years ago and she had no knowledge about anything relating to Sir G. Arthur Marlow has several other surviving relatives in Australia who I am trying to contact but I am not optimistic anything positive will result.. Maybe "Project Mackereth" has reached the end of the line - but you never know!

**The Real German War Plan 1904 - 14,
Terence Zuber**

In this book Terence Zuber has presented a detailed analysis of Imperial Germany's war plans leading up to the outbreak of the First World War. He had already presented some of the information in his earlier book, German War Planning 1871-1914, however new information has come to light since his first book. He has taken the opportunity to present an updated study of German war planning. His footnotes claim 85% of this book is new material, with necessary reprint of some previously published material.



Any reader needs to be prepared to clear their mind of any preconceptions that they have concerning the Schlieffen Plan before reading this book as he proceeds to demolish the Schlieffen Plan and the role it played.

This is not a book to undertake lightly as it is a detailed scholarly examination of all the currently available sources of information. Peer review will either vindicate or reject Zuber's analysis. If vindicated will dispel all the currently accepted wisdom of the Schlieffen Plan and Germany's intentions at the outbreak of the war.

So overall this book is a bit of a slog and although it is less than 200 pages long it is heavy going with huge amounts of information to take in.

Just as a taster, in the first page he states the Schlieffen Plan was intended to destroy the French army in one quick enormous battle and no forces were to be sent to East Prussia to guard against the Russians.

Zuber's style is unlikely to win him many friends as he is very dismissive of and arrogant towards all those in the "Schlieffen Camp".

I was less than convinced by his analysis of the Marne Campaign and would need to read more on this subject before reaching my own conclusions on this matter.

For anyone interested in the build-up to the Great War this is an essential read and is full of interesting snippets and a selection of these are dealt with in Gareth Simon's excellent detailed review on Amazon.

I have also done a brief resume of other reviews of Zuber (not in any order of priority):

A. Gilbert (www.warbooksreview.com) believes the book is for devotees of the 1914 campaign rather than the general military reader and that Zuber cherry picks facts to suit the argument.

An important point on the History Forum (www.armchairgeneral.com) is "the near total lack of references by the leadership in the German Army towards the Schlieffen Plan as Moltke's campaign unfolded" suggests there was no such Plan.

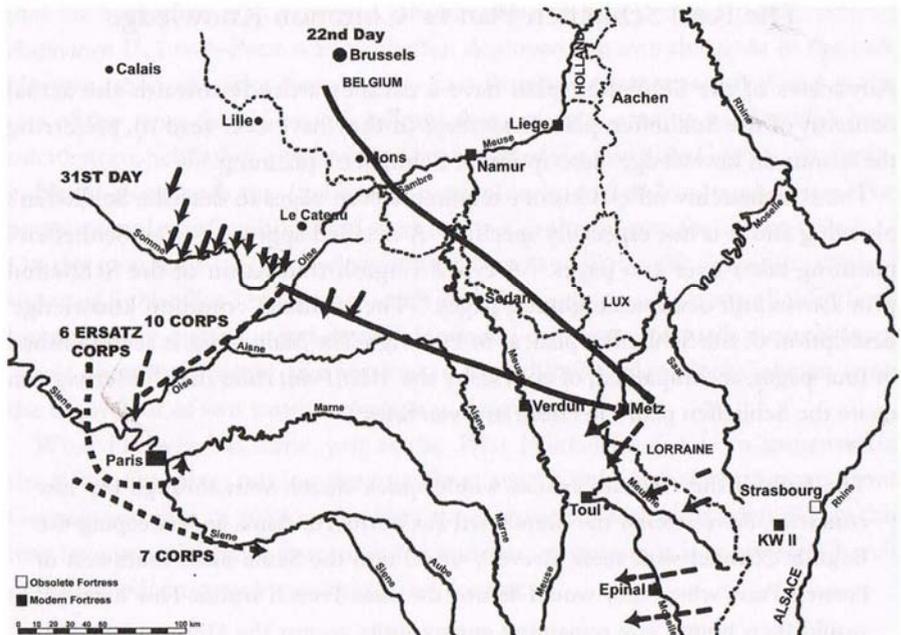
T. Holsinger (www.strategypage.com) makes two important points for Zuber's book namely his scholarly and readable explanation of the strategic context underlying all German war planning over

the twenty years prior to World War One and his presentation of the relationship between the German General Staff's

contains numerous details. The frequent use of German terms is a barrier to understanding within the book. None-the-

1906/07

Actual Schlieffen Plan Map



analysis of Germany's strategic position and its development of appropriate military strategies.

Eric (www.ericjnies.com) has been convinced the conventional wisdom is all wrong thanks to Zuber's new book.

The Landships War Forum (www.landships.activeboard.com) includes many interesting points and the last point concludes: "there is merit to what Zuber writes, and I'll bet that there are other such revisions to our common knowledge of the war still waiting to be uncovered."

JAS (www.theminiaturespage.com) believes: "the book is well supported with maps that help to illustrate the deployments proposed in the various war plans. The book is a dense read, as it

less, "The Real German War Plan 1904-14" is richly detailed and provides a clear summary of actual German war planning prior to the Great War."

A worthy addition to my bookshelves.

OUR LAST GIFT REMEMBRANCE FROM ALL AT HOME - Pte W C Maybury, East Lancs Regt.

LINESMAN GOES TO BELGIUM: TD (+P) See Map on Back Page

In each May's Despatch it has become customary for me to compose some words about cycle jaunts in connection with my (annual?) presentations. Many years ago I was taught the importance of site visits when training as a civil

engineer. This year's talk about Macdonell's (Mac) multi-continental war should, therefore, have taken me to far-flung places to view the scenes of his significant actions but the current trend of risk assessments prohibits my travel to Nigeria, Cameroons or Iraq and I have had to content myself with Belgium.

In June 1917 Mac found himself at Nieuport commanding battalions in 32 Division and, never having studied the terrain there, Emmie and I had 2 days on site in March. We stayed at the Gemeete Huis, Sint Joris at the southern end of the British sector which was a two division frontage. 1 Division were in the "Dunes" sector near the sea and 32 Div held from the Geleide Brook to Sint Joris.

The "Sint Joris" sector is low-lying dominated by waterways, six of which meet at the Achterhaven (Ganzepoot) south of the King Albert Monument. 95 years on, the ground differs significantly from Linesman's trench maps. The key reasons being the construction of a new road to provide for traffic growth and provision for an amazing array of yachts. The Spaarbekken man-made lake imposes itself north of St Joris. After viewing the lake the predominance of water resulted in mid afternoon mist which inhibited further photography, as



testified by this photo of the Nieuport Memorial to the Missing with the King Albert Monument in the background.

Next morning we went west of the Ijzer towards the sea and looked across the river to the Dunes held by 1 Division until the German's launched their attack on

View across Ijzer from West bank



10th July 1917. I imagined the scene as survivors of 2KRRC and 1st Northants tried to escape to the west bank of the river. We then cycled via the Achterhaven and round the huge yacht haven east of the Ijzer into the dunes area which is now a nature reserve. Thanks to Linesman I had 1917 trench maps and current 1:25000 maps on my mobile phone so could follow Mac's movements.

Part of the dunes area is a military zone and the remains of concrete emplacements from WW2 can still be seen. From the high dunes near the coast it is possible to look down on the lighthouse and across the nature reserve to Nieuport in the distance.



Returning to Sint Joris we retraced our cycle tracks through the dunes and

crossed the embankment under which now flows the Geleide Brook in a culvert. The trench (Nose Lane) on the east of the brook became the front line after the German's attack on 10th July. Cycling round the yacht haven I wondered whether Mac, as he passed up Nasal Support, Nasal Trench and Nose Alley, could have imagined the ranks of yachts occupying the same space 95 years on.

Our last task before leaving Nieuport was to call and say hello to the 800 or so "fallen" who lie in Ramscappelle Road Military Cemetery. We also looked for evocative inscriptions to include in Despatch.

WHEN I LEFT HOME I LITTLE
THOUGHT MY RACE WAS SO NEAR
RUN - Pte George Biggin, King's Own
Yorkshire L. I.

MARTIN'S CORNER: Martin Simpson - Chairman, Cumbria Branch WFA

Our Occasional Day will be on **Sunday 10th June 2012** at the Best Western Shap Wells Hotel which is on the A6 between Shap and Kendal not far from M6, Jct. 39. Post Code CA10 3QU. Travelling by rail the nearest main line station is Oxenholme near Kendal.

The day will commence between 10.00 am and 10.30 am for tea or coffee, with lunch at 1.00 pm. Lunch will be carvery style, with various choices of starter, main and dessert courses (inc vegetarian options), so you can choose what you want on the day.

The morning programme will commence at 11.00 am with a talk by Prof John Derry - "*Foch, the Architect of Victory*" after which Andrew Brooks will

speak on "*Sergeant Richard Murphy, 7th Royal Dublin Fusiliers*".

The afternoon's session will commence at 14.15 with a talk by Rob Thompson - "*Future Shock, Tales from the Devastated Zone 1917-18*". *The day will close around 16.00.*

The cost of the day is £20 per person. Contact me for more details if you are interested in coming (tel: 01229 230026)

The remaining programme for 2012 is as follows (all meetings at Penrith British Legion 7.45 for 8 pm, unless stated):

Aug 23rd: **The Basra Cemetery and Memorial** - Vern Littley

Oct 18th: "*The Court-Martial of the DLI 6*"
- David Tattersfield

Dec 2nd: AGM and Christmas Lunch at the Best Western Shap Wells. Guest Speaker Dr Bryn Hammond. Further details will be on the WFA website Cumbria Branch Page in due course

DEAR EDITOR:

Rudolf Ord 1/4th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

In Issue 8: Nov. 2011 Despatch is a very interesting article on Rudolf Ord by Amy Coaker of the Queen's Lancashire Regimental Museum. I have a small group of letters/photographs sent by him home to his wife between September 1915 and April 1918. They were purchased in a philatelic auction at least twenty years ago and possibly came from a different source than the ones held by the museum. Only one of the photographs is of Rudolf and like the one in Amy's article it is not a good one as the aim of the photographer was perhaps to capture the baby!



Rudolf wrote long letters home to his wife and I have taken a letter written on the 29th October 1915 as one of the most interesting examples. The following two extracts give a flavour of his writing. From the information in the previous article we know that he had just returned to France after a spell of convalescence in England.

Les Trenchies 29.10.15.

*My own baby darling kid,
... .. I am glad you tell me all. I am so much better able to picture you. Now that I know you receive my letters in bed it is comforting to know that while you lie there stretched out on your snow-white bed, your luscious body & you yourself in your very soul can feel the tremors of the emotion that pulsate through my veins when I write.*

(3.0am) It is now much later or really earlier & after a tour of duty I am about to

recline in my straw bed which is really wonderfully comfortable.... ..

(Later) I am making this letter today's 'Daily'. Since I have started this letter and in fact since the last bit of it, a great sorrow has fallen on us all. Major Nickson was mortally wounded last night and died just about the time I re-started this note. It is terribly sad. As this is a private & family letter I can hardly say much more but his loss is a great and irretrievable one - He was such a splendid soldier. He fully deserved a D.S.O. for our show. It is cruel how the best are taken. I dare not think of his wife. She will be almost demented with grief. There is a lot more I could tell you but can't. In the midst of life we are in death.

I have changed my mind and will not put this letter in a green envelope but will send the cheque and A.R.'s letter by themselves. I believe green envelopes take longer to come and go. This will allow me to say that Nickson was wounded by a shell which went through his shoulder into his lung, as he was walking away from the fire trenches down a communication trench. The shell was coming the same way as he was going & the portion of it that struck him hit him in the back near the shoulder & went down into his lungs. He was in great pain until the Doctor was able to relieve him with morphine. He was a hero and a gentleman. We can only ask that God will give him rest now that his mortal toil is over. I might add that he was exceedingly well liked by the men, not only his own company but the Battalion in general. I must close. The Post Corporal awaits this.

*With piles & piles of hottest burning kisses all over you, your own cockie boy
R.*

Rudolf changed his mind about sending this letter in a green privileged envelope and sent it instead in a plain envelope (which he self-censored). He did this so that he could give full details of how Nickson died. If he had put the same details in a 'green' envelope (which could have been opened at the Base Censor's office) he would have been in serious trouble. If his self-censored letter had been opened the censor would have just struck out anything contravening the rules or returned the letter with a warning.

Rudolf Ord's letters mention many of his fellow officers and they are all interesting to read. He is also very fond of his new wife and sometimes quite amorous in his writing.

Andrew Brooks

BRANCH AFFAIRS



ARMISTICE PRIZE 2012

When going to press with Despatch no entries had then been received for 2012. This was a similar situation to 2011 when submissions were made towards the end of the summer term. The closing date for entries is 1st August.

In February Andy Gregson at St Cecilia's Roman Catholic College, Longridge sent out reminders to Heads of Department at County Council schools and in March reminders were sent out to High Schools in Blackburn, Blackpool, south Cumbria and the private schools.

If any readers of Despatch have contact with any High Schools it would be useful to mention our competition and

encourage entries. Details of the competition are on our website.

Since last November's Despatch I have pursued sponsorship of the competition with a car dealer but after considering my request I was advised the company had other requests for sponsorship which they considered to have higher priority for their available resources. Any suggestions for other sources of sponsorship?

MEETING REPORTS

A.G.M. and Social: December 2011 (23 attended)

After reporting the "healthy" state of branch funds Gaynor Greenwood indicated she would be relinquishing the post of Treasurer which she had held since 2002. Gaynor was thanked for the work she had undertaken over the past 10 years. Stan Wilkinson and Graham Kemp agreed to continue in the posts of Chairman and Secretary respectively and Chris Payne took over the position of Treasurer.

Donations were agreed as follows:

Toc H:	£50
King's Own Royal Regt. Museum:	£100

A contribution was considered to the National War Memorial's Trust and this will be reconsidered in 6 months time in the light of the level of Branch funds.

After the formal business Chairman Stan spoke about his about his collection of Old Bill mascots. Terry Dean then showed a selection of photographs from the WW1 album of Sir Arthur Mordaunt Mills (see also Page 7).

Tricia Platts followed with a presentation about the WW1 exploits of the Cottrell brothers who she had

encountered on the Guiseley Memorial. Finally Grant Smith presented a DVD which held the reminiscences of a local WW1 veteran.

Kemmel Hill Revisited: November 2011 (32 attended)

Kemmel Hill, at over 150m, is the highest point in the Ypres Salient and affords commanding views. It was taken on 25 April 1918 by the Germans during the Battle of the Lys, and recaptured by the Allies in September 1918. **Jon Honeysett** gave an account of the



involvement of his father - Charles Edward Honeysett - as an infantryman at Kemmel Hill using extracts from the shorthand battlefield diary his father had kept - against regulations - during the war. He also used recordings from an interview with his father in 1980.

Charles was born in 1899, and we heard of his Edwardian childhood in Croydon and his willing enlistment at Wimbledon Common in April 1917, on his 18th birthday. Charles spoke favourably of his training, including battle training on Salisbury Plain.

A spell of leave at Thornton Heath was disturbed when the German Spring Offensive in 1918 led to Charles receiving a telegram on 27 March 1918; he was to report for embarkation to the Continent. Thus it was that in early April 1918 Charles found himself being inspected by General Plumer - who it seems was well liked by the men - before

being moved by motor lorry on 10 April to Kemmel in response to the German attack in the Salient the previous day. On 11 April Charles was in waterlogged trenches on Messines Ridge, and soon came underfire.

We heard fascinating audio recollections about his chit chat with his comrades about their prospects; the experience of being under artillery barrage and machine gun fire; rest periods with his colleagues in the Royal Irish Fusiliers, with whom he felt at home and who were in fact quite a mixed nationality bunch - including a fellow from Ceylon; and the emergence of a 'working class' consciousness amongst the men.

Messines Ridge and Passchendaele - taken by the allies in 1917 at such huge cost - fell; the allied defensive front shortened; and on 11 April Haig issued his 'Backs to the Wall' message. The French and British on Kemmel Hill - including Charles on 13 and 14 April - came under intense bombardment, including gas and aeroplane attack, and eventually the steadfast resistance of the - mainly French - defenders weakened, Kemmel Hill falling into the hands of the German 56 division on 25 April, at heavy cost to both sides. Charles' unit sustained heavy losses. The German advance beyond Kemmel faltered and was stopped on 29 April.

By then Charles had reported sick on 22 April with a foot wound and a skin condition, and was hospitalised in Boulogne until June, returning on light duties in early July, only to be reprimanded for impertinence to an officer. He rejoined his battalion on 23 July, and was very glad to meet up with the newly arrived US troops, who began shelling Kemmel Hill. In an audio extract Charles also spoke highly of the Australians, South Africans and the

Flanders peasants, and we heard a humorous anecdote involving General Birdwood.

In August Charles had a couple of near misses from enemy fire, and later that month contracted paratyphoid infection ('enteric fever') and so was invalided home, he now speaking highly of the medical services which had relayed him back to 'Blighty'¹.

By the time of his 'demob' on 24 February 1919 Charles had recovered his health. He became a teacher of shorthand and typing, and was an advocate for the League of Nations, speaking - as he saw it - on behalf of 'those who didn't come back'; he was aghast at the indifference shown after the war.

Charles was called up in 1939 and deployed to the War Office, accompanying the Quebec Conference delegation and taking dictation from Winston Churchill. He died in 1982. (Peter Denby)

THERE IS NO DEATH WHAT SEEMS SO
IS TRANSITION - Pte James Mc Oustra,
Arg. & Suth'd Highr's

German South West Africa 1914-15: January 2012 (26 attended)

John Restorick from the Bradford Mechanics Institute explained that his interest in this particular conflict was a result of reading the diary of Gerald Restorick (b.1891) who joined H.M.S. Albion in 1914, along with ten other men from the small town of Beer. John's relative in this obsolete pre-dreadnought battleship played a small part in the campaign.

The talk commenced with a very necessary explanation of the climate and

physical geography of the region under discussion, followed by a brief historical background which culminated in the Hereros Rebellion in 1904-08.

When Britain declared war on Germany in 1914 one of the concerns of the Royal Navy was to contain or destroy enemy warships posing a threat to the supply lines that brought troops and materials from the Empire to G.B. German South West Africa (GSWA) had two seaports able to refuel and repair ships operating in the South Atlantic and at the town of Windhoek, high on the central plateau, stood the second largest wireless station in the world. This could maintain contact with Berlin and pass on information relating to the movement of shipping along the coast. In August 1914 the Union of South Africa agreed to send an expedition against GSWA, to capture the ports and the wireless station.

John gave a brief summary of the position of both Smuts and Botha and explained how they had to deal with uprisings within their own country from those who were sympathetic towards Germany. Although one port, Luderitz, was soon captured it was not until after the Battle of the Falklands that the Navy felt safe enough to move further north along the coast and capture Swakopmund.

The Germans, commanded by the rather cautious Colonel Franke, had a force of 2,000 Officers, NCOs and men plus 7,000 settlers with military service experience; also a Camel Corps with 500 camels! The opposing force consisted of 60,000 men from the South African Permanent Force, the S.A Mounted Rifles and the Citizen Force (Territorial). The spearhead of the Allied attack were the Commando units who were good at charging at Machine Gun Posts but found routine discipline difficult to follow!

As the Germans retreated they destroyed the railways but after a long march (over 400 miles) the Allies were victorious and the Germans surrendered on July 9th 1915.

This very interesting talk again illustrated the point that there is much to be learnt from escaping the confines of the Western Front every now and again. (Andrew Brooks)

Haig: February 2012 (26 attended)

Peter Hart vigorously defended Haig's generalship, saying that Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and Basil Liddell-Hart were responsible for wrecking his reputation after his death. Haig is misunderstood and most working historians have a different view of Haig to that held by most of the general public, who think that First World War generals were stupid, insensitive brutes.

Haig believed that he should concentrate on the fighting on the Western Front. However he was hampered by an insufficiently trained Kitchener's Army and by not having complete control, as at Arras in 1917 when he was under Nivelle.

The many criticisms of Haig include that he was inarticulate, obsessed with religion, ignorant of modern warfare and a believer in attrition. Peter dealt with all the criticisms providing evidence in support and stated that 1918 was the year which proved Haig's ability.

Haig made mistakes but he knew what he was doing and held his nerve. At the end of the war he spent the rest of his life working for the British Legion and made it rank free.

Peter concluded that Haig was a great man, a great Commander-in-Chief and that he stands alone at the forefront of British generalship.

As with any talk on Haig, a lively question and answer session followed. (Gaynor Greenwood)

Army Chaplaincy, a Historical View: March 2012 (28 attended)



An Army chaplain himself for some 25 years, **Rev John Bolton OBE** concentrated on the history of chaplaincy during the First World War.

His description of the Chaplains' role in the first two years of the war painted a picture of well-intentioned volunteers who often found themselves well outside the comfort zones of their parish experience. Given no clear job specification when sent overseas, they were initially prevented from moving with the troops to the front line (where the pastoral need was greatest); some either disobeyed such orders or struggled to find a fulfilling use of their skills. Inter-denominational politics also caused strained relationships between faiths.

Receiving little or no support from the agnostic Lord Kitchener, the situation for

Chaplains steadily improved once Douglas Haig, a committed Christian, was given command of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in December 1915. Haig saw that the Chaplains could play a significant role in helping to boost morale amongst the troops. Sifting out the weaker brethren amongst the chaplaincy, Haig oversaw an increase in the numbers of Chaplains (all volunteers and unarmed) attaching them to field ambulance sections and casualty stations as well as to other roles in which they were given the freedom to go wherever the BEF troops were to be found, including the trenches. This provided the Chaplains with better-defined roles including ministering to dying men on the battlefield, and providing the wounded with both practical and spiritual help.

One inevitable consequence was that many Chaplains faced the same hazards as the troops. Hundreds were killed or wounded in the course of duty. Three Victoria Crosses were awarded to Chaplains, two on the Western Front and one in Mesopotamia. One of the recipients was Theodor Bayley Hardy VC MC DSO, Vicar of Hutton Roof a Cumbrian parish adjacent to the county border with Lancashire.

The excellent talk ended with questions from the audience and a short discussion on the increasingly ecumenical role of Chaplains in the modern British Army. (Chris Payne)

The First (and Last) to Fall: April 2011
(28 attended)

Dave O'Mara gave a supreme display of his research capabilities in presenting details of the first and last deaths of the main combatant nations. After summarising the backgrounds of

Corporal Peugeot (French) and Lieut Mayer (German) Dave described their encounter shortly before 10.00 a.m. on 2nd August 1914 south-east of Belfort. Peugeot called on Mayer's advancing patrol to halt, Mayer fired with his revolver seriously wounding Peugeot whose comrades returned fire killing Mayer with a shot to the head, Peugeot died later that day.

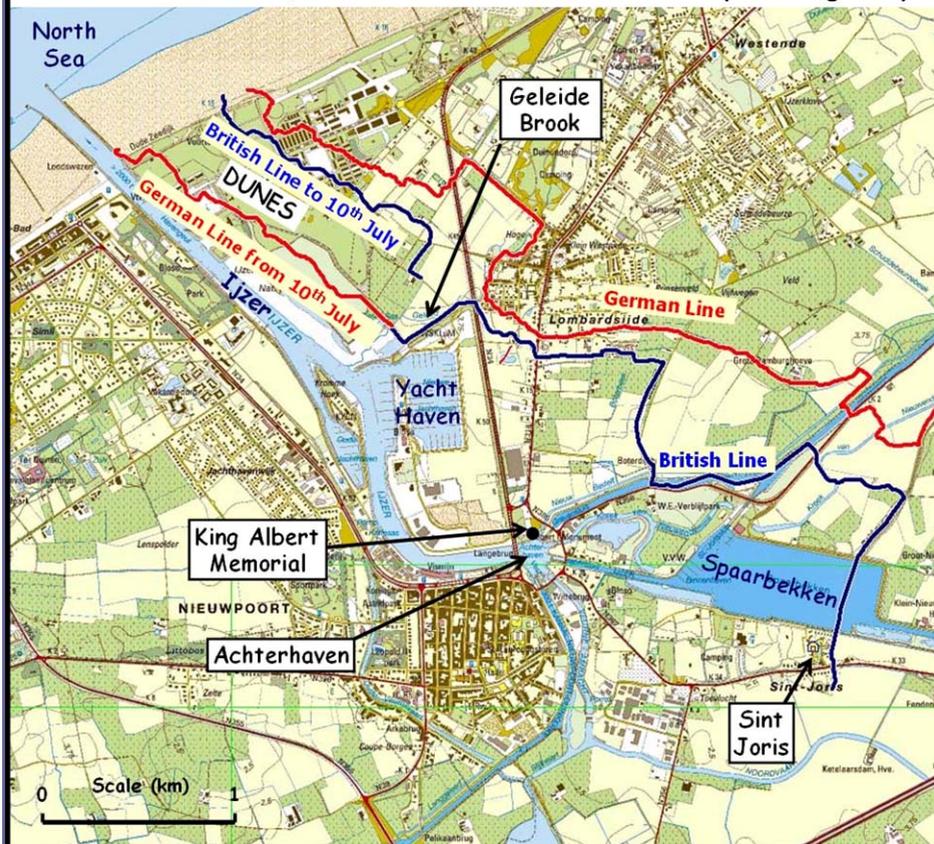
After describing the first Belgian loss on 4th August, 150 British sailors perishing when the HMS Amphion was sunk on 6th August, Pte Bai's death with the Gold Coast Regiment on 15th August we heard how 16 year old John Parr, attached to the 4th Middlesex, was killed at Obourg on 21st August.

Dave then went on to account the "early" deaths of Britons and Americans serving with the French and Belgian armies together with the first deaths in the Australian and Canadian forces, before describing the first American dead after their entry into the war in 1917 and how they were repatriated to USA.

The presentation concluded with the last losses on 11th November 1918 commencing with Private Ellison of the 5th Lancers who fell at Obourg at 9.30 a.m. having served in France from August 1914. The Americans suffered many losses on the last day with Private Gunther falling at 10.59, one minute before the Armistice. Dave felt the most tragic loss was the German's Lieut Thoma who was shot by Americans at 11.02 as he walked towards them to tell of the Armistice. (TD)

NATURE MIGHT STAND UP AND SAY
TO ALL THE WORLD THESE WERE
MEN - Pte Deuxberry, 21st Canadian Inf

NIEUPOORT AREA, BELGIUM: NOW AND THEN (see Page 23)



PROGRAMME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

June 11th (2nd MONDAY IN MONTH)

"German Commerce War Part 3 - Under the Sea" - Graham Kemp (N Lancs W.F.A)

July 2nd: *"A Nurse's Life in France and Flanders"* - Sue Light (Sussex W.F.A.)

Aug 6th: *"Fritz Harber - German Scientist at War"* - Dave Wright (Scientific Historian)

Sept 3rd: *"Charlie's War Part 2 - 2/5 Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment, Jan 1918 to Feb 1919"* - Dr Chris Payne

Oct 1st: *"POWs in Russia"* - Andrew Brooks (N Lancs W.F.A.)

Nov 5th: *"Chairman's Night"* - Stan Wilkinson

Dec 3rd: *"A.G.M. and Christmas Social"* - An invitation to members to speak for ten minutes on any WW1 topic

Western Front Association, North Lancashire Branch

Chairman: Stan Wilkinson

Tel: 01524 262302

Secretary: Dr. Graham Kemp

Tel: 01524 310649

email: graham.kemp@nasuwt.net

Treasurer: Chris Payne

Tel: 01539 561980

Editor: Terry Dean

Tel: 01772 864182 Mob: 07866 493210

email: editor@wfanlancs.co.uk

Website: www.wfanlancs.co.uk