



THE
Poppy





Founded by John Giles. Inaugurated 11th November 1980
Registered Charity No 298365

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Grave of Sgt H Reeve in Regina Trench Cemetery
He was a cousin of our Branch Chairman
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The photograph on the front cover is of 'poppy windmills' on the beach at Seahouses, Northumberland during the *Pages of the Sea* remembrance event
The photograph was taken by the editor on 11th November 2018.

From the Editor

On 11th November 2017 I attended the annual Canadian Service of Remembrance in Brookwood Cemetery, which is always held on the actual day, and expected to be there this year, as it is just down the road from home.

However, an important dog show in Edinburgh on Saturday 10th November meant that we would be away, and we decided to spend the Saturday and Sunday nights on the Northumbrian coast, just opposite the Farne Islands at Seahouses. I had considered that a disappointment until, only a few days before, I discovered that the beach at Seahouses was one of the sites picked by Danny Boyle for his "Pages of the Sea" remembrance events.

After walking the dog on another beach in the morning, we went along to the Seahouses 'Pages' event in the afternoon. By that time the face of William Jonas had been completed and there were a number of 'poppy windmills' placed in the sand as well as ranks of figures of soldiers that had been drawn by visitors as their personal act of remembrance, using stencils supplied by the organisers.

All the people commemorated at each beach had a link to the local area and Pte. Jonas (September 1890 – 27 July 1916) was no exception.

Born in Blyth, Northumberland, William Jonas played for local football clubs Jarrow Croft, and Havanna Rovers before

joining London-based Clapton (later Leyton) Orient in 1912 on the recommendation of his childhood friend, Richard McFadden, who played for that football club as a forward.



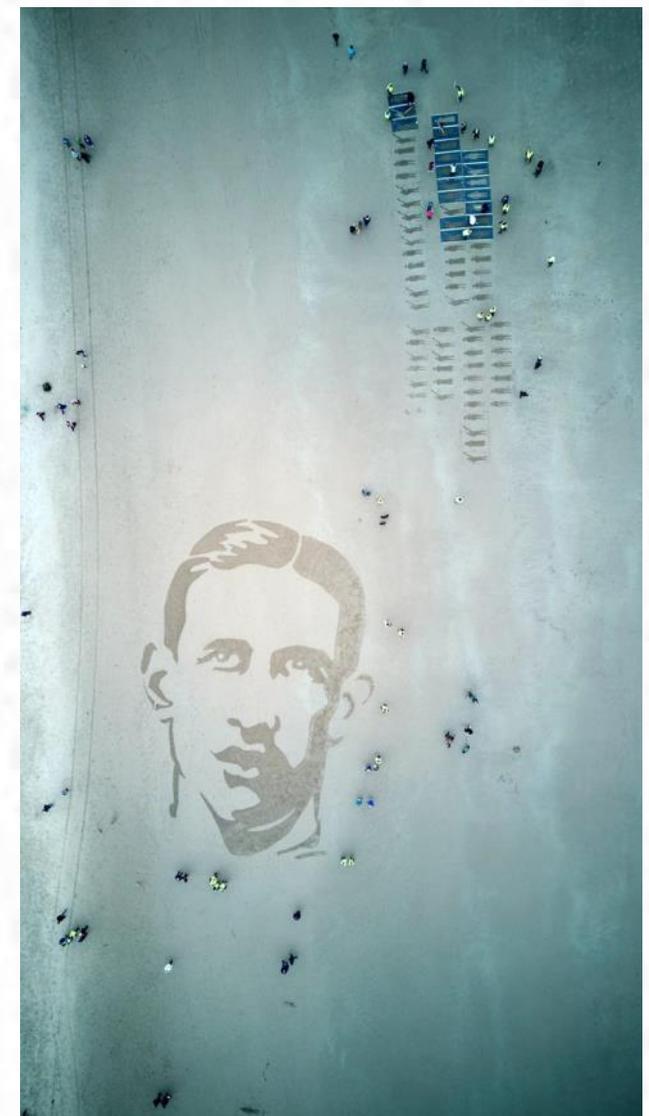
William Jonas wearing Leyton Orient strip

With Jonas' speed and passing ability, Orient thrived in the years before the First World War, although in January 1915 he was sent off during a match against Millwall for fighting with their goalkeeper, which apparently incited a riot in the crowd. When professional football was suspended, Jonas joined the 17th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, known as the Football Battalion as it was formed around a core of professional players who had all volunteered. During the battle of the Somme, Jonas and McFadden were trapped in a trench under heavy fire while fighting in Delville Wood. Jonas raced out and his old friend from Blyth witnessed him shot and killed instantly. His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial Pier and Face 12 D and 13 B.

What really surprised me, considering the relatively low level of advance publicity for "Pages of the Sea", was the considerable number of people who visited the beach, and then walk along the road to Seahouses itself to attend the afternoon Remembrance Service.

National television coverage that evening included a considerable section on the various "Pages of the Sea" around the country, although concentrating on that at Folkestone, where Danny Boyle was present and was interviewed.

Niall Ferguson



The image of William Jonas on Seahouses beach with visitors and, top right, soldier silhouettes being drawn in the sand.

Image from a drone, courtesy of Gary Redfern



Dedications

As a mark of respect to all those who perished during the Great War the meetings last season were dedicated to the memory of a local man who died on that date during 1914–1918. If during your travels you happen to be near to where any of these soldiers are buried or commemorated kindly pay a visit.

27th September 2018

Sapper 137947 Arthur Tegg

237th Field Coy., Royal Engineers

Arthur Tegg is buried in a registered war grave and commemorated on CWGC war pattern headstone in Reading Cemetery.

Arthur Tegg died on the 30 September 1916 aged 37. He was the husband of Annie Carter (formerly Tegg) of 248 Basingstoke Road, Reading. At the time of his death his address was given as 1. Rinefield Terrace, Reading. The 1911 census indicates that he was a bricklayer and that he had two children Alexander 6 and Ruby aged 4 years.

A report in the Reading Standard 12 August 1916 gave notice of the wounding of Sapper Tegg. His obituary in the Chronicle 13 October gives more detail stating that he was wounded on 27 July 1916 whilst trying to help a wounded man, his hip being fractured.

Arthur Tegg was sent from France to the Kitchener Hospital, Brighton, where he had his leg amputated, but he died from complications following the surgery. It must be remembered that there were no antibiotics available during the Great War with which to treat infections.

His body was brought home to Rinefield Terrace and the funeral took place with full Military Honours on 5 October 1916. The Chronicle reported that his chum Sapper Clarke, came 270 miles to attend the funeral. The Rev. J.F. Warren and the chaplain from Kitchener's Hospital officiated.



Sapper ARTHUR TEGG, Basingstoke Road, Reading.—Wounded.

Arthur Tegg had been in the army only three months. He was one of three brothers serving, and a report of 27 May 1916 noted the serious wounding of a Private W. Tegg, possibly his brother.

25th October 2018

Sapper 167527 Ernest David Filewood: 81st

Field Company Royal Engineers

The initials E.D.F. appear on a small flower holder in the Reading Cemetery, with an inscription stating that E.D.F died a prisoner of war.

However it has been possible to discover not only rank and regiment from the CWGC website but also details of his service history from Ancestry UK including his full name.

In addition Sapper Filewood's great great nephew, Dean Fostekew, has been able to supply further information.

Ernest David was the youngest of five children of David and Henrietta (nee Rose) Filewood. His siblings were Eliza, Phoebe, Fred and George. Phoebe was Dean's great grandmother.

Sapper E.D. Filewood died on the 23 October 1918 aged 30 years. He is buried in the Tournai Communal Cemetery Extension, Tournai, Hainaut, Belgium. The grave location is II.J.33. The area of Tournai was in German hands for almost all of the war years, being occupied from 23 August 1914 until 8 November 1918. The cemetery is a concentration cemetery for a small numbers of burials made in the surrounding area



PRISONERS OF WAR IN GERMANY.—Included in this group is Sapper E. D. FILEWOOD, R.E., 44, Edgell Street, Reading.

as well as a later casualty clearing station and hospital. There are many prisoner of war graves including a large contingent of Russian graves.

Sapper Filewood is standing in the back row of the photograph, second on the right and hat-less.

By trade E.D.F. was a monumental mason. He attested in

December 1915 and was posted to the Royal Engineers in May 1916. He was posted missing on 10 April 1918 but sent a post card home on 20 April 1918 indicating that he was a prisoner of war. His war record indicates that his death was due to cardiac weakness during his capture.

E.D.F. was married to L. V. (Lizzie Violet nee Saunders) on 18 January 1913 and they lived at 44, Edgell Street, Reading. He left a daughter called Phyllis born on 23 June 1915. His wife remarried, becoming Lizzie Violet Elphee and it is that name which appears on the CWGC register.

29th November 2018

200422 Corporal Evan Lloyd Davies

"A" Company 1st/4th Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment

Evan Lloyd Davies was appointed to the staff of Wokingham Road Senior School Reading on 1 April 1906, he had previously been teaching in Newtown School Reading. He was married and his home was 'The Bungalow', Emmer Green. Evan Lloyd Davies, who was already a Territorial, enlisted for active service in the first week of the war.

Although he could easily have applied for a commission he chose to serve in the ranks alongside many of the young men he had previously taught. Many of his letters were published in the local papers and they give a flavour of life in the trenches.

Laughing While the Machine Gun Clatters.

"I am having a wonderful experience and with nothing to regret except the anxiety I am causing those at home.

I wish I could give you an idea of the wonderful life we live out here, but as that would fill a big book I will write a little on one of the fatigues which we do during those short spells when we are out of the fire trench.

In the evening we go out in single file, each man carrying only his rifle and bandolier of ammunition. We make our way towards the firing line until we come to the place, which is usually screened by a hill or mound, where the transport has left the food, coke, sacks etc. Here we wait till it is quite dark, when each man takes up his load, either on his back or on an improvised stretcher, and the long line of men continues its way.

This part of the work absorbs all our attention, as it is necessary to watch for holes in the road, for sudden halts or for shifting loads."

Under Fire

"A few yards from the loading-up place the column comes under fire, and if it were day every man could be wiped out. In the darkness, however, one is comparatively safe, though casualties are expected and received, as bullets are whizzing about all the time. When a star rocket goes up each man stands quite still, as then he cannot be seen from a distance of a few hundred yards, but when a machine gun clatters each man throws himself flat till the music is over. We do not stop our work for rifle fire, but to machine gun fire we give best and down we go. Hats off to the machine gun!

We have been having glorious weather, but this morning, on waking, I found there had been heavy rain and all the wood was wet. We set our inventive faculties at work, and in a quarter of an hour had a plentiful supply of tea, and this is how we did it. We shaved off the outside of each stick, and kept the inside, which was fairly dry, and we next made a candle lamp in the following way: we cut a candle into six small candles and stood them in the bottom of the brazier, and then fed the fire with small slivers of wood about the thickness of a match. It was a great success. Would you believe I can boil two dixies of water, fry three rashers and four slices of bread, brown and crisp, with two handfuls of wood!"



Thiepval had still not fallen and would not do so until 28 September 1916. The next day the 1st/4th were withdrawn along with the rest of the 48th Division for a well-earned rest.

In 1915 Evan Lloyd Davies was injured when a shell burst near a dugout he and other men were using. Many were injured. However, our Corporal soon found himself back in the front line and involved in preparations for the Battle of the Somme.

During the fighting his unit was involved in efforts to take Thiepval and Davies was awarded the Military Medal after having acquitted himself well during the fighting he was commended for 'distinguished bravery in the field.' However, this was not without personal cost and Evan Lloyd Davies received a serious head wound. In spite of the efforts of the 48th Division, Thiepval had still not fallen and would not do so until 28 September 1916. The next day the 1st/4th were withdrawn along

with the rest of the 48th Division for a well-earned rest.

Evan Lloyd Davies was eventually evacuated back to 'Blighty.' He was at various times at Tooting Hospital and the Reading War Hospital.

Evan Lloyd Davies had been convalescing for almost a year at Albion House, Newbury when the news broke that the Austro-German army had attacked the Italian 2nd Army. Whether he knew of his battalion's exploits in their last great battle is not known but, whilst the battalion was celebrating the end of their war, on 5 November 1918 he eventually lost his fight for life.



In early November 1918 he had been transferred back to Tooting Military hospital where specialists were about to perform a highly delicate operation as part of the treatment for the head wound he sustained two years and two months earlier in the fight for Thiepval. The operation took place but Evan Lloyd Davies did not survive. His funeral, at the Reading Cemetery, took place on the day of the Armistice on All Fronts, Monday 11 November 1918.

Evan Lloyd Davies is commemorated on the main headstone of his parent's grave in the Reading Cemetery and also on a smaller scroll stone. The scroll states that he 'died of wounds received on the 27th August 1916.'

20th December 2018

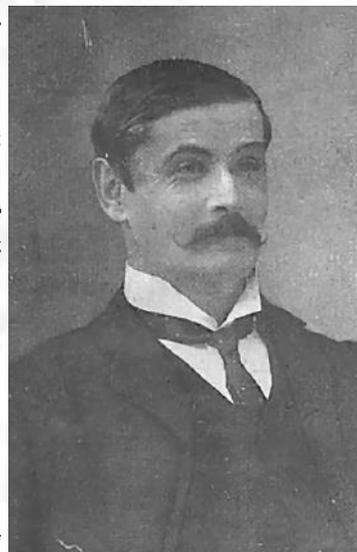
Lieutenant Colonel William Thomas Freeman
Royal Army Medical Corps

Died 23 December 1918 aged 61

Lt Col Freeman was the son of Henry Freeman, husband of Caroline Beatrice Freeman, of Cutbush House, Shinfield, Berks. He had been born at Burnham, Norfolk.

Lieutenant Colonel Freeman was the Medical Officer in charge of the war hospital based at Redlands School. He had worked tirelessly until his death and was well loved by both patients and staff. He died suddenly and his demise was felt to have been accelerated by his dedicated work at the war hospital and elsewhere.

He was cremated at Golder's Green and his ashes were interred in the War Plot in the Reading Cemetery. His name is commemorated on the Screen Wall.



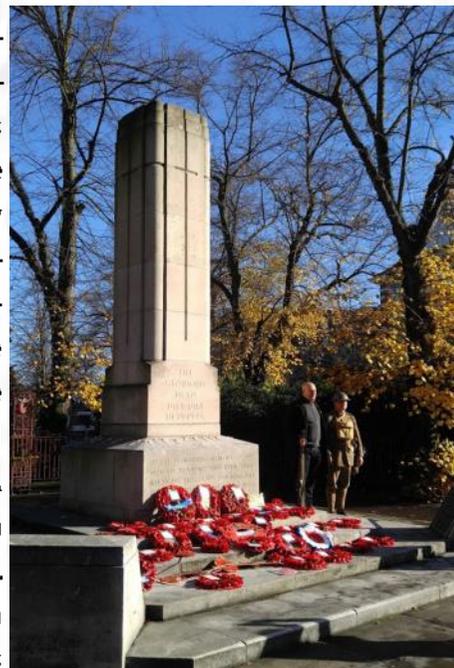
Lt.-Col. Freeman RAMC

Great War Centenary Remembrance Forbury Gardens, Reading Chris Nash

At the October WFA Branch meeting Barbara Taylor mentioned to me that our long-serving member Pat Moran was unable to continue with laying the Thames Valley WFA wreath at the annual Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial in Forbury Gardens - would I be willing to take this on? I felt it would be an honour to do so and duly collected the WFA wreath from Pat & Rita one week beforehand. Sunday November 11th was bright and sunny as

my wife and I drove into the town. We joined the small group that was forming around the Reading and Berkshire Memorial in the SW corner of the historic Reading Abbey grounds of Forbury Gardens. This is a simple but dignified WW1 memorial erected in 1932 known as the Reading and Berkshire Memorial. It was designed by Leslie Gunston a cousin of the poet Wilfred Owen, who had lived in the nearby village of Dunsden for a period of time.

The Reading Brass Band gently played 'Abide With Me' and as the golden leaves of nearby trees floated down the band of The Rifles (created in 2007 from the merger of a number of regiments including the famous Oxfordshire &



The Forbury Gardens Memorial covered in Poppy tributes on 11th November 2018

Buckinghamshire Light Infantry) marched towards us and drew smartly to attention. In front of a now large group including young families and a scattering of Ghurka and Sikh representatives, the traditional Acts of Remembrance was conducted in the presence of the assembled dignitaries including the Lord Lieutenant, the Mayor of Reading and the Bishop of Reading.

Following The Blessing an invitation was made for those with wreaths to approach the Memorial so stepping forward I laid the Thames Valley Western Front Association wreath, bowed and on behalf of all WFA members thought of those brave local men who are to be remembered at this very special anniversary.

From the Chairman

I was very keen to see the *Beyond the Deepening Shadow* candles being lit in the moat at the Tower of London. So a couple of friends and myself set off to do just that on the Thursday before Armistice Day. The candles were lit every evening from Sunday 4 November up to and including 11 November. Thursday proved to be the right day to go as it was dry and quite mild.

Firstly, we went to the IWM to see the *Weeping Window*, the last venue of part of the poppy display that has spent the four years of the centenary going around the country, along with *The Wave*, and then set off by bus for the Tower. We got there just before 5 pm. I couldn't believe the crowds! Luckily, and quite by chance, we got a pretty good spot.

Firstly, up on the Byward Tower, the Last Post was played. The candles were lit all around the moat from 5 pm and they were all lit by 6pm, so there must have been a big team doing it. All of this was accompanied by music, some of which was especially composed. If I am honest, I would have preferred to hear some of the famous songs of the war, as I found the music a bit dour – probably more suited to the execution of Anne Boleyn! If it had been war songs, as I expected, I would have been reduced to tears. The amazing thing was that the crowd were largely silent and clearly very moved by the whole thing and its meaning. When I got home and watched the news a spokesman said that there had been 100,000 people or thereabouts who had seen the installation up until then. Frankly, judging by the number there that evening, I would think it far in excess of that. I can't imagine the final numbers by Armistice Day.

Then on Armistice Day itself, I was invited to attend the special service at Westminster Abbey, attended by HM The Queen and other members of the Royal Family, to commemorate the signing of the Armistice. I consider it a great honour to have been able to go on behalf of the branch and for myself. I am sure many of you watched this on TV and probably saw much more than I did. The service was very moving. Sadly, photography was not allowed. After the service, as the guests were leaving the Abbey, a great peel of bells was rung. This magnificent sound followed me as I walked up Victoria Street to meet up with other WFA stalwarts!

The weekend before that on, 4 November, Nigel Crompton (Ox and Bucks Branch) very kindly brought over their display stands, and we mounted an exhibition at Purley on Thames Armistice weekend event in the Barn at Goosecroft, a superb facility for events such as this. Along with the stands, Nigel brought items of soldiers' kit as well as a Lee Enfield rifle, which naturally got much attention! Nigel and I were very impressed with the quality and interest of the stands (and the cakes in the tea room!). We were also impressed with the interest shown by the local community and the sheer numbers of people that came through the door, including a lot of young people and families with children. The organisers were quite overwhelmed with the response and their estimates of those that attended over the two-day event was in excess of expectations. A really good effort all round. Purley is to be congratulated.

You will all know by now that there has been much controversy about the sale of the Butte de Warlencourt by the WFA, even reaching the national press.

Thames Valley branch committee has been very silent publicly on this matter, but I think it only fair to convey the committee's view on the main points, which were largely as follows and I have now conveyed them to the chairman and the EC:

- 1) The lack of transparency before the event and the timing, so close to the Armistice was to be regretted.
- 2) That the reason for disposal was sound, with no suggestion whatsoever of any wrongdoing.
- 3) The use of Social Media that views have been expressed with, as I understand it, in some cases offensively is not acceptable.
- 4) The mass resignation of the remaining members of the EC is very worrying and will be counter-productive in the long run with the loss of experience. We hope it won't put EC members off standing again!

I also said that, of course, I could not speak for individual branch members. It should be remembered that all those who run the association are volunteers, including us. I don't know of anybody prepared to leap into the breach! Barring unforeseen events, I will be attending the AGM in April. If individual members have other views that you wish to make known, I recommend that you attend the AGM as clearly, this matter will probably dominate it. The committee won't be discussing it further.

Barbara Taylor



A High-ranking Casualty of 1914

Chris Nash

If you are travelling west of Reading, Bowood House offers an interesting place to visit. Now the Wiltshire home of Charles Petty-Fitzmaurice, the present ninth Marquess of Lansdowne, it also famous as the location where Dr Joseph Priestley, who was a theologian and tutor to the first marquess's sons, discovered oxygen, in 1774. In the years leading up to the



The original grave marker for Mercer-Nairne in Belgium (see endnote)

Great War, it was the home of Major Mercer-Nairne, Lord Charles George Francis, son of the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne and husband of Violet Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound (sic), daughter of the fourth Earl of Minto.

Lord Charles Mercer-Nairne is commemorated in the chapel of Bowood House, with a replica wooden cross in the style of many Great War grave memorials that were subsequently replaced by the well-known War Graves headstone. A number of the original wooden crosses were



The replica grave marker in the chapel at Bowood House

returned to this country and are often found displayed in local churches. However, there is a curious feature of the

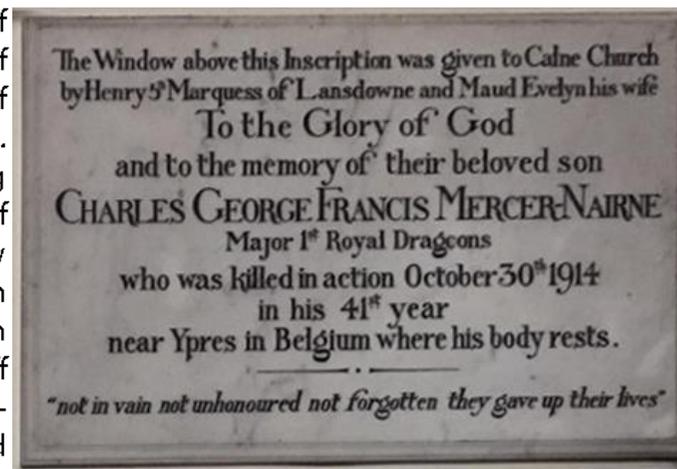
cross at Bowood House, and of the original cross, now in St Mary's Church in Calne: the date of death on the Bowood House cross is 31st October 1914, whereas the War Graves headstone, the original cross and church memorial plaque state 30th October 1914. The circumstances of Major Mercer-Nairne's death are worthy of recounting.

Mercer-Nairne's military background was impressive: South African Medal (5 Clasps), Legion of Honour (France), Order of Military Merit (Spain), Order of the Crown (Prussia), Order of the Iron Crown Class II (Austria), Equerry-in-Ordinary to King George V when Prince of Wales, 1909-10 and Equerry to His Majesty, 1910-1914. In

January 1901, he was seconded for service on the army staff as Aide-de-camp to Lord Roberts, who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Forces. When that post was abolished in early 1904, and Petty-Fitzmaurice was promoted to Captain of his former regiment, the 1st Royal Dragoons.

On the 8th October 1914 Major Mercer-Nairne landed at Zeebrugge as part of 1st (Royal) Dragoons, 6th Cavalry Brigade. Following disembarkation the Brigade made its way to the east of Ypres, forming part of the line seeking to stop a German breakthrough.

By October 30th 1917, the Cavalry were holding a line very lightly to the north of Chateau de Hollebeke, Klein Zillebeke. Mercer-Nairne was positioned within the chateau repulsing German advances. It was during this action that he lost his life at the age of 40.



The plaque in the chapel at Bowood House

During the same fierce action other military of senior rank also became casualties: Captain Kinkead, R.A.M.C. (attached 10th Hussars) and 2nd-Lieutenant Burn (Royals) were killed. Lieutenant A. Peyton (A.D.C.), Major B. E. P. Leighton, Lieutenant C. G. W. Swire and Lieutenant H. M. P. Hewett (Royals), Major C. W. H. Crichton, Captains the Hon. H. Baring, E. A. Fielden and G. C. Stewart (10th Hussars) were wounded.



Captain H. Jump (Royals) was missing. He was so severely wounded it was found impossible to move him from Hollebeke Chateau and he was captured. Twelve men were killed, 37 wounded, three wounded and missing, and four missing.



There is a photo of Major Mercer-Nairne's grave showing the original cross (see footnote), and also a photo taken after the war of King George V visiting Ypres Town Cemetery in December 1918 (below)

The IWM photo is captioned:

King George V's visit to France and Belgium, 30th November to 10th December 1918. The King and the Duke of York paying homage at the temporary grave of the King's one-time equerry Major Lord Charles Mercer-Nairne who died in Ypres in October 1914.

From the appearance of the crosses it seems clear that the King has already passed Major Mercer-Nairne's cross which is in the left foreground.

On 28 August 1916 Nairne-Mercer's widow, Violet, married John Jacob Astor, 1st Baron Astor of Hever, becoming , Lady Astor of Hever.

John Astor was the youngest son of William Waldorf Astor, 1st Viscount Astor, and Mary Dahlgren Paul. Violet and John had three sons, the eldest being Gavin Astor, 2nd Baron Astor of Hever (1 June 1918 – 28 June 1984) who married Lady Irene Haig (1919–2001), youngest daughter of Field Marshal Haig.

Violet, Lady Astor of Hever died in 1965.

Endnote: The photograph of the original grave marker was probably taken by Ivan Bawtree, who had worked for Kodak before the war and who in 1915 joined the Red Cross and, as part of the newly formed Graves Registration Unit, went to the Ypres Sector of the Western Front to photograph war graves *in situ* to send to their relatives . His story and many of his photographs have recently been published as **Photographing the Fallen: A War Graves Photographer on the Western Front 1915-1919** By Jeremy Gordon-Smith. (Editor)

The Didcot War Memorial Project Malcolm Peel

On my local War Memorial in Didcot, 28 men who fell in the Great War are remembered with the majority being buried or commemorated in either France or Belgium.

With the approach of the Armistice, I was conscious of the fact that many families may wish to visit the final resting place of their loved one but were unable to do this personally. So my idea was to do that for them.

Over the 2018 Remembrance weekend, as well as attending some of the events in France and Belgium, I visited and paid my respects to 24 of these soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice - placing poppy crosses on the graves and where feasible, on the memorials.

I took photographs of each headstone at the

well as of the cemeteries and memorials themselves and intimated that, should any relatives or friends of the fallen be interested in seeing them, they could contact me.

I promoted the project locally at a Great War exhibition as well as cross-referencing the names on the memorial with Ancestry, and I was contacted by several families who asked me to include their relative in my trip.

In total, I visited 16 cemeteries and 7 memorials and the graves or inscriptions of 32 men: I was also able to attend the funeral of two



Australian soldiers who were killed in 1917 but whose bodies were not found until 2015. They were buried with full military honours in the CWGC cemetery at Queant Road near Buissy, France.

I should like to stress that my project was non-profit-making -- all I suggested was, as the crosses were kindly donated by the RBL, that a voluntary donation could be made to this or any other relevant charity.

The pictorial tribute at the grave of G.G. Lord was made when a relative sent me a photo (purely as a matter of interest) but I thought that I would use it to create something a little more fitting.

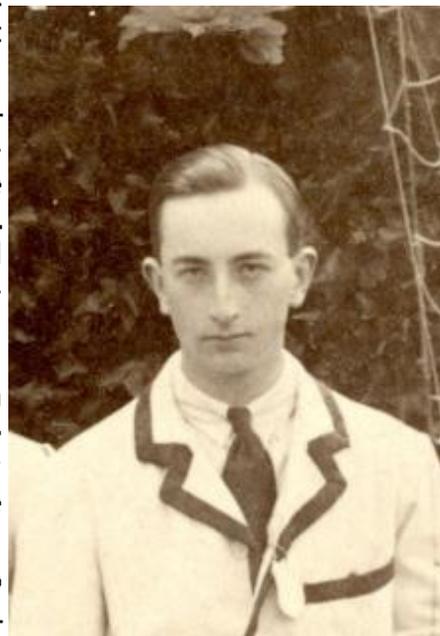
Marlow Rowing Club Memorial Project Marie Lou Stephenson

Marlow Rowing Club already has an Honours Board which features the 19 Club members who lost their lives during the Great War: the youngest only 17 and the oldest 52 years of age.

Therefore the club committee decided that a fitting memorial in the centenary year of the Armistice would be to name two boats in remembrance. (Deciding on the names to be carried by their boats is of considerable importance to the club). They asked three of us to organise the event, and we decided that the afternoon of 11th November would be an appropriate time. We didn't want to clash with any British Legion organisation in the town.

We also decided to research the 19 names of those who had fallen, finding out what we could about their backgrounds, their military history, and their rowing. We divided the work up and the result was a booklet with information about each man, with photographs when available.

On the day we put up a display in the Clubroom on large boards, echoing the booklet information, with additional information about the Club and rowing at the turn of the century up to 1914. We had contemporary memorabilia around as well. we also provided refreshments, and the bar was open.



H.J. Boyton

We applied to the 'There But Not There' project for some silhouettes of the type that were upper body size, and managed to secure 10 of them. We devised a 'crew' of eight with a cox, and placed them in one of the eights to be named. It is unlikely that these men would have rowed together in real life, but they were each mentioned in Club records as taking part in regattas etc.

The second eight was to be named in honour of Lt Henry Boyton, Grenadier Guards, who died on the Somme in 1916. His family owned the land on which the Club stands, and from whose descendants we purchased it in 2014.

The boat naming itself took place at the riverside, and descendants of the Boytons were present to pour the champagne over the bow of 'Lt Henry Boyton'. Our Chairman named the other eight, 'Lest We Forget', containing the silhouettes, in memory of the other 18 on the Honours Board.

There were 19 members of the Club who stood holding oars in honour of all the men who died. Two buglers played the Last Post before a minute's silence. They then played the Reveille. It was a very moving ceremony....and the weather was kind!

The event was open to the public as well as Club members, and many came along, including the local Mayor and a member of the Council from the French town with which Marlow is twinned, Marly-le-Roi.

Editor:

Henry James Boyton was born in Ealing, London on 21 February 1892. His father was Sir James Boyton, the Conservative MP for Marylebone East from 1910 until 1918, when the constituency was abolished.

After attending Harrow School, Henry went on to the Jesus College, Cambridge in 1910. He was an active member of the Jesus College Boat Club, rowing in either or both Lent and May boats every year he was at College. In the Lent races 1911 he was in the third Jesus boat, at bow. He made



Lt. H.J. Boyton

it to the first Jesus College boat in the Lent races 1912, when he came in at No. 7 to substitute for H.L. Baillieu (1911). Although 1st Trinity I pushed them all the way, the Head of the River was theirs. After that Boyton was in either the second or third boat; he took part in the Clinker fours and rowed at Henley Regatta in 1914.

He was a member of the O.T.C at Harrow and was attached to it at Cambridge. He had taken a commission in 1912 in the first City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers).



The regiment initially served in Malta but returned to France in March 1915. He was wounded in May 1915 during the battle of Festubert .

On 16 July 1915 he was one of many men who attended a Special Congregation for men who had done at least six months military service and were awarded a BA. He was later promoted to Captain and was transferred to the 4th Battalion Grenadier Guards, which formed as a new battalion at Marlow on 14th July 1915 and landed in France on 15th August. He joined them at the Front in October 1916. He was killed in action at Sailly-Saillisel on 14th December. The battalion was taking over the front line near Bronfay Farm when it was caught in a German barrage—Henry was the only person killed. His body was buried with a cross that was still present when his body was exhumed for reburial in late 1920, allowing identification. He was re-interred in Comblès Communal Cemetery Extension.

They Died to Hold the Falzarego Pass **Dr. George Bailey OBE**

In the Dolomite mountains of the Italian Front, the Falzarego Pass was the scene of intense fighting between the Austrians and the Italians. The Italians were aiming to force their way into and enter Austria along the valleys of the Dolomites. Large numbers of soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were wounded holding the Pass. Many were brought down to the three hospitals in Bruneck (modern Brunico), the German-speaking town in the disputed Tyrol region.

With the seriously wounded succumbing to their injuries, soon the municipal cemetery was full. In 1915, the decision was made to create what is now a remarkable military cemetery on the steep mountain side above the town, opposite the castle.

During the next three years some 800 graves were dug. Besides the 669 Austro-Hungarians,



The Heldenfriedhof Waldfriedhof Cimitero

there were soldiers from the many ethnic parts of the Empire: in addition 103 Russians were interred in the cemetery. Some Germans and Italians buried there were disinterred in the 1930s and taken to their ethnic cemeteries: nineteen graves contain fallen soldiers of the Second World War.

The cemetery was handed over to the Bruneck Mayor. After the War, the women of Bruneck, led by his wife, began to maintain the graves, and continue to do so. The fir posts marking the graves carry bronze shields recording the names and dates of death.

Nowadays the ethnic diversity of the Empire is seen in the small sections for those of the Jewish and Muslim faiths.

Reaching the cemetery in the deep snow of winter is a task. Snow chains fixed to boots are needed but the beauty of the setting compensates for the stiff climb.

Compared to the formality of cemeteries on the Western Front, the graves appear informally laid out among the trees, which gives them charm and some individuality.

Visitors to Bruneck (Brunico) wishing to reach the cemetery during the summer months, however, are able to walk up the set paths. The view over the walled town is well worth the climb. The Heldenfriedhof Waldfriedhof Forest Cemetery remains a fitting place to consider the human cost of the Great War to all the belligerent Empires and nations.



The bronze shields record a group of graves

An Appeal for Copy

The Editorial file of items awaiting publication is nearly empty and more articles are always welcome. My e-mail address is on the Contents page or copy can be handed to me at most Branch meetings.

Niall Ferguson



Programme for the coming months

Details of the speakers for the second half of our 2018-19 season, including September 2019, are set out below and offer a variety of different subjects to meet most interests. Should you have any comments on the programme or suggestions for future topics and speakers please let us know. This programme is also available for viewing on:

www.westernfrontassociation.com/thames-valley. For a description of the talk just double click on the talk title.

All meetings are held at the Berkshire Sports and Social Club, Sonning Lane, Reading on the last Thursday of each month (except December) commencing at 8.00 p.m.

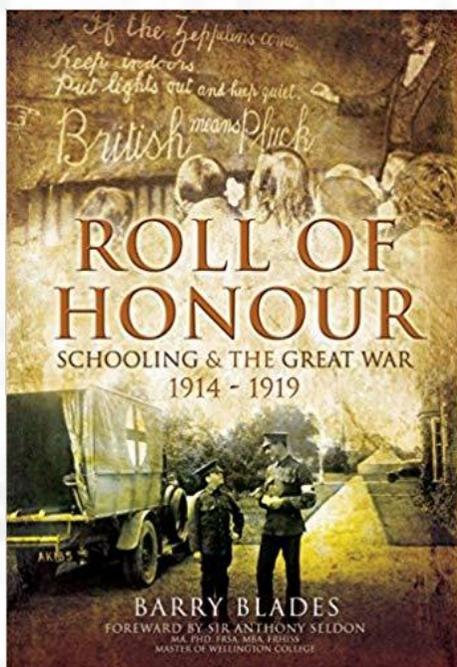
31st January 2019 – Dr Barry Blades
Roll of Honour: Schooling and the Great War 1914-19.

After a career in teaching, senior leadership and consultancy in secondary schools, Dr Barry Blades is now concentrating upon research into the impact of the First World War on British education. He has been commissioned by Pen & Sword books to write a trilogy of books under the heading 'Schooling & the Great War 1914 to 1919'. The first title, *'Roll of Honour'*, was published in October 2015. The second book in the series; *Temporary Gentlemen & Other Ranks'*, is due to be published in October 2019. *'Little Soldiers'* c. 2022) will complete the series.

'Roll of Honour' explores the impact of the Great War on British schools, teachers and the communities they served.

It focuses on the myriad faces of a war in which pupils served on the Home Front: a reserve army of citizens supporting Tommy in the trenches, contributing to the manufacture of war materiel, and facing the devastating technologies of total war. The careers of teachers - and the impact of the decisions they made in wartime - are also considered. The talk is illustrated

throughout by a series of thought-provoking images.



28th February 2019 – Prof. Peter Simkins:
Up the Sharp End:
The Experience of the 12th (Eastern) Division in the Hundred Days, 1918.

Honorary President of the WFA, Peter Simkins began his working life in 1962 as Archivist and Research Assistant to Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart before embarking upon a long and distinguished career at the Imperial War Museum from 1963 to 1999, latterly as its Senior Historian and Head of the Research and Information Office. He was awarded the MBE for his services to the Museum. He is also Hon. Professor of Western Front Studies at the University of Wolverhampton; a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society; and a member of the

British Commission for Military History. His book *Kitchener's Army* was awarded the Templer Medal by the Society for Army Historical Research.

The 12th (Eastern) Division had a success rate of nearly 70 per cent in its attacks during the BEF's 'Hundred Days' offensive between 8 August and 11 November 1918. In his talk, Professor Peter Simkins will discuss and examine some of the factors which contributed to and affected its performance in battle during this period, including its organisation and composition; command at divisional, brigade and battalion levels; junior leadership; NCOs and other ranks; and the support it received from artillery and tanks.



Troops of the 12th (Eastern) Division following their capture of Moislains on 4-5th September 1918

28th March 2019 – Prof. Gary Sheffield

How the Allies won The War in 1918

Branch member, Academic, and prolific author, Gary Sheffield is sure to give a fascinating talk, encompassing his latest research. An annual event that is not to be missed.

25th April 2019 – David Filsell

Death and the Air Aces -Leadership: death, success and failure of those who fought in the air.

David has had a varied career as a motoring journalist, Head of Corporate Communication for the AA and The British Tourist Board/English Tourist Board. He still works occasionally as a journalist and media relations consultant. He is a former Trustee of the WFA, and is the Book Reviews Editor for 'Stand To!'

David has informed us that his talk "no longer involves singing or dancing since the unfortunate matter of the pig!!"

30th May 2019 – Prof Brian Bond -

Commemorating Victory 1918-2018

Brian Bond is Professor Emeritus of military history at King's College London and President of the British Commission for Military History. He has written a considerable number of military history books on subjects as varied as *Alice Liddell photographed in the 1870s*, *The Victorian army and the Staff College, 1854-1914* and *The unquiet Western Front: Britain's role in literature and history*, and has edited and contributed to others, such as *Look to your front: studies in the First World War* and *Haig: a reappraisal 80 years on*.

27th June 2019 – Marietta Crichton Stuart

Alice in Wonderland and her lost boys: from Oxford and the rabbit hole to the Somme and beyond.

Marietta has always been interested in history, she studied it at Reading University and, as her particular interest is the First

World War, has made many trips to Gallipoli and the Western Front often related to researching a proposed biography of her grandfather who was killed at the Battle of Loos.

After a career working in the newspaper industry, Marietta now has the time for research; she leads guided walks and gives talks on the Great War, her family's history and Victorian architecture. She is also Chair of the Friends of London's Kennington Park a role which sometimes feels like a full time job!



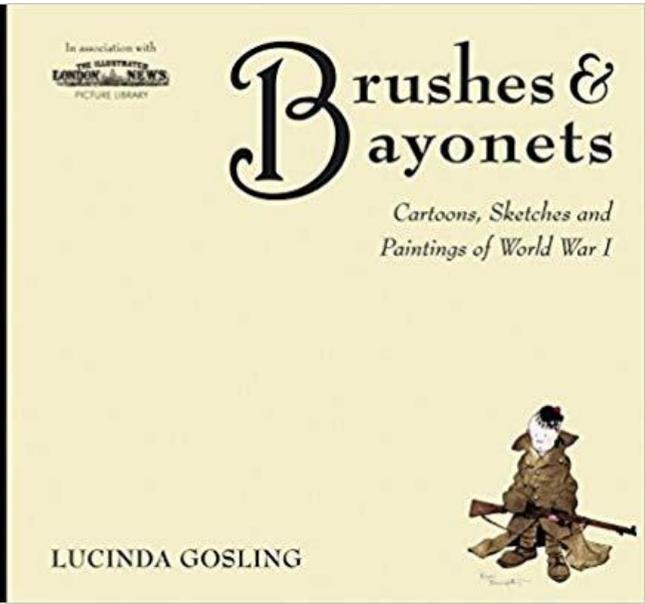
Marietta tells the story of Alice Liddell, the inspiration for Lewis Carroll's stories. We will hear about a royal romance, marriage, the loss of two sons in the Great War and life in a changed world.

26th September 2019 – Luci Gosling

Winning with Laughter: How Britain's cartoonists helped win the First World War.

Born in Co. Durham, Luci studied Ancient & Medieval History at the University of Liverpool before a career in the picture library industry. Formerly manager of the Illustrated London News archive, she has been part of the team at historical specialist, Mary Evans Picture Library for the past eight years while also writing on a freelance basis.

With an interest in a number of historical areas, Luci specialises in the social history of the First World War, 19th and 20th century royalty, high society and illustration. She has



contributed to a wide variety of publications including History Today, Majesty Magazine, Tatler, Illustration, Stand To!, and BBC News Online.

This is the talk that Luci gave to the WFA AGM in Newcastle in 2017.



Mr. Fisher to Hindenberg. "THANKS TO THE DISTRACTIONS YOU'VE OFFERED ON THE WESTERN FRONT, I'M GETTING MY BILL THROUGH QUITE NICELY."

