

BETWEEN THE LINES

Newsletter of the East Kent Branch of The Western Front Association

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Founded by John Giles
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Articles, etc for *Between the Lines* should be sent to me in M/S Word with accompanying images attached as JPGs. The deadline for contributions (articles, letters, queries, etc) for the next issue of *Between the Lines* is Sunday, 30th June 2024. □

Contributions should be e-mailed to me at: [REDACTED]

James Brazier, WFA East Kent Branch Newsletter Editor

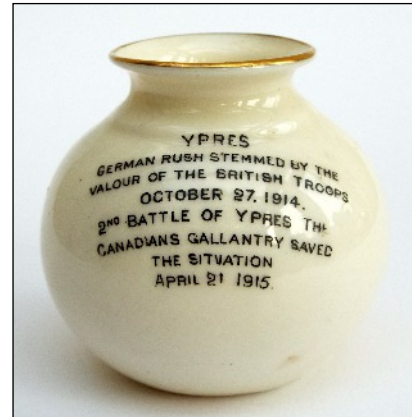


This issue of *Between the Lines* contains articles from four of our members in addition to some articles by yours truly which I trust will be of interest to our members. Over 30 members attended our meeting in February and it would be marvellous if more of our members were to submit articles for inclusion in future issues of *Between the Lines*.

Readers of the last issue of *Between the Lines* will recall John Drouot's interesting article 'Returning to the Western Front, January 1921' and his telling of M & R's visit to Buffs Road Cemetery on the Hogezeikenweg between Wieltje and St Julien. I must confess to having never visited that cemetery but reading John's article brought to my mind a small display that had been put on inside the Bastion Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral precincts in 2016. The display just happened to include a panoramic scene comprising five photos of Buffs Road Cemetery! Once again, I had put two pieces of the 'jigsaw' together.

It was nearly eight years ago that Professor Mark Connelly, at one of the *Gateways* lectures at the University of Kent, appealed for volunteers to help staff the Bastion Chapel during a few days in June 2016 when the Chapel was to open to the public as part of the collaborative event being jointly organised by Canterbury Cathedral and the University of Kent entitled *A Festival of Ideas: Questions of Space*. Having previously visited the Chapel on a few occasions, I found myself volunteering to help staff the event at the Bastion Chapel. As I recall, I spent a day at the Chapel manning the event which included an impressive panoramic photographic display of Buffs Road Cemetery that had been put on by Mark Connelly, Tim Fox-Godden and Birger Stichelbaut (from Ypres). I had a most rewarding day there explaining the Chapel to its many visitors - including a good number from overseas - who had found their way to the Chapel that day. I also took the opportunity to take a few more photographs, both inside and outside the Chapel, that day.

It was as a result of my looking back at my photos that the thought struck me that the Bastion Chapel would make a first-class subject for a future article for inclusion in *Between the Lines*. My article appears on pages 3 - 8. I hope that you will find it interesting and that, if you haven't ever visited the Chapel, you will



Crested-china vase bearing the Ypres coat-of-arms on its front and the matching inscription on the back of the vase. This model is one of a series of crested china pieces (mainly vases and urns) bearing coats-of-arms of cities, towns and villages along the Western Front with matching inscriptions. They were all produced during the early years of the Great War by Savoy China. The coat-of-arms on the Ypres vase features the Ypres Cross (sometimes referred to as the Cross of Lorraine). The Ypres Cross also features on the Bastion Chapel as can be seen in some of the photos in the article on pages 3 - 8. The above model is 60mm (approx 2¼ inches) tall

want to do so when it is next open to the public. A service is held at the County of Kent War Memorial Cross once a year organised by the Association of the Men of Kent and Kentish Men. It is understood that this year the service will be held in June but the actual date has yet to be announced. It is hoped that the Bastion Chapel will be open on that date. Do watch out for the occasion but be aware that the Cathedral now charges for admission, although a Cathedral Card - valid for five years - is available for local residents and members of Diocesan churches at £6.00.

Occasionally, the Bastion Chapel is also open to the public such as when the private gardens inside the Cathedral precincts are open to the public. If you have never visited the Bastion Chapel, do look out for when it will next be open to the public. But even when the Bastion Chapel is not open, a visit to the Harris Memorial Garden to see the County of Kent War Memorial Cross and to view the exterior of the Bastion Chapel is hugely rewarding. □

James Brazier
Newsletter Editor

The Bastion Chapel: Doorway to the Salient



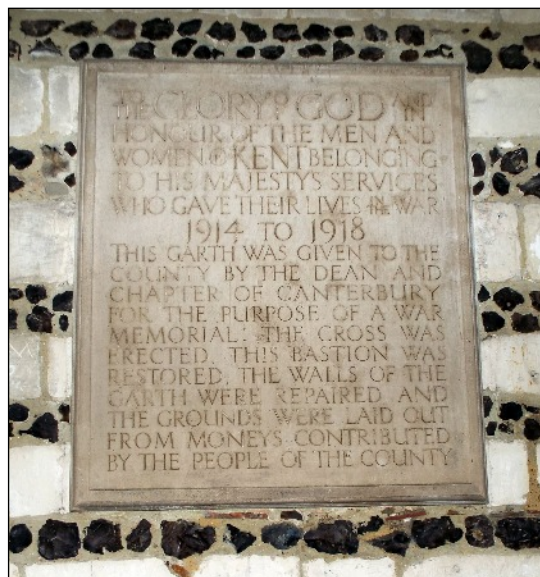
The unimposing doorway entrance to the Bastion Chapel with a stone (top left) from the Cloth Hall, Ypres incorporated in the city wall



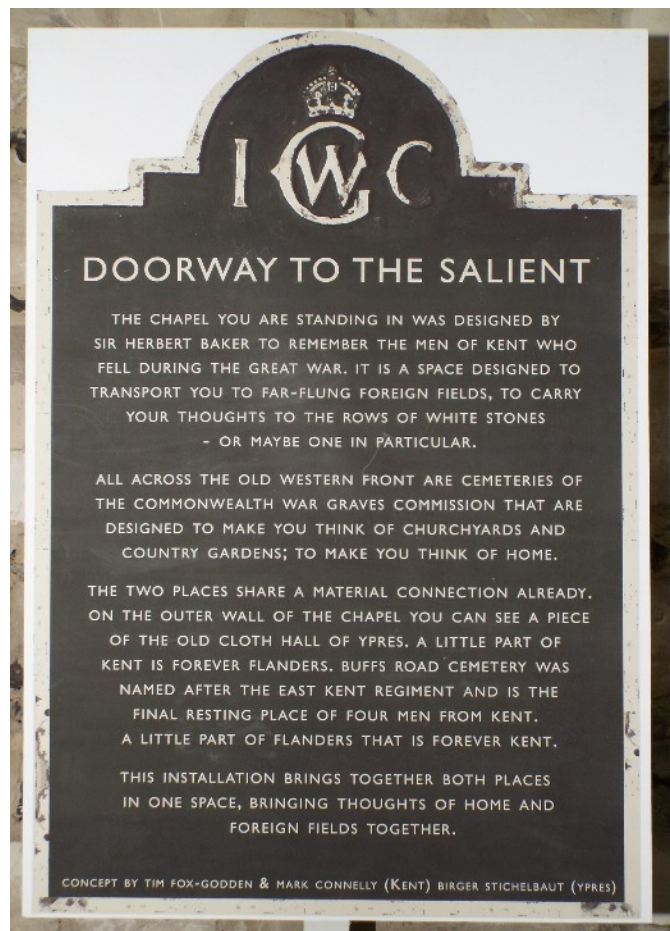
Close-up of stone from the Cloth Hall, Ypres incorporated into the city wall



The architect for the restoration of the bastion and its conversion into the Bastion Chapel, and the County of Kent War Memorial Cross was Sir Herbert Baker FRIBA, RA (1882-1946)



Stone tablet set in the wall inside the Bastion Chapel (a garth is an open space surrounded by cloisters)



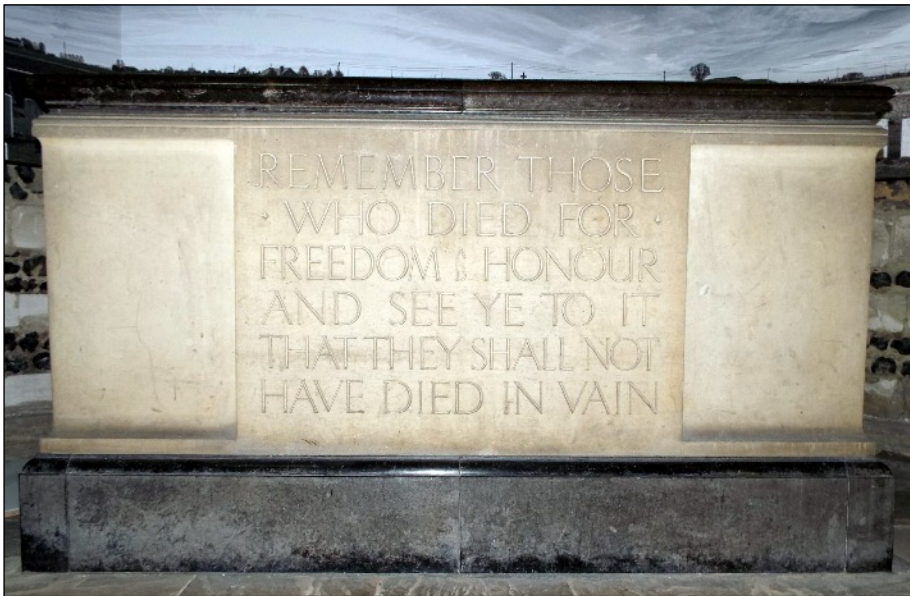
Note the reference in the text to Buffs Road Cemetery which featured in John Drouot's article "Returning to the Western Front, January 1921" published in our last Newsletter



Four of the many coats-of-arms on stained-glass windows in the Bastion Chapel



The panoramic-photograph display of Buffs Road Cemetery that was mounted in the Bastion Chapel when the Chapel was open to the public for a few days in June 2016 as part of the "Festival of Ideas (Questions of Space)" series of events that were organised collaboratively by Canterbury Cathedral and the University of Kent.
The panoramic display was mounted behind the stone altar/cenotaph (see below)



Note the inscription under the window:
A PLACE WHERE PRAYER IS WONT TO BE MADE
(From the Acts of the Apostles Ch 16 v.13)



The inscription surrounding the Crusader's Sword on top of the stone altar/cenotaph reads:
GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT
A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS
(From St John's Gospel Ch 15 v.13)

◀ The inscription on the front of the stone altar/cenotaph reads:
REMEMBER THOSE WHO DIED FOR FREEDOM and HONOUR AND SEE YE TO IT THAT THEY SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN

◀ See also a superb postcard-image of the interior of the Bastion Chapel reproduced on page 24



Another window containing two stained-glass, as yet unidentified, coats-of-arms each featuring a Middle-Eastern Crescent



The re-sited Norman Gateway leading to the Harris Memorial Garden with the Bastion Chapel seen through the Gateway



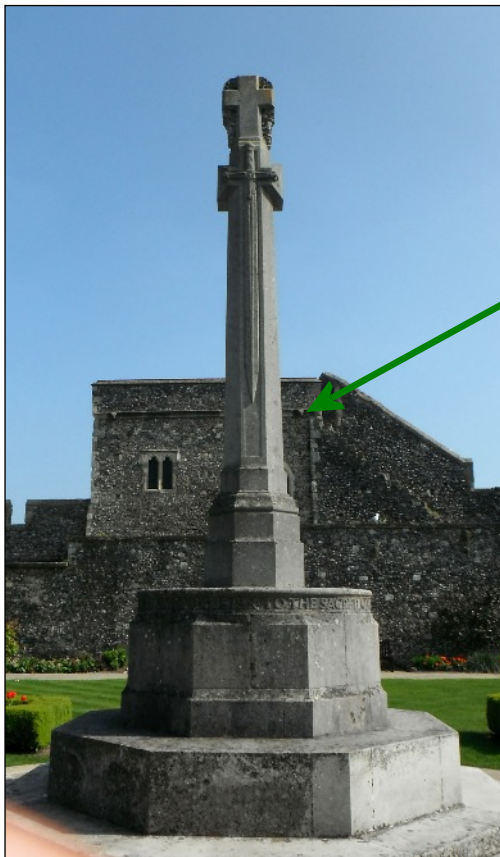
The County of Kent War Memorial Cross in the Harris Memorial Garden with Canterbury Cathedral at rear



The Harris Memorial set into the wall next to the Gateway leading to the Harris Memorial Garden



Close-up photos of the top of the War Memorial Cross. The Cross and the 'Ship of Sea Power' are shown in the photo on the left whilst the trailing roses and lilies (representing the fallen of England [sic] and France respectively) can be seen in the photo on the right. The Sword of Sacrifice on the back of the Memorial Cross can be seen in the photo shown at bottom left



Back of the Grade II-listed County of Kent War Memorial Cross with the Bastion Chapel at rear*



The two grotesques together each with the Ypres Cross (or Cross of Lorraine) and the date 1921 at either end of the string-course on the façade of the Bastion Chapel overlooking the Memorial Garden

*Around the base of the Memorial Cross is inscribed:
TO THE SACRED
MEMORY OF THE
SONS AND
DAUGHTERS OF
KENT WHO DIED IN
THE GREAT WAR
1914-1919*



The view of the County of Kent War Memorial from inside the Bastion Chapel showing Canterbury Cathedral at rear



The three photos above were taken on a wet afternoon in February 2024 on a visit to the Memorial Garden to view the exterior of the Bastion Chapel. They show the year '1921' made from studs hammered into the wood of the door/window on the first-floor. At first glance, the date appears to read '1927' but it is thought that the additional stud which appears to change the second '1' in '1921' to a '7' to make '1927' is cosmetic and simply mirrors the additional stud shown after the first '1' in '1921'



This is the view from inside the Bastion Chapel looking out through the window shown top left in the above photo. It shows the Coats-of-Arms of Ypres and Belgium (on left) and of France (bottom right). The Arms shown top right have yet to be positively identified



The Ypres Cross (or Cross of Lorraine) together with the date MCMXX (1920) inscribed on a roof timber inside the Bastion Chapel. This is one of two identical inscriptions on the roof timbers inside the Bastion Chapel. They are not easy to locate due to the low level of lighting inside the Chapel. The year date '1921' can be found on the front of the Chapel (see top of page above). The County of Kent War Memorial Cross, the Harris Memorial Garden and the Bastion Chapel were dedicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, on 4 August (the anniversary of Britain entering the Great War) 1921. The Memorial Cross was unveiled by the Marchioness Camden (Lady Joan Marion Pratt), whose husband was John Pratt, 4th Marquess Camden and Lord Lieutenant of Kent from 1905-1943

Stained-glass armorial windows in the Bastion Chapel



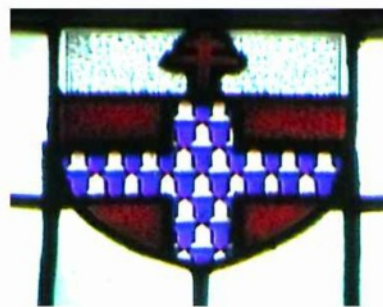
British Navy



Royal Air Force



Jerusalem

*Mesopotamia?**Gallipoli or Balkans?**Gallipoli or Balkans?*

Ypres



Belgium

*Switzerland?*

France

High up within the Bastion Chapel are the above ten stained-glass windows. Whilst six of them are easily identifiable, the remaining four (as indicated above) are not. Also, it would appear that whilst both the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force are represented, the British Army is not. Enquiries at Canterbury Cathedral have not been conclusive and help is sought in identifying the remaining four windows. Surprisingly, English Heritage's listing entry for Canterbury's City Wall (Ref 1003554) makes no

reference to the Bastion Chapel and neither does it even refer to the Bastion Chapel in its listing entry for the County of Kent War Memorial Cross (Ref 1446080). So no help there. Strangely, neither the War Memorials Trust nor the Imperial War Museum's Register of War Memorials appear to even list the Bastion Chapel.

Can you identify any of the four symbols/crests shown above with question marks? If you can, please contact the Newsletter Editor.



Watercolour painting by Canterbury artist Leslie Marsh showing the Bastion (containing the Bastion Chapel) and Queningate (foot entrance) with Canterbury Cathedral behind - as seen from Lady Wootton's Green c.1975.

(Note: Canterbury's City Walls, including its Bastions, are a Scheduled Monument)



From: The Kentish Independent and Kentish Mail, Friday, 29 July 1921

Courtesy of the British Newspaper Archive

Brooch bought back by a pilgrim to the Ypres battlefields in the 1920s
(Note the Ypres Cross)



CANTERBURY'S ANTIQUITIES.

"In a city of so much historical association as Canterbury, it is no small thing that the public should be given greater freedom for enjoyment of its antiquities. The dedication of the Kent war memorial has made them possessors of a plot in the Cathedral precincts which hitherto had not been theirs. The memorial cross rises on what was the bowling green, and, of late years, has been a place of rest for the clergy. It is an old-world garden between the canons houses at the eastern end of the Cathedral the lawn now crossed by paths, and the beds bearing clumps of familiar flowers, and creepers rising against walls of warm red brick. A Norman arch gives entrance; trees form what might be a shaded cloister walk. It has no great area, but is a pleasant place of rest and repose, which Canterbury's thousands of visitors from all climes will value. Filling out the eastern side is a length of the old city wall, strengthened by a big bastion. Part of the war memorial has been a restoration of this city wall and of the bastion, to save them for all time. They date from the eleventh or twelfth century. With the bastion roofless and its structure eaten into by decay, and the wall with no small part of its flint facing lost, there was danger of their crumbling away. To many people and with good reason, the word 'restoration' is of ominous sound, but at Canterbury the work has been undertaken with reverence. It gives no offence. There is a walk upon the wall, but you cannot reach it, and outer steps to the summit of the bastion, but these you may not climb. In due time, all is to be made accessible. A door is also to be opened from this new public ground giving access by Bertha's Walk to St. Augustine's Abbey—a short way, in place of the present circuitous route. Through the narrow, key-like openings of the bastion wall, the eye gets a glimpse of the tall turret-gateway of St. Augustine's Abbey.

From: The Dover Express and East Kent News Friday, 12 August 1921

Courtesy of the British Newspaper Archive

◀ A trench-art decorated WWI German 77mm brass shellcase dated 1917 bearing the Ypres Cross (or Cross of Lorraine) surrounded by oak leaves

Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks to Chris Crooks, former Vesturer (2005-2022) at Canterbury Cathedral for his invaluable assistance in putting this article together for our Newsletter.

Whilst he was at Canterbury Cathedral, Chris Crooks wrote a leaflet on the County of Kent War Memorial Cross and the Bastion Chapel. Copies of this leaflet (as a PDF) are available from our Newsletter Editor. Chris Crooks is now the Byrlysgydd y Deon (Dean's Verger) at St Davids Cathedral, Pembrokeshire.

JB

Does the Giles family of Canterbury hold the record for the highest number from one family who served in the Great War?

In February 2022, I noticed a report in the *Daily Telegraph* which was entitled "Family gave ten brothers to the Great War". It began by telling of a fifteen-year-old soldier who lied about his age to join up shortly after the outbreak of the war which helped his family achieve a remarkable record, but never knew it. Private Stanley Giles, born in 1899, served 300 days on the Western Front with The Buffs before his mother was able to get him discharged because he was underage.

When I read the whole article, I was very interested indeed because the family came from Canterbury and at that time his parents lived in York Road, a small road off Wincheap. Their father, who was born in Lamberhurst, was a tanner and possibly worked at the St. Mildred's Tannery, not far from York Road. Their mother was a teacher and some of the brothers emigrated to Canada before the war and joined up before returning to the United Kingdom.



Photo: Richard Young

4 York Road, Canterbury
- once the home of Mr & Mrs James Giles



Courtesy of the Daily Telegraph

Studio photograph of three of the Giles brothers
- Stanley, James and Verney

The story became known when Stanley's granddaughter, Andrea Proctor, learned about her grandfather and great-uncles' service to the country. She said that she always remembered Stanley in his garden leaning on his fork. He was a big man and at

fifteen was 5 feet 11 inches tall. Stanley was one of nineteen children of James and Alice Giles, and the brothers' story was pieced together by Mel Giles, Andrea's cousin, whose father Verney, enlisted in the Territorial Force in May 1914, three months before the war broke out.

Sadly, of the ten brothers, three were killed whilst serving in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) and one took his own life.

George Giles was born in 1881 joined the Royal Navy in 1914 and then served in the Royal Naval Air Service. He died in Maidstone in 1947.

Arthur, Giles was born in 1885 in Riverhead and enlisted in The Buffs in 1902. He emigrated to Canada and enlisted in the CEF in 1914. A Lance-Corporal in the Winnipeg Rifles, he was killed in action on 15th August 1917, having been twice wounded in 1915, and is buried in Maroc British Cemetery. In the *Kentish Gazette* of 8th September 1917, the death of Lance-Corporal Arthur Giles, one of nine sons of Mr and Mrs James Giles, 4 York Road, was announced.

The other eight were: Sergeant James Giles, serving in a Canadian Trench Mortar Battery; Private Albert Harry Giles in the Canadian Grenadier Guards; Trooper Amos Giles in the Lord Strathcona's Horse; Private Verney Giles in the RAMC; Private Stanley Giles, released after serving 300 days on the Western Front; AC2 (Aircraftman Second Class) George Giles, RNAS; Herbert George Giles serving in India; and Harry Giles in the 49th Battalion CEF.

Herbert George Giles was born in 1888 in Riverhead, enlisted in 1915 and took part in operations in India. He held the India General Service Medal and the War Medal. After the war, he lived in London.

Amos Giles, born in 1889, emigrated to Canada in 1908. He lived in Sawyerville, 65 miles from Montreal and worked as a farm labourer. He returned to Europe in 1915 with the CEF and trained in England before going to France. A Sergeant in a Trench Mortar Battery, he was wounded in 1916 and treated in the No 1 Canadian Hospital at Etaples. In June 1917, he was awarded the DCM and, in 1918, he was again wounded and admitted to the Nell Lane Military Hospital, Didsbury, Manchester. He married Edith Bowles in Canterbury. Tragically, probably

suffering from shellshock (now PTSD), he jumped from a liner crossing the Atlantic returning to Canada and was drowned.

Albert Henry Giles, born in 1890 also in Riverhead, emigrated to Canada around 1910. He enlisted in the Canadian Grenadier Guards. He was twice wounded in 1916 in 1917, invalided to England in 1918 and was discharged as unfit for further service in 1919. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal and died in Wingham, Kent, in 1976 having married a Kentish girl.

Frederick Charles Giles, born in 1891, served for three years with the Grenadier Guards before emigrating to Canada in 1911. He enlisted in the CEF in the 49th Battalion and was killed in action on 18th July 1916. He is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial.

Harry Giles, born in 1893, emigrated to Canada around 1910. He arrived in France with the CEF in the 49th Battalion. He was killed in action on 1st October 1918 and is buried in Haynecourt British Cemetery, situated between Marcoing and Cambrai.

Amos Giles, born in Maidstone in 1894, emigrated to Canada in 1910. He enlisted in the CEF on 7th September 1915, and served as a trooper in the Lord Strathcona's Horse. He was discharged in 1919 suffering from a serious shoulder-wound and lived until 1960.



Photo: James Brazier

There are three Giles' names listed on Canterbury War Memorial in the Buttermarket. It is most probable that they were three of Giles family being the subject of this article, namely:

Arthur Giles (15th August 1917)

Frederick Charles Giles (18th August 1916)

Harry Giles (1st October 1918)

If so, all three died serving in the service of the Canadian Expeditionary Force

Verney Richard Giles, born in 1897 in Canterbury, enlisted in the Territorial Force. He served in the 82 Field Ambulance and the RAMC. He served in France and the Balkans where he was wounded by shrapnel and suffered from malaria. He worked as a fishmonger in Canterbury and emigrated to Canada in 1921 to join Amos. He married Janet Dawson, whose son Mel was the author of the family history. Before going to Canada, he played for Canterbury Alliance Football Club. He died in Montreal in 1979.



Photo: John Herbert

St Mildred's Tannery buildings in Stour Street, Canterbury - photo taken in 2005. These buildings have since been converted into apartments



Photo: Richard Young

The Bull sculpture in Tannery Field, Canterbury. The sculpture is made from old steel rails. Tannery Field was once part of St Mildred's Tannery

Stanley Giles was born in Canterbury in 1899 and enlisted in the 24th Battalion of The Buffs as Private 3380 at the age of 15 years eight months. He was discharged after his mother wrote to the authorities. He re-enlisted on his eighteenth birthday in the Grenadier Guards. After the war, he became Head Gardener at a large country house, celebrated his golden wedding with Lavinia and died in 1976.

This family with nineteen children had a remarkable record of service in the Great War. Whether they hold the record for the largest number of one family to serve in the British forces is not known. □

Richard Young

(My thanks to both the *Daily Express* and *Daily Telegraph* for some information included in this article.)

Port Richborough - Revisited

Most members of the WFA East Kent Branch will be familiar with the story of Port Richborough. Its history reaches back some two hundred years although the Stonar Cut was dug out even earlier in the second half of the eighteenth century. The initial murmurings of a port on the Stour came almost a century later when the Royal Navy were looking at Dover Harbour as a major base it also coincided with the arrival of the railways to east Kent. This was followed by the discovery of coal in east Kent at the turn of the century. This led to large areas of land being purchased for future exploration. For a variety of reasons these proposals all fizzled out and it wasn't until 1914 and WW1 that the situation changed. Requisitioned by the army, an enormous complex of workshops, marshalling yards and barracks came into being. These stretched from the Toll-Bridge at Sandwich along both sides of the A256 Ramsgate Road to almost as far as Pegwell Bay. Estimates vary but at its height there were probably up to 30,000 employed at Port Richborough. Even as late as September 1918, the Richborough Command personnel stood at 20,000. The plans for a car-ferry were submitted in January 1917 and, in little over a year later, the first sailing took place. (*How long would that process take today?*) A few short years following the Armistice the area was forgotten and much of the area was sold-off. It came into its own again during WW2 when a Royal Navy shore station, HMS *Robertson* was established. Much of the work in this period including construction of sections of the Mulberry Harbour was classified as top secret.



(A) The Alfred Colebrook in 1962 - looking towards Cliffsend

This short article merely adds some recently discovered images to the story. They were found in the archives of the Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory and are of interest as they feature the isolated and rarely-visited southern bank of the River Stour. This whole



(B) The Alfred Colebrook in 1962

area is part of the Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve whose southern boundary abuts the Royal St George's Golf Course. In addition to the photographic images, I have included a short note together with a sketch suggesting that the final resting place of two Spritsail barges were indeed Port Richborough and not Ramsgate (see images E & F).

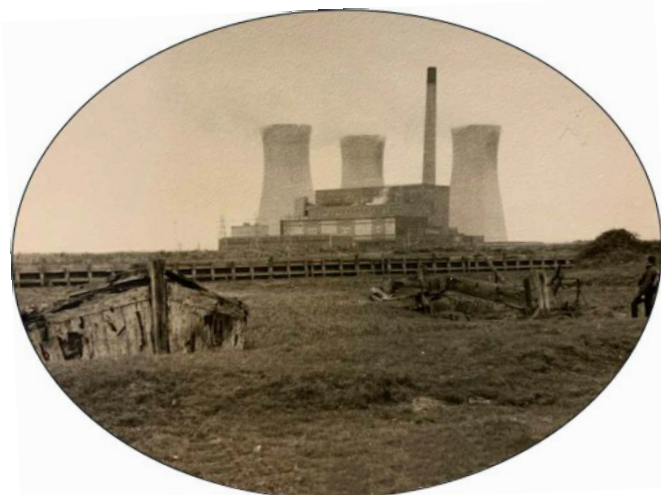


(C) 1972 Image of barge constructed during WW1

The two images of the barges (images C & D) were taken in 1972 and in even in a derelict state appear similar to those manufactured at Richborough during WW1. The former Richborough Power Station is the backcloth.

The other two images (A & B) date from WW2 and show the remains of a fishing drifter, *Alfred Colebrook*. She was sunk in the mouth of the river to act as a block-ship in September 1940. Coincidentally, a sister vessel the *Margaret Colebrook* hit a mine in Rye Bay during WW1 resulting in a heavy loss of life.

The wreck of the *Alfred Colebrook* went on to serve a useful purpose following WW2. For several years, until swallowed completely by the sand, she was used as a marker to measure the northerly drift of sand and



(D) 1972 A further view of the barges with the former Richborough power station as a backdrop

shingle which is pushing the course of the river inexorably towards the harder chalk cliffs of Ramsgate. The first image taken in 1962, illustrates perfectly how far the course of the river had moved in less the twenty-five years. Just six years later, in 1968, the wreck barely protrudes above the sand.

An in-depth history of Port Richborough can be found in the book *Port Richborough* by Robert Butler, a revised edition of which was published in 1999. □

John Websper

Name	Official number	Flag	IMO	
ALFRED COLEBROOKE	128951	GBR		
Year built	Date launched	Date completed		
1912	01/06/1912			
Vessel type	Vessel description			
Fishing Drifter	Steel Screw Steamer			
Builder	Yard	Yard no		
Scott & Sons, Bowling		231		
Tonnage	Length	Breadth	Depth	Draft
56 grt / 20 nrt /	70.1 ft	17.0 ft	7.6 ft	
Engine builder	-			
Engine detail				
17nhp 1-screw				
First owner	First port of register	Registration date		
William Edwin Colebrook, Rye	Rye	03/07/1911		
Other names				
Subsequent owner and registration history				
1918 Harold Eves, London - mng George Coote, Rye				
1919 The Marine Mercantile Co Ltd, London - same mng				
c1922 Harold Eves, London - mng George Coote, Rye				
1926 Richard T Page, Rye				
1937 Albert Batchelor, Broadstairs, Kent				
Vessel history				
Fishery No: RX3				
Remarks				
End year	Fate / Status			
Disposal detail				
in MNL 1940				

No photos available for this vessel

(E) Ownership of the Alfred Colebrook and the Margaret Colebrook shows a possible family link. Were they the children of the original owner, Wilfred Colebrook?

Document describing the origin of the hulks at The Sampher

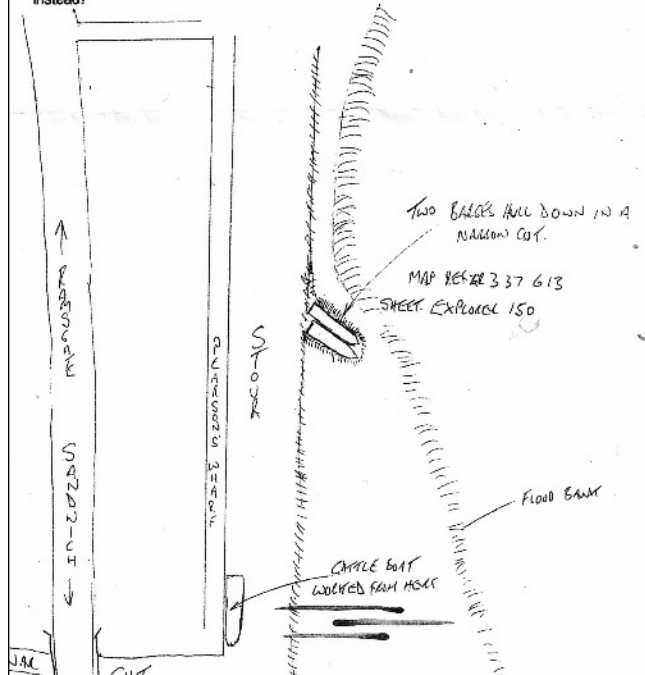
The spritsail barge hulks at Richborough may, I believe, be the following:-

'H.A.C.' (ex-'INVICTA'). This barge was sold whilst lying at Ramsgate in 1949 for use in connection with dredging operations. 55 tons. Built 1896 at Murston. Registered No. 105551. PLA No. 9649. 80 x 19 x 5.7 feet. Port of Registry London.

'ESTHER'. This barge was a housebarge by 1946 and is reported as being severely damaged by a gale whilst lying at the West Harbour wall at Ramsgate in 1957. 50 tons. Built 1900 at Murston. Registered No. 112721. PLA No. 14056. Port of Registry London.

Both these barges are recorded as having been broken up at Ramsgate in 1957, but I was told back in the 70s that one of the barges at Richborough had been used in connection with dredging. This seems a bit of a coincidence to me especially as it was around that time that a berth towards the Cut end of Pearsons Wharf was prepared for the short-lived cattle boat trade from there to the Continent.

I wonder if the two barges were not broken up at Ramsgate, but towed round to Richborough instead?



(F) Notes suggesting Richborough as the final resting place of two Spritsail barges of the type constructed at Port Richborough during WW2

Acknowledgements:

Ken Chapman, Archivist, Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory

Port Richborough by Robert Butler

The article & sketch of the Spritsail barges is un-attributable

Footnote:

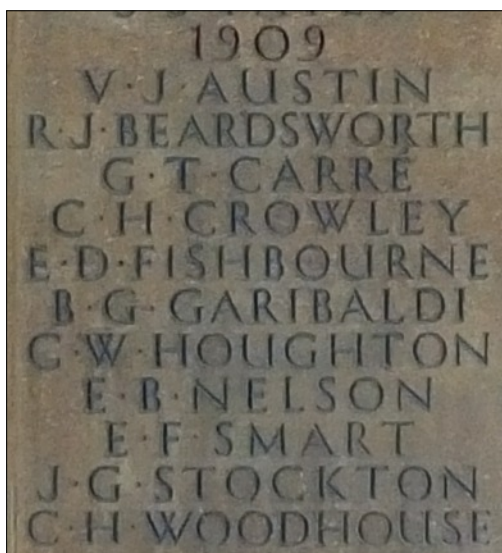
The figure standing on the extreme right of (D), just visible in the 1962 photograph, is a local Margate man, George Dunkling, who now, aged 90, lives in Dorset. He became a well-known wildlife photographer. Both he & I - as young ornithologists - first visited the site of the *Alfred Colebrook* in 1953. Most weekends, we would cycle from Margate to Sandwich Bay and then walk along the shoreline the three miles or so to the estuary. Then, as now, it was a gathering area - particularly in winter - for large numbers of roosting wading birds. On our way home, we would stop off at the Sportsman's Café (Cliffsend) for a steaming mug of tea. (Happy memories!)

Bruno Garibaldi 1890-1914

Bruno Garibaldi, the grandson of the founder of modern Italy, was the fifth son of Ricciotti and Constanza Garibaldi who had in all seven sons and three daughters. His mother, nee Constance Hopcroft, was English coming from Annerley in Surrey. They were married at St James' Church, Westminster on 2nd July 1874. Bruno was born in Rome in 1890 and was brought up in the family home in Riofreddo Lazio. At an early age, his parents decided that young Bruno should make his career in commerce and to prepare him for this he was sent to the King's School in Canterbury.

(The family had been brought up as Anglicans.) He was at King's from 1904-1909. Although not academically brilliant, he excelled at rugby, playing as a forward, and rowing, being at one time Captain of Boats. After leaving King's, he was sent as an apprentice to a sugar factory in Cuba, eventually rising to be Assistant Manager. On the outbreak of war, in August 1914, he joined the Garibaldi Legion which was being assembled by his brothers in New York. The Legion was made up of mercenaries whose ideals were to uphold freedom and democracy and had previously seen action in Greece in 1910 and in Mexico.

The Legion originally offered its services to the British Government, but they were declined. It then approached the French Government who also initially declined their services unless they were prepared to become part of the French Army and wear full French uniforms. This was unacceptable to



The King's School War Memorial - section listing those boys who had left the school in 1909 including Bruno Garibaldi and Vernon Austin (see Between the Trenches No. 74 for article on Vernon Austin)

the Garibaldians, but compromises were made, and they became part of the French Foreign Legion which was sent to the Argonne.

It was on 26th December 1914, that, during fighting in the Ravin des Medrissons, the Garibaldian Legion received its baptism of fire when the 2nd Battalion was detailed to take a German trench. The attacking front was limited to about 150 yards, but the position was strongly held and protected by a deep entanglement of barbed wire. After an artillery bombardment lasting from

midnight to dawn, the Garibaldian companies rushed forward one behind the other but were held up by the uncut wire. At one point, an opening was found and a few men got as far as the German trench, only to be killed. It was during this engagement that 2nd Lieutenant Bruno Garibaldi was killed. Having been wounded in the hand, he returned to the fight before being wounded for a second time. However, supporting himself against a tree, he continued to urge his men forward until being hit for a third and fatal time. His body was recovered the following day by his comrades and returned to Italy where he was buried amongst much pomp and ceremony. His younger brother, Costante, was killed in the same region on 5th January 1915 whilst four other brothers - Ricciotti, Sante, Guiseppe and Enzo - survived the war, some of whom saw action in the Dolomites in 1917. The remaining brother Menotti was in China at this time. The three sisters served as nurses in the war.

On the rise of Mussolini to power in the 1930s, the family was split between the pro- and anti-Fascists. The parents were both ardent Fascists, but one brother fled to America and another to France. On the death of the father in 1924, Mussolini organized a grand funeral which included the exhumation and reburial of both Bruno and Costante. The ceremony took place in the Campo Verano Cemetery in Rome in front of the monument to Goffredo Maneli.

There is a memorial to both brothers at Lachalade in the Argonne whilst Bruno is commemorated on the King's School War Memorial. There is also a large bust of Bruno on Cavicolo Hill overlooking Rome. □



The King's School War Memorial, Canterbury

Ed Holman

Mademoiselle from Armentières

Note: This is an article about a song, together with a town and the women who lived there. When referring to the song, and quoting the song, I use the anglicised spelling Armenteers, when referring to the town I use the French spelling Armentières.

John Drouot

The song *Mademoiselle from Armenteers* has been in the world's collective memory for over a hundred years. The lyrics have been published in many forms, bowdlerised, expurgated, unexpurgated and radically rewritten, to the extent that the original is scarcely recognisable, yet alone identifiable. The music has been arranged, performed and recorded to suit many agenda and tastes: as a reproduction of soldiers spending an evening in an estaminet, as a children's campfire song, as a regimental march, an American line dance, a French chanson, a rugby song and Lord knows what else. Over the years the song has attracted three questions: "Who wrote it?", "Who was the Mademoiselle?" and "Why Armentières?".

In the 3rd edition (1965) of their book of Soldier's Song and Slang 1914-18, *The Long Trail*, John Brophy and Eric Partridge, Oxford academics and former officers, date *Mademoiselle from Armenteers* to 1915. They include it in their chapter on songs used on the march and are adamant that the original version, sung by British troops from 1915 to 1918, only had a single verse:

Mademoiselle from Armenteers

Parlez-Vous

Mademoiselle from Armenteers

Parlez-Vous

Mademoiselle from Armenteers

Hasn't been ----- for forty years

Inky pinky parlez vous

In 1965 "fucked" was still not so easily printed as today, though its use is still contentious.

Brophy and Partridge classify *Mademoiselle from Armenteers* as a song "Predominantly Sung on the March". The majority of the songs within this classification fit the same basic formula: a single verse with a call and response format: ideal for co-ordinating actions whilst diverting attention during a dull repetitive activity. The song *We're Here Because* is another example: its use in an early scene of the recent film of *Journey's End* (2021) gives a good idea how such songs worked. Brophy and Partridge identify three close variants of *Mademoiselle from Armenteers*: *The Landlady's*



Front Cover from "The American Weekly" June 1949

Daughter, The Sergeant Major's having a Time and Skibboo, (also known as *Three German Officers*). They maintain that these songs had separate uses and identities.

Brophy and Partridge hypothesise the song's origin in an "untraceable parody" of a German poem, written in 1809 by Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862) and called *Der Wirtin Töchterlein* (The Landlady's Little Daughter). This parody was "perhaps written for performance at 'men only' smoking concerts" – sadly the authors do not explain how a German poem found its way into the British army in the first place. There are certainly strong similarities between the first verse of the poem and those of *Skibboo*. Whilst *Der Wirtin Töchterlein* deals, mawkishly, with three students mourning the death of a young woman; *Skibboo*, deals, obscenely, with gang rape. Uhland's poem has no chorus, which was presumably added to the original parody as it evolved from a recitation to a song. If we accept this Missing Link story, then *Skibboo* was the precursor of *Mademoiselle from Armenteers*, but that latter song did not magically appear: someone made it.

The closest, I can find, to an "official" story of the song's composition is cited by Emma Hanna in *Sounds of War*: Lieutenant Gitz Rice, a Canadian professional musician turned artilleryman, was inspired to write the song in 1915 whilst observing a barmaid in an Armentières cafe. I have found a copy

of the sheet music in the American Library of Congress. It credits Rice with the tune (in 1915) and “Red” Rowland with the words. The tune is the one we know as *Mademoiselle from Armentiers* and the lyrics of the first verse are the same as Brophy and Partridge’s, except their “-----” has been replaced by the commercially necessary “kissed”. Unfortunately the rest of the lyrics, including the “Hinky Dinky” chorus, relate to the American Army in France and would have been written in 1917 or ‘18. I have not been able to find a version, credited to Rice, with words that reflect the British army in Flanders in 1915.



Front cover of sheet-music for “Hinky Dinky Parlez-Vous” (published 1940, in New York, and probably aimed at the British Market), with photograph of Lt Gitz Rice

An alternative origin story, implicit in Brophy and Partridge, is that *Mademoiselle from Armentiers* was the creation of an anonymous author which caught on with its functionally rhythmic lyrics and, at its heart, the story of a soldier chatting up and, maybe, pulling a woman. This does not preclude Rice, a Canadian soldier, as the writer; his later exploitation of the song was the natural product of its popularity. He was not alone in seeking to cash in on *Mademoiselle from Armentiers*. A recording, with that very name, appeared in 1915 performed by the music hall artist Jack Charman and written by Harry Charlton and Joseph Tunbridge. The first verse, as near as I can make out from a poor recording on YouTube, goes as follows:

*What is the latest song that folks are singing
around the street,*

Singing about the street, everyone you meet?

*What is the latest melody that’s caught the
young idea?*

*Promise to keep the secret and I’ll whisper in
your ear:*

*It’s Mademoiselle from Armentiers, parlez
vous*

Mademoiselle from Armentiers, same to you.

Sing it with all your heart and soul:

Sing everyone right up the pole.

Inky Pinky Parlez-Vous.

Again, the tune is the familiar one, but the lyrics jump on the bandwagon of another song’s popularity.

The question of the song’s authorship will probably never be settled, and the same applies to the identity of the Mademoiselle. In 1930, the Daily Mail claimed she was Laure Millanquet. The article says that, in 1914, Laure had been a local beauty attracting the attention of all the troops; her lover was killed in the war and she became a recluse, dying alone in 1930. In 1964 the Mail contradicted its earlier “scoop”, taking Rice’s barmaid as its starting point and identifying her as one Marie Lecoq. On the basis of the Mail’s story, in 2008 a monument was placed near Marie’s grave in the town cemetery. This shows her being lifted, on a shield, by four British soldiers.



The Marie Lecoq Memorial, Armentières Cemetery

The town archives of Armentières, identify three “Demoiselles de Armentières”. One is Marie Lecoq, with the Daily Mail’s 1964 story cited as evidence. The second is Jeanne Lescornez who, in 1928, was chosen as the Mademoiselle by a South African veterans association with the help of the French Foreign Minister. The final woman is Bernadette Verbeque, who met and married an Australian artilleryman, Albert Byrne MM, moving to Victoria after the war; she died in 1984. She is described on the Australian Virtual War Memorial as

“a young ‘mademoiselle from Armentières’ who, along with many others, helped the Allied troops with laundry and sometimes meals as they battled the German Army”. The formal title was assigned to her by the artist Christine Canetti who used her, in 1998, in an artwork commemorating the women of Armentières during the war.



Christine Canetti's 1998 art installation to the Women of Armentières

In 1930 R H Mottram, who had known Armentières during the war, saw the Mademoiselle in generic terms rather than as an individual. He described two broad types of women encountered by soldiers in Flanders. The first were women from the countryside: shielded by their families, hardened by agricultural work and who appeared distant and reserved when approached by men. The second were from the towns: comfortable in many different social situations, outgoing in their interactions with men. Many troops passed through the towns of Flanders and, Mottram argues, the song is about the women they met in them. If he is correct the song could as well be about a Mademoiselle from Bailleul or Poperinge, except neither of those names would scan as well. Although set on the Somme, William Orpen's 1918 painting Adam and Eve at Péronne makes a similar point.

Men, out of the line, appreciated the company of women for many things: a glimpse of normality accompanied by the sensations of attention, flirtation and a spot of mothering. Depending on his sexuality a man would also have appreciated women for the potentials and the



*William Orpen's Adam and Eve at Péronne, 1918
Imperial War Museum*

realities of sex. In 1979, Peter Hart, working for the Imperial War Museum, recorded Sergeant George Ashurst of the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers, describing a bar/brothel in Armentières.

“This estaminet I was in, this particular night, it was absolutely crowded and there were five women in there and it was five francs a time if you went with them, up the stairs and in the bedrooms. And fellows were coming in, coming out, coming in, coming out. ... There was a man on every step waiting his turn to go in with a woman. ... I didn't fancy the women at all. They were so common. Tom said: ‘Are you going up there?’ I said, ‘No, not with them things.’ They were all sorts of ages the women.”

The late Dr Clare Makepeace researched soldiers' attitudes to sex and to the women, near the Front, who provided it. In a 2014 article she quotes Lance Corporal Bert Chaney, from his autobiographical writings, held in the Liddle Collection at the University of Leeds :

“It was said the girls, and not all were young either, were making a fortune, they had never had so many customers before, and were completely exhausted by the end of each day. They were sent home in cabs each night as by that time most of the girls were unable to walk. In some cases, it was whispered, they could not even close their legs after the rough treatment from some of their more impatient customers.”



A piano setting of the 1915 Carlton and Tunbridge version of Mademoiselle from Armenteurs

It is unclear, from this extract, the extent to which Chaney's words express prurience as against empathy. They certainly reflect a young man's gullibility regarding the extent to which pimps and brothel keepers rewarded and cared for their women. Dr Makepeace states, regretfully, that Chaney's account is the closest her research was able to come to a representation of the life of a prostitute on the Western Front: she could find nothing from the women themselves. She was focusing on sex workers but equally silent are the voices of those women whose relationships with British soldiers were as straightforward service providers, in billets, shops, estaminets and laundries. If such relationships extended to the sexual, it was more likely to be casual or even romantic. What little can be understood, so far, about the actual women of Armentières, usually dates from post-war and is told from a man's perspective. As far as the Mademoiselle in the song is concerned, notwithstanding the efforts of newspapers, artists and researchers, we can only know her through the lyrics. These vary according to the needs and sensitivities of performers and audience: they are either commercial and slightly saucy, or they are from the oral tradition of the British army and often downright filthy.

There is still the final question, "Why Armentières?" which for me, by now, has little meaning as all three questions come together in the song. If we accept Rice's claim, Armentières was where he found his inspiration, in a specific unidentified woman. Move the focus from Rice and the song takes centre stage. In this case the only thing that sets Armentières apart from other possible locations is how well the resonance of its anglicised name "Armenteurs" fits the rhythms of the march and of communal chanting. Whoever wrote the song probably appreciated this, wherever the act of composition took place. According to Brophy and Partridge *Skibboo*, or something similar, was already being sung in the army in 1915, independent of any specific composer, woman or location. Finally, in Mottram's summary of soldiers' perceptions of women in Flanders, Armentières' women, their attitudes and their callings were no different from those of other towns in the area. In the end it is the song that matters: it worked well on the march, whilst offering soldiers a diverting sexual fantasy. It was a gift to the music business, providing songwriters and publishers with the opportunity to claim unallocated credit. Each version defines a different woman, making the hunt for her futile. Apart from all this, it has a catchy tune in 6/8 time, and memorable words, with or without the obscenities. □

John Drouot



In the unlikely event that a reader does not have easy access to their own copy of Journey's End (2017) the We're Here Because We're Here scene may be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ejr9mhqWk>

The late Martin Middlebrook and the Kelowna Cross

Members will be saddened by the death of Martin Middlebrook on 19th January 2024 - just five days before his 92nd birthday. WFA members will, no doubt, have read David Tattersfield's excellent obituary of Martin in the latest issue of the WFA Bulletin (Number 126). *The Times* published their obituary of Martin on 1st March and followed that up with a number of tributes from those who knew him. One of those tributes was from Rob Kirk who some of our members might know as a former editor of *Lochnagar Crater Today*. Rob wrote about Martin's involvement in the story of what is now known as the Kelowna Cross but was originally the memorial to the 12th (Eastern) Division that had been erected at Ovillers in 1917.

Martin had found the Kelowna Cross at a military museum on a visit to Canada in 2007.

Martin told the story in an online article he wrote for the Tom Morgan's excellent Hellfire Corner website available on hellfirecorner.co.uk/middlebrook3f.htm.

The *History of the 12th (Eastern) Division in the Great War* published in 1923 contains an Appendix detailing each of that Division's Memorials that stood on the Western Front including the one at Ovillers.

The following is an extract from that book:

"The First Memorial to the officers and men of the 12th Division was erected in 1917. After the Battle of the Somme in 1916, a strong feeling arose that the gallant and epic fight at Ovillers should be commemorated. Accordingly a site was selected close to the ruins of the church at Ovillers, and on the spot, sacred for all time to the 12th Division, a simple oak cross was raised. It stands on high ground, and can be seen for far and near, and, notwithstanding the engagements that took place in its vicinity in 1918, the cross remains on that spot to this day, a memorial to the brave men who fell in the great fight in July, 1916."

The story of how the cross was removed from France to England and how it stood for over seventy years in a private house in Dorset before finally being shipped to Canada is most moving.

We are all indebted to Martin for his ground-breaking book *The First Day on the Somme* which was first published in 1971 at a time when no guidebooks to the Western Front were available (other than the original Michelin guidebooks). We are also indebted to Martin for drawing attention to the whereabouts of the 12th (Eastern) Division's memorial cross that stood at Ovillers for some eight years.



This image shows the original oak cross that stood at Ovillers until 1925. The image has been digitally reconstructed from two photographs - one of the top of the cross and the other of the bottom of the cross. The cross is approximately ten feet tall

The inscription on the wooden cross reads:

IN
MEMORY
OF
OFFICERS, WARRANT OFFICERS, NCOs & MEN
12TH DIVISION

WHO FELL AT THE CAPTURE OF OVILLERS
DURING THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME
JULY. AUGUST. OCTOBER. 1916
GRANT THEM O LORD ETERNAL REST

Martin Middlebrook was the first author to adopt the 'bottom up' approach to the Great War. Prior to his book *The First Day on the Somme*, most books were written on the 'top down' approach. By telling the personal stories of the PBI (Poor Bloody Infantry) men who had experienced the war at ground level, Martin had 'broken the mould'. His novel approach was followed by the likes of Lyn Macdonald and Peter Liddle, amongst others.

Those members of the East Kent WFA Branch who were privileged to attend the special *Gateways* evening at the University of Kent some five years ago when Martin gave a presentation will never forget that occasion. □

JB

Au revoir to our very good friend Dr Dominiek Dendooven

After more than 25 intensive years at the In Flanders Fields Museum and First World War Studies, our very good friend Dominiek Dendooven recently bid farewell to IFFM to take on the role of researcher/curator for the Merghelynck Museum in Ypres

According to Dominiek, the move is a return to an old love as well as the chance to devote himself more intensely to his great love of eighteenth-century art and culture. Dominiek remains in the Cloth Hall but has moved from the knowledge centre to the other side of the same building in the former Town Hall to join his colleagues at the Yper Museum.

Dominiek has written numerous books regarding the Great War. He has also given talks to our Branch and has been a frequent visitor to the excellent Gateways lectures held at the University of Kent.

Dominiek has contributed a 'News from Ypres' report for the WFA Bulletin for a good number of years. Those reports have ensured that WFA members have been regularly updated on developments in the Ypres Salient.

Although Dominiek has now left IFFM he remains a supporter of it as he regards it simply as being 'the best war museum in the world'. That view is shared by many others but I know that he will be very sadly missed by many WFA members

We wish Dominiek every success in his new role and look forward to seeing him again whenever the opportunity arises.

JB



Dominiek Dendooven and Nicholas Saunders at Sanctuary Wood during the Trench Art Conference held In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres - April 2009*

Mark Connelly (University of Kent) writes:

As all who have the privilege of encountering Dominiek realise immediately, he is someone of immense warmth, enthusiasm and knowledge. Ask Dominiek any question about the Great War, and particularly its impact on Flanders and Belgium, and you will get an answer of great insight; you will come away knowing a lot more than you did before. Moreover, you learn because he is always so engaging and so passionate. We have worked in close collaboration for over ten years now, and it has been an absolute joy, particularly because of his 'can do' manner. It is truly inspiring to sit down with Dominiek (often accompanied by a glass

of Flemish liquid heritage) to discuss ideas, plans, and projects. It is this approach and sheer dynamism that allowed us to get the Gateways/University of Kent - In Flanders Fields Museum's talks up and running in an amazingly short space of time, and we are both delighted to see the loyal audience it has built up and how greatly appreciated it is. I'll certainly miss Dominiek, but am delighted that he is only going round the corner in Ieper (Ypres) and has the chance to pursue one of his other great passions at the Merghelynck Museum. I also know that he will continue to support the talks series, but from the spectator's point of view... and I have no doubt he will ask every speaker a very, very interesting question! □

Professor Mark Connelly

**Emeritus Professor Nicholas Saunders is the country's leading expert on Trench Art*



Dominiek Dendooven during a visit to the Newsletter Editor's home at Margate - November 2018

The Story of a Wrecked Model of a Mark IV British Tank

Length 4 inches



I acquired this wrecked model of a British tank from Norman Brooks when he ran *La Maison Blanche* bed & breakfast establishment at Mailly-Mallet on the Somme battlefield over 30 years ago. At the time, it puzzled me as to whether it was a toy. It took me more than 30 years to find out what it wasn't a toy!

On its underside, the model tank had the letters LVA and the date 1919 stamped on it. That information eventually led me to an online auction site showing an undamaged example of the same model (see image below left). So, my model tank had once been a table-lighter before it had suffered catastrophic damage. It

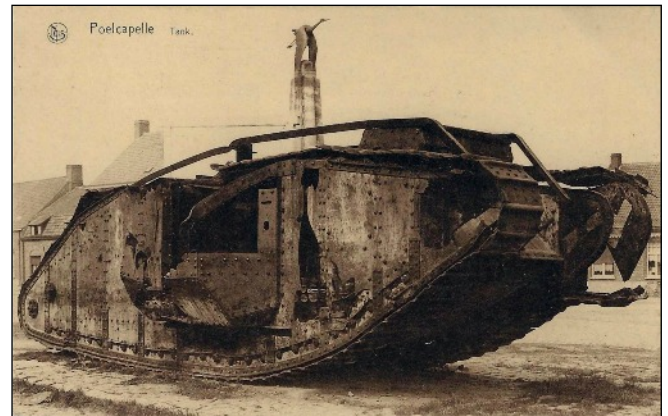
had lost its striker, or wand, (which originally had stood in the hole in the tank's cabin) and the whole of its port sponson had broken off along with the tank's numerous guns. The model is extremely heavy for its size: the casting seems to be an alloy but with a lead-lining under its roof. Note that the starboard sponson on the model still has its striker strip. Another puzzle solved!



Postcards showing some of the many wrecked British tanks that littered the battlefields immediately after the end of the Great War:



Wrecked tank outside the railway station at Ypres



Wrecked tank at Poelcapelle



Wrecked tank 'Eldorado' at Langemarck



Wrecked tank No 2648 at La Pompelle (Route de Châlons) with 'Keep out' warning signs in French

More Tank Souvenirs



Two Tank Corps sweetheart brooches



A flag-day emblem featuring a Tank and the words: HAVE HELPED. Unusually, the emblem is made from material (cotton?). The pin has rusted badly and the emblem is now very fragile - but it is over 100 years old!



These two pin-badges were probably sold by street-hawkers during visits to towns and cities by Tank Banks during WWI



Tank postcard by Herbert Bryant

The Imperial War Museum has, in its collection, an entirely wooden model of a Whippet Tank that was made in the Tank Workshops on the Western Front by a member of the Chinese Labour Corps. Perhaps this wooden model (below) with copper tracks was also made by a member of the Chinese Labour Corps. Who knows?



Model of the Medium Mark A Tank (later known as the Whippet Tank)

More Trench Art paper-knives made from copper driving-bands

A number of copper Trench Art letter-openers were illustrated in the last Newsletter: here are a few more:



*'To my English friend Charles
From your Belgian friend John'*



'SOUVENIR OF WAR'



*'SOUVENIR OF KEMMEL'
'1914-18'*



'Present from P. Dobbelsstein'



The back of the 'Present from P. Dobbelsstein' paper-knife inscribed 'P.o.W. Camp 281'



The back of the above 'VIMY 1916' paper-knife is plain



*Unidentified detail on the '14-15-16
Souvenir de Boesinghe' paper-knife
'FG - IB?'*



Photo: James Brazier

Another photo from the archive

This photo was taken at the 41st Division Memorial at Flers during the WFA East Kent Branch trip to the Somme in September 2016 led by Dr Andrew Thomson

Future meetings:

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at The Hall, St Andrews United Reformed Church, Watling Street, Canterbury CT1 2UA

7:30pm start (hall open from 7:00pm)

2024

7 May

Tony Bolton: 'Mobilisation. The 18 days - 5-22 August 1914'

4 June

Meghan Kelleher: 'The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's enquiries' files'

2 July

Marietta Crichton Stewart: 'The Welsh Walter Mitty - life and adventures of a lieutenant, 6th Welsh'

August - no meeting

3 September

Phil Sutcliffe: 'The Somme: April - September 1916 through the eyes of a foot soldier'

1 October

Peter Hodgkinson: 'The 4th Army in the Battle of the Selle, 17-31 October 1918'

5 November

Viv Newman: 'Regina Diana - seductress, singer & spy'

3 December

Mark Connelly: 'Not so silent nights: the 1914 Christmas Truce'

All are welcome

WFA branches are entirely self-supporting. A donation towards the expenses of the meeting is very much appreciated

For further details, please contact:

Hazel Basford



**THE WESTERN FRONT
ASSOCIATION**

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

LATE NEWS

This postcard was found by Branch-member Richard Young at the Canterbury Collectors' Fair held at Westgate Hall, Canterbury on Saturday, 13th April 2024. The caption to the postcard-view is: 'Interior of Kent War Memorial, Canterbury Cathedral'

See also page 4 for more-recent photos of the stone altar inside the Bastion Chapel



Courtesy of Richard Young