

Introduction

John Madden

Chairman: Bartons' History Group

This, the fifth in the Bygone Bartons series (including the Jubilee Edition), is dedicated to those Bartonians who gave their lives in the two World Wars. Their names are listed below, those at least which our archives and research could trace.

There has been much discussion, in this centenary year, about the causes and conduct of the Great War of 1914-18, with several historians taking issue with what has been called the “Blackadder” depiction (“lions led by donkeys” in the famous phrase). Whatever the rights or wrongs of this argument are, there is no doubt that many thousands of young men - including those from the Bartons - enlisted voluntarily, eager to defend their country - though not as a result of the most famous poster of the War - see page 30.



Celebrating the end of the War: troops march past the Carpenters Arms

Also in this issue are articles about the Grove Nursery and the British Red Cross, before returning to the WWI theme with some smaller items.

This is the poem that Nigel Wood recited at the Middle Barton Sports & Social Club on Remembrance Sunday, November 10th, 2013. We believe it to have been written by a friend of his from the army at the time of the Korean War, but have no indication of his name. Although it is about a later war, we felt it appropriate to reproduce it in this issue.

The years have passed aplenty
Since the time that I was there
Along with countless others
The burden for to share.
I often think of those who stayed
Detained against their will
'neath a field of painted crosses
On the side of a South-Korean hill.
What price this golden glory
In the winning of the fight
When you're not here to share it
You're gone forever, out of sight.
But you will never be forgotten
And this I remember too
But there for the grace of God above
I would have shared that field with you.

Nigel added: I salute my special heroes of sixty years ago.

Steeple Barton

Middle Barton

Westcote Barton



**IN MEMORY OF THOSE
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
IN TWO WORLD WARS**

WORLD WAR I, 1914 – 1918





Arneke Cemetery

Private HAROLD (BIDMEAD) BASSETT

12134 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry, and
47030 Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

Died of wounds in France 8th September 1918

Aged 23

He is buried at Arneke Cemetery, Plot 8 Row A24

Harold was the son of James and Annie Bassett
who lived in Worton Road



Thiepval Memorial

Private FREDERICK CARPENTER

12111 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry, 6th Battalion

Killed in action 3rd September 1916

Aged 21

He has no known grave but he is commemorated
by name on the Thiepval Memorial, France. Pier
and Face 10A and D

He and William Keen enlisted at the same time and
they both died on the same day.

Frederick was the son of John and Ruth
Carpenter who lived in Kiddington Road.

Private HORACE VAUGHN CASTLE



132757 The Machine Gun Corps (Infantry),
36th Battalion

Killed in action, 8th September 1918

Aged 20

He is buried in the Wulverghem-Undenhosk Road Military Cemetery, Belgium. Plot 5, Row B, Grave 17.

Horace was the youngest son of Moses and Annie Castle who lived in the part of the main road now called Enstone Road.



Private WILLIAM JOHN CLACK



The Chatby Memorial, Alexandria

101415 The Machine Gun Corps
(Cavalry)

Drowned at sea (from H. T. Osmanieh)
31st December 1917

Aged 19

He is commemorated by name on the Chatby Memorial, Alexandria, Egypt, and also on a tombstone in the churchyard of St Edward the Confessor, Westcote Barton.

William was the son of Samuel and Elizabeth Clack, who lived in Brookside, Enstone Hill, Westcote Barton.



Landrecies British Cemetery



Steeple Barton Church

**Private FREDERICK WILLIAM
CONSTABLE**

65103 The Lancashire Fusiliers,
16th Battalion

Killed in action. 4th November 1918

Aged 27

He is buried in Landrecies British Cemetery, France. Row B, Grave 49, and is also commemorated on his brother's tombstone in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Steeple Barton.

Frederick was a son of William John and Eliza Constable who lived at Home Farm, South Street.



JOHN CONSTABLE

The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry

Civilian records: Died 19th February 1917

Aged 23

He is buried in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Steeple Barton.

John was a son of William John and Eliza Constable, Home Farm, South Street.

Gunner ERNEST JAMES HAWKINS

73221 Royal Garrison Artillery, 108th Heavy Battery.

Died of wounds in France 19th April 1917

Aged 29

He is buried in the Duisans British Cemetery, France. 11 L1

Ernest was the son of James and Harriett Hawkins, who lived on the Duns Tew Road. He was the husband of Elsie Maud, neé Tims, and they had a daughter Edith Maud.

Ernest was also the uncle of brothers George Henry, Albert Edward and Ernest James Hawkins, who all died in the war.



Duisans British Cemetery



Private ALBERT EDWARD HAWKINS

5692 Yorkshire Regiment.

Transferred 41041 West Yorkshire Regiment

Transferred 143187 Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)
17th Battalion

Died 4th April 1918

Aged 28

He is buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen. Block P, Plot 7, Row N, Grave 8B.

Albert was the second of three sons of Stephen and Martha (Patty) Hawkins who lived in Jacob's Yard. All three sons were killed in the war.



St Sever Cemetery



Tyne Cot Memorial

Private ERNEST JAMES HAWKINS

106940 The Machine Gun Corps (Infantry),
202nd Company

Died 9th October 1917

Aged 22

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name of the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium.

Ernest was the youngest of three sons of Stephen and Martha (Patty) Hawkins who lived in Jacob's Yard. All three sons were killed in the war.



Private GEORGE HENRY HAWKINS

6349 London Regiment, 1st/13th Kensington
Battalion

Died of wounds in France, 17th January 1917

Aged 29

He is buried at Merville Communal Cemetery
Extension, France. II A 24



Merville Communal Cemetery

George was the eldest of three sons of Stephen and Martha (Patty) Hawkins who lived in Jacob's Yard. All three sons were killed in the war.



Bailleul Communal Cemetery

Private WILLIAM EDWARD HUMPHRIES

37920 Gloucester Regiment, 8th Service Battalion

Died of wounds at Bailleul, France, 29/30th July 1918

Aged 19



Steeple Barton Church

He is buried at the Bailleul Communal Cemetery extension. Plot 3, Row D, Grave 287. He is also commemorated in an inscription on his mother's tombstone in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Steeple Barton.

Edward was a son of William and Ellen (Nellie) Humphries who lived in Jacob's Yard.



Private WILLIAM KEEN

12112 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, 6th Battalion.

Killed in action 3rd September 1916

Aged 20



Thiepval Memorial

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name on the Thiepval Memorial, France. Pier and Face 10A and D

William Keen and Frederick Carpenter enlisted at the same time and they both died on the same day.

William was the son of Edwin and Martha Keen who lived in Fox Lane.



Thiepval Memorial



Steeple Barton Church

Private GEORGE FELIX KIRBY

14/1263 The 14th Royal Warwickshire Regiment, B Company

Killed in action 23rd July 1916

Aged 20

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name on the Thiepval Memorial, France. 9A, 9B and 10B, and also on the stone surround of his parents' grave in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Steeple Barton, although the inscription is now obscured by moss and ivy.

George was the only son of Felix John (Phil) and Marianne Kirby who kept the shop in North Street.



Tyne Cot Memorial

Private FREDERICK JOHN LUING

28821 The Royal Berkshire Regiment, 2nd Battalion

Killed in action 2nd December 1917

Aged 38

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium. Panels 105 to 106.

Frederick was a son of William and Emma Luing who lived in the Cottages-in-the-Fields, Steeple Barton.



Ypres Town Cemetery

**Second Lieutenant JENNER
STEPHEN CHANCE MARSHALL**

The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry, 2nd Battalion

Killed in action 23rd October 1914

Aged 19

He is buried in Ypres Town Cemetery, Belgium. Row E2, Grave 6, and is also commemorated on a tablet on the wall in the church of St Edward the Confessor, Westcote Barton.

Jenner Stephen was the only son of Jenner Guest and Grace Marshall of Westcote Barton Manor



Private WILLIAM JAMES PARSONS

Military details unknown

Killed in action at Passchendaele 27th August
1917

Aged 36

No known grave but is commemorated on his parents' tombstone in the churchyard of St Edward the Confessor, Westcote Barton.

William was the only son of James and Jane Parsons who lived in North Street, opposite the Alice Marshall Hall



Westcote Barton Churchyard



St Patrick's Cemetery, Loos



Sapper WILLIAM W PROFFITT

155806 The Royal Engineers,
173rd Company

Killed in action 5th July 1916

Aged 26

He is buried in St Patrick's Cemetery, Loos, France. Plot 3, Row A, Grave 20.

William was the son of Ellen Proffitt who lived in Fox Lane



Private NIGEL STEWART RIACH

23725 Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders,
14th Battalion

Died of wounds received at St Eloi near Ypres,
30th September 1918

Aged 19

He is buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium, although a plaque in St Mary the Virgin's Church, Steeple Barton Church records that he was buried in St Bartholomew's Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgium.

Nigel was the youngest son of Colonel and Mrs Stewart Riach, Charlecome, formerly of Steeple Barton.



Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery

A railway spur was laid from the Poperinge line to the Lijssenthoek Cemetery, the second largest in Flanders, where men of many nationalities were buried. The cemetery was begun by the French in 1914 and it has the unusual dates of 1914-1920.



Steeple Barton Churchyard

Private JOHN EDWIN SMITH

203341 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, 1st/4th Battalion

Died of wounds 23rd July 1919

Aged 35

He is buried in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Steeple Barton.

John was the son of John and Martha Smith. His father died when the children were young. His mother went on to marry Edwin Keen and they had a son called William Keen, John's half brother, who also died in the war.

John Smith was married to Ethel (née Gibson) and they had a son also called John Edwin Smith.



Cement House Cemetery

Private CHARLES BERNARD STEVEN

43676 Lincolnshire Regiment, 10th Battalion

Died 12th October 1917

Aged 21

He is buried in the Cement House Cemetery, Belgium. Plot 6, Row D, Grave 27.

“Cement House” was the military name given to a fortified farm building on the Langemark-Boesingbe Road

The War Graves Commission information states that this is the only C Steven listed but also records two entries for his parentage. 1) He was the son of Robert Marshall, or 2) he was the son of Steven and Mary Matilda Steven of Warwick. The Bartons' History Group would welcome any more information about this man.



Thiepval Memorial

Private HORACE PERCY STEWART

12477 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Light Infantry. 6th Battalion.

Killed in action 3rd September 1916

Aged 21

He has no known grave but is commemorated
by name on the Thiepval Memorial, France. Pier
and Face 10A and D.

Horace was a son of Thomas and Lucy Stewart
who lived in Fox Lane.



Private FELIX FRANCIS GEORGE STOCKFORD



Ploegsteert Memorial

G/25259 The Queen's Royal Regiment (West
Surreys), 1st Battalion.

Killed in action 13th April 1918

Aged 19

He has no known grave but is commemorated by
name on the extension to the Ploegsteert Memorial,
Belgium. Panels 1 and 2.

Felix was a son of Mark and Annie Stockford
who lived in Fox Lane.



Tyne Cot Memorial

Private WALTER ALLISON WOODRUFF

33321 The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, 1/4th Battalion.

Killed in action 16th August 1917

Aged 31

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium. Panels 96-98.

Walter was the son of William and Sarah Woodruff who lived in Greenways, Church Lane.



WORLD WAR II, 1939 – 1945



Wormhoudt Communal Cemetery

Private WALTER HENRY BOFFIN

7600486 (Records: 7090488) The Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Died of wounds 22nd-26th May 1940

Aged 29

He is buried at the Wormhoudt Communal Cemetery, France. Row F, Grave 26.

William was a son of Charles and Edith Boffin who lived in Worton Road.



Gunner (Dvr 1/C) FREDERICK JOHN SHIRLEY

942908 The Royal Artillery, 115 Field Regiment.

Died 28th May – 2nd June 1940

Aged 21

He has no known grave but is commemorated by name on the Dunkirk Memorial, France.

Column 15



Frederick was a son of Frederick and Florence Ruth Shirley who lived in North Street.

Dunkirk Memorial



The information above is based on the Bartons' History Group's archives, mainly recorded by our founder member, Audrey Martin. If anyone has any further information about any of these men, or believes there is a mistake, please contact the History Group so that we can update our records.

The Grove Nursery and the Soden Family

Barbara Hill

Ever since we came to live at the Grove I have been interested in learning more about the history of the house and garden and particularly the Soden family who ran a nursery and market garden here some years ago.

Evidence of the nursery was abundant when we started digging the back garden and found lots of pieces of glass.

We also acquired a map of Middle Barton and surrounding area dated 1881 which clearly shows a number of large greenhouses to the rear of the house.



Extract from 1881 OS map showing Grove Nursery and glasshouse

The earliest reference we have of the Soden family is to William Soden who was born in about 1745 probably in one of the villages to the south west of Banbury. It is possible that he was born into a non-conformist family, perhaps Quakers, which is why his birth or Christening was not recorded in the parish register.

By 1771 William was living in Sandford St Martin and married to Elizabeth Smith. Parish records of Sandford St Martin and Westcott Barton show that ten children were born to the couple between 1771 and 1786 but we believe that only four

survived beyond infancy. Elizabeth died in January 1789 and in January 1790 William subsequently married Mary Summerton with whom he had a further seven children. Four of the children were christened at Sandford St Martin church, one at Westcott Barton and two at Steeple Barton church, indicating that the family moved more than once up to 1786 when John Soden was born.

William Soden is shown as the landlord of the Fleur de Lis public house in records from 1797/1798 and again in 1801/02. He is also recorded as holding the licence from 1784-1787 although at that time he was apparently living in Westcott Barton. The Fleur de Lis was later renamed The Carpenters' Arms.

William died on 8th November 1827 as a significant landowner, leaving three separate properties and gardens to his wife Mary.

John Soden married Elizabeth Fortnam on 9th April 1817 and they had ten children. At the time of his marriage John was described as a gardener.

When Mary, his mother, died in 1832 several of her children had predeceased her but in her will she left to John 'all the garden and the land on which he has erected a dwelling house'. Subsequent records seem to indicate that this house was what became 'The Grove'.

As the first census, in 1841, shows John Soden, aged 45, as a nurseryman living near the public house we must assume that this is the same land which, by the time of the 1861 census, was named Grove Nursery. Evidently John had by then built up a notable business as the 1852 Directory for Oxfordshire quotes:-

Middle Barton is a hamlet and township in the parish of Steeple Barton. Here are the nursery grounds of J Soden and sons. These gardens which extend over several acres are well stocked with choice fruit and forest trees, flowering shrubs, with fine specimen conifers also a large assortment of greenhouse plants. Messrs Soden have been successful competitors at the horticultural shows at Oxford, Banbury, Deddington etc.

John and Elizabeth had only one son who survived beyond infancy and he subsequently joined his father in the business. John the elder died in July 1879, his wife, Elizabeth having died in 1863.

From the census records in 1841, 1851, 1861 and 1871 it appears that the families of John senior and his son inhabited the same property which had clearly been extended to accommodate everyone. The 1861 Census indicates that John is head of the household at the Grove Nursery and employs five men and two boys. As well as John, his wife, Sarah, her sister and three young children, the household also

includes Sarah Stockford, a nursemaid born in Duns Tew, Rose Wallen (or Walton), a domestic servant, born in Upper Heyford and Jane Giles, monthly nurse, born in Quanton.

John and Sarah had married in about 1850 and had a total of eleven children, seven of whom were girls. The eldest, Annie, who was born in 1851, left to become a governess in Cheshire and Mary, born in 1859, helped in the nursery business as a florist. Little is known of the other girls but one of the boys, Herbert, died aged 15 and the other boys, Charles (b. 1861) and John Frederick (b. 1857) both joined the family firm.



John Frederick Soden becomes the manager of the business and takes over the ownership of the firm in 1884 on his father's death. In the 1891 Census he is still unmarried at 33 and his brother Charles is working alongside him as a seedsman.

We know nothing about the business during the first two decades of the twentieth century but it is safe to assume that the Sodens supplied essential seeds to ensure that the local population could grow fruit and vegetables to sustain them during the years of the Great War.

In 1901 John Frederick married Alice Harding, who hailed from Pembrokeshire and together they had three children - Myra, Cynthia and Bernard. Bernard worked at Lucy's Eagle Ironworks in Oxford for most of his life and died in November 1968.

None of the offspring seems to have been involved in the nursery business and

when John Frederick Soden died in 1920 the business was sold and ceased to be a nursery.

It is understood that some members of the Soden family settled near Chard in Somerset.



A view of the rear of The Grove from the early 1900s

From the electors' list it appears that Orland Lennox Beater was living at The Grove in 1920 but from about 1926 we know that Walter Parsons owned and was living in Grove Cottage (now 79 North Street).

The Parsons family were one of the oldest families in the Bartons, with records dating back to the 1500s. From about 1905 until 1926 the Parsons ran the General Stores at 'Top of Dock' (34 North Street).

In 1929 Walter Parsons sold the Grove and Grove Cottage to William Frederick Lloyd James. Walter Parsons died in 1939.

In 1934 both properties were sold to John Gill Green then in 1949 to Harry Mansell Parsons (not sure if he was related to Walter Parsons). After only nine months, in February 1950, the ownership passed to Colonel Charles Barnard Appleby, whose daughter lived in the Bartons until quite recently.

In 1953 The Grove Nursery, as it was still known, extending to more than five acres

and including the two dwellings, was purchased by Arthur Hynes, who came from Kensington, London.



A view of The Grove in the 1950s

The two properties finally came into separate ownership in 1964 when Grove Cottage (79 North Street) was sold to Reginald Burton, a coal merchant from Oxford and The Grove (81 North Street) to Alfred ‘Stan’ Hill who hailed from Birmingham (my father-in-law).

Grove Cottage, sometimes known as ‘The Small House’, passed to Mrs Margaret Dunlop then her daughter, Barbara Heulyn Dunlop before eventually being purchased by the Caldwell family.

In 1964, on selling The Grove and Grove Cottage, Mr Hynes divided up the land and had the bungalow, which became The New Grove, constructed in order to provide more suitable accommodation for his wife who suffered from ill-health.

Subsequently some of The Grove land, fronting the road, was sold for a bungalow for Mr and Mrs Lewis, previously of Downhill Farm, Worton Road. This is now 85 North Street.

My mother-in-law, Doreen Hill, was a very talented and enthusiastic gardener and flower arranger who loved and worked in The Grove garden until she died in 2001

at the age of 82. It was partly as a tribute to her that it became my ambition, when I retired, to open the garden for the National Garden Scheme, 'Yellow Book'. I like to think that she would be very happy to know that so many people have been able to enjoy the garden and that John Soden would be gratified that the tradition of gardeners at The Grove continues.

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The British Red Cross

Christine Edbury

The International Red Cross Movement was initiated by a Swiss businessman Henry Dunant, who had been horrified by the suffering of men from both sides in the Battle of Solferino in 1859, men being left to die because of lack of care.

A national relief society of volunteers, neutral and impartial, was created to assist. Eventually a committee which later became the International Committee of the Red Cross was established in Geneva in 1863. This led to the General Convention of 1864 when Dunant proposed countries adopt an international agreement to give medical services to the wounded on the battlefield.

It is believed the emblem, which is still used today, was created then, using the Swiss national flag and reversing the colours, red cross on white background from the Swiss flag white cross on red background.

Following the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, an article was published in *The Times*, suggesting a National Society was formed along the same lines as the Red Cross. A public meeting was called and subsequently the British National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War was formed. Subsequent battles and campaigns in Europe came under the protection of the Red Cross emblem. The name of the organisation was changed to the British Red Cross in 1905 and a royal charter was granted in 1908.

At the outbreak of World War I, the British Red Cross formed the Joint War Committee and Order of St. John and members of both organisations were organised into VAD groups (Voluntary Aid Detachment). The name VAD was given to groups as well as individuals. Their primary role was to help sick and wounded soldiers and sailors, at home and abroad. Volunteers were recruited and all members were given basic training in first aid. Cooking, hygiene, sanitation, transport and air raid precaution training was also given. Qualified nursing was also provided, as well as food parcels, wheelchairs for the returning wounded. VADs and nurses worked in the auxiliary hospitals (home and abroad) and convalescent homes. Food parcels were also organised for the prisoners of war abroad, letters home revealed the men were starving. Clothing was also provided.

In 1915 The London branch provided a missing and wounded service. The VADs were asked to make enquiries at the London hospitals and made lists of missing and wounded personnel. Families could enquire at the London hospitals about loved

ones they had not heard from. The VADs sent their reports to Headquarters. There were offices for this service in France, Malta, Alexandria and Salonika. The Red Cross re-established contact for the families, a service which still continues today.

By the end of the war 90,000 individual VADs had volunteered and been trained under the Red Cross banner.

Today the International Red Cross movement continues to provide humanitarian aid worldwide, with 97 million volunteers and members of staff.



In WWII the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John again joined forces. George Kirby received this Commendation for his services

The History of the Remembrance Poppy

Rosemary Wharton

‘In Flanders Field’ by John McCrea

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

This moving poem was the inspiration for an American lady named Moina Bell Michael to buy poppies and sell them to raise funds for American ex-servicemen. It happened one Saturday in 1918 just before the Armistice, when Moina was on the duty desk for a Conference in New York City. It was here, on this day, that the idea of the Poppy as a memorial emblem originated. To summarise her own account in her book ‘The Miracle Flower:’

“On Saturday morning, November 9 1918, before the Armistice, during the 25th Conference of the Overseas YMCA War Secretaries, a young soldier placed a copy of the November Ladies Home Journal on my desk. I found time to read it and discovered the marked page which carried Colonel John McCrae's poem, ‘We Shall Not Sleep’, later named ‘In Flanders Fields’. It was vividly picturized - most strikingly illustrated in color.”

“I read the poem, which I had read many times previously, and studied its graphic picturization. The last verse transfixed me and was for me a full spiritual experience. In a high moment of white resolve I pledged to KEEP THE FAITH and always to wear a red poppy of Flanders Fields as a sign of remembrance and the emblem of ‘keeping the faith with all who died’.

As a helper at this annual conference, Moina had always cheered up the rather gloomy room with flowers bought at her own expense and as she was reading the poem, three committee members came to her desk to give her a cheque for \$10 in support of her efforts to brighten the place up. She was moved by this sudden appreciation and said she would use it to buy 25 artificial red poppies. And she showed them the poem, explaining why. The Committee was equally moved and took the poem and the idea back to the Conference. They liked the idea and afterwards asked her to get red poppies for them to wear at the Armistice.

Moina actually had great difficulty in tracking down artificial poppies; other flowers -- yes, but not poppies. But finally she found 25 red, silk, four-petalled poppies. It turned out that the shop girl who served Moina had lost a brother in the War and was 'sleeping in Flanders Fields.' This personal connection made Moina's resolve even greater and that first batch of Remembrance Poppies was worn by her small group of supporters at the Armistice.

The next development came from a Frenchwoman, Madame Anna Guérin, who liked the poppy symbolism. She had founded the "American and French Children's



League." She suggested that artificial poppies should be made and sold and in 1921 organised the League to manufacture millions of cloth poppies. These were sold throughout the US to raise funds for the restoration of the war-torn regions of France and for the benefit of the French inhabitants, particularly the orphans.

Anna was also determined to introduce the idea of the Memorial Poppy to all the nations which had been allied with France during WW1. She made visits or sent representatives to America, Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand.

So, in 1921 Anna brought the idea to Britain. She went in person to visit Field Marshal Earl Douglas Haig who was founder and President of The British Legion. She persuaded him to adopt the Flanders Poppy as an emblem for the Legion and the first British Poppy Day Appeal was launched by the British Legion that year, in

the run up to November 11th 1921 -- the third anniversary of the end of the Great War.

The key player in Britain was Major George Howson MC. He had founded the Disabled Society to help disabled ex-servicemen and women. Howson suggested to the British Legion that the Disabled Society should make the poppies. He obtained a grant of £2000 and set up a small factory on the Old Kent Road. The Poppy Factory had the double purpose of providing work and income for disabled servicemen as well as generating funds to support the wider spectrum of disabled veterans. The flowers were designed so that someone with the use of one hand could assemble them.

Howson wrote a letter to his parents:

‘I have been given a cheque for £2000 to make poppies with. It is a large responsibility and will be very difficult. If the experiment is successful, it will be the start of an industry to employ 150 men. I do not think it can be a great success, but it is worth trying. I consider the attempt should be made if only to give the disabled their chance.’

Within months, an increasing number of disabled veterans were working at the factory, producing poppies. Within three years, they outgrew their premises and the Factory moved to Richmond, where it remains today. In the same year, the Disabled Society changed its name to the British Legion Poppy Factory.

Today, 50 Servicemen and women make over 27 million poppies, 113,000 wreaths and 800,000 crosses for the Field of Remembrance.

DUSTY CUPBOARDS AND NEVER ENDING DRAWERS

by Jackie Wood

After many weeks of going through large dusty cupboards and never ending drawers, I came across, what I thought was yet another tin containing more hairgrips, buttons and those important items we all keep in case they may be useful one day! Looking closer at the tin it seemed rather special; it was made of brass about 5 inches long by just over 3 inches wide, and about 1 inch deep, on the front it was embossed with a profile of a young girl, on both sides of the profile were the letters 'M' and underneath were the words 'Christmas 1914'. Opening the hinged tin slowly and carefully it contained a very old frail Christmas card. Intrigued I decided to find out more about this tin, good old internet!

Apparently, these tins were the idea of Princess Mary, the 17 year old daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. Princess Mary organised a public appeal to raise funds to ensure every Sailor and every Soldier at the front received a Christmas present. The appeal raised £162,591 12s 5d and eligible to receive the gift was every person 'wearing the King's uniform on Christmas day 1914' - approximately 2,620,019 men and women. This large number of recipients caused a problem, as it was impossible to make such a large number of tins by Christmas Day 1914, so they were divided into three classes.

Class A: These tins would be received on Christmas Day 1914 by the Navy including minesweepers, dockyard officials, all troops at the Front in France, wounded in hospital, prisoners and men interned (for whom the tin was reserved), members of the French Mission, nurses at the Front and widows and parents of those who had already lost their lives.

Class B: All British Colonial and Indian troops serving outside the British Isles who were not provided for in Class A.

Class C: All troops in the British Isles.

Classes B and C were not given out until January 1915; they contained a Happy New Year card.

Each tin contained either a Christmas or New Year Card and a picture of Princess Mary; other contents varied, tobacco or cigarettes (no worries about smoking in those days) chocolate, spices and a rifle bullet pencil.

Looking at my tin, as I sit here writing this, I wonder who it belonged to? Did it belong to one of my grandfathers? Or perhaps a great uncle? What stories could it tell me about the Great War? As I close my tin, I think these memories are best kept inside, don't you?

BOB FOR TOM

Jackie Wood

On the mantle shelf above the inglenook there stood these dull pewter tankards, when you opened their hinged lids and looked inside you could see they had glass bottoms, why?



Apparently, in the 17th and 18th Century, there are tales of sailors being pressed ganged into the navy after a shilling was slipped into their drink, and possibly being the worse for wear, the sailors would down their drink and they would find the shilling, too late, they had accepted the King's Shilling and would be marched towards a ship, perhaps never to be seen again. To overcome this, tankards were made with glass bottoms, so the sailors could see if a coin had been placed into their drink. During WW1, when young men went to the Recruiting office, they were asked their age (minimum 19, although some lied!), measured (they had to be taller than 5' 3") and given a silver shilling, the King's Shilling. Once this shining shilling was placed in the new recruit's pocket, he was deemed to have enlisted as a Tommy. This was the daily rate of pay for an ordinary soldier. Some new recruits would spend it straight away, usually in the pub, but some would keep it, as a lucky charm, believing it would keep them safe during the dark days of war. Some families today still have these shillings which they keep as family heirlooms.



This is probably the most famous image of the Great War, with the staring eyes and pointing finger of Lord Kitchener. But it was not originally intended to be a recruiting poster, and even when reproduced as one it was only in a relatively small print run, of which very few copies have survived.

It was designed by Alfred Leete, an illustrator, for the cover of the London Opinion magazine on Sept 5th 1914, and used a photograph of a much younger Kitchener, who by then was 64. Leete also “touched up” the picture, making the moustache darker and wider, and removing the squint in the real-life Kitchener’s left eye!

Kitchener himself, who had been made Secretary of State for War, was not entirely happy with the idea of using his face for recruitment purposes, believing it should be the King appealing to his subjects to volunteer for service (conscription was only introduced in 1916).

Field Marshal Horatio Herbert Kitchener, 1st Earl Kitchener (to give him his full title) was to perish when the ship taking him to Russia struck a German mine in June 1916.

"London opinion 1914sep5 Kitchener". Via Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:London_opinion_1914sep5_Kitchener.jpg#mediaviewer/File:London_opinion_1914sep5_Kitchener.jpg

From the school log book for the duration of WW1:

School children helped the war effort in both the First World War and Second. In September 1917 and 1918 the school was closed for the children to go blackberry picking for the war effort – for the Army and Navy. According to the log they picked a total of 964 pounds. From a log book of Lower Heyford school, the berries were despatched to jam factories in London, so perhaps the Barton blackberries also went that way.

The only other entry mentioning WW1 is a tentative reference to a young male teacher, Mr. Hinton. He was absent from school 6 May 1913 to attend Yeomanry drill at Woodstock. Still away at camp until 23rd. In September he was away doing territorial rifle practice. Then in September 1914 he seems to have been replaced by Miss Lester as Assistant Teacher. His name does not appear again in the log, so we can only assume he was in the army during WW1.



Celebrating the end of the War

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