In Memory of The Members & Servant's of this Club who fell in the GREAT WAR 1914 — 1918 Their name liveth for evermore ALINGTON GH 2ND LIEUT GOORKHA RIFLI BONHAM CARTER AT CAPT HANT'S REGT BOOKLEBANK I G CAPT WEST LANC'S BOF R



WWI REMEMBERED Memories of and by Club Members

Jones, C.H. Capt, Royal Welsh Fusilief Ersey, W.H.M. Capt, R.G.A. Jartin, C.H.G. Lieut, Monmouthshire Reg Jorgan, A.C.O. Lieut, R.F.A. Jowatt, O. Lieut, IOTH (P.W.O.)Royal Hussa Jurdoch, L.F.C. Lieut, Scots Guards Pirie, G.L. Lieut, Northants Yeomanry Ollock, C.T.A. Capt, East Yorks, Regt, Pollock, M.V. Lieut, South Wales Bordere Obertson, H.M. Capt, Royal Welsh Fusilie Sheepshanks, C.J.E. Capt, Devonshire Rec Sparrow, G.W.S. Capt, King's Shropshire, L

TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB & STAFF WHO FELL IN THE WAR 1014 - 1018

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In Memory of The Members & Servants of this Club who tell in the CREAT WAR 1914 - 1916

Their name liveth for evermore

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WWI REMEMBERED Memories of and by Club Members

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Introduction

he 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War fired the public imagination. Occurring shortly after the deaths of the last known combatants and at a time when there was no shortage of national and international news, the level of interest might seem surprising. However, a moment's reflection explains it. The conflict touched the many participating countries as arguably no other conflict before or since. Its effects dominated the rest of the twentieth century, shaping today's world.

Everywhere one is still surrounded by evidence of the war. The great number of fatal casualties affected every community directly or indirectly. In his *King's England*, Arthur Mee counted just 31 "Thankful Villages", villages without a war memorial. France boasts only one, Thierville. The effects of the war went beyond the dead. Under the forms of physical and mental disability, bereavement and economic distress, they continued to affect survivors and their descendants. Lives were transformed by the conflict and society irrevocably changed. The desire to remember still draws crowds to monuments such as the Menin Gate, the cemeteries and the preserved trenches.

It was therefore right that the Club should mark the anniversary. It did so in a number of ways: by holding a commemorative dinner addressed by Sir Max Hastings, by taking part on 4th August in the Royal British Legion's national moment of recollection, Lights Out, and by inviting members to participate in a project of remembrance, coordinated by Joanna Tudor-Blakeway. This book results from that project. The object was to assemble a collection of poems, letters, photographs and other materials, creating while still possible a record showing how the war affected Club members past and present. The response was gratifying. The scope and variety of material that emerged is striking, ranging from contemporary pieces such as Eric Simson's poem The Sopwith Camel and Sir Edward Courtenay Thomas Warner's first-hand description of the famous Christmas truce, through modern recollections such as Hillier Wise's memories of his father's participation in the conflict, to Joanna's own thought provoking interview with current member Hugh Easterling.

Members' thanks are due to the contributors for their illuminating submissions and to Joanna (my fellow Univ. historian) for taking on this valuable but onerous project and bringing it to such a successful and rewarding conclusion.

Christopher Jordan Editor, Club News



Foreword

he Imperial War Museum's War Memorials Archive estimates that there are approximately 100,000 UK war memorials in the UK commemorating conflicts across Britain's history. A very rough search of the IWM's database suggests that of these, almost half - 43,718 - cover the First World War. This War was the War like no other wars. It changed our way of life, left economic, social and international scars and arguably put us irrevocably on the road to the many international conflicts which have shaped the Twentieth Century; something which is considered further in one of our contributor's pieces analysing the war.

Yet when speaking to colleagues, fellow club members and peers, there is a consensus that the collective memory of this war is in danger of fading amongst younger generations. Not knowledge of it, but a real understanding of its impact. It perhaps reflects the reality that this generation was the last to have any ancestor alive who experienced it. This hasn't been helped by media column inches dedicated to

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"Not just as an exercise of social history for the Club, but as a mark of respect for those men who are starting to fade into the memories of time"

war, being shared with other important but subsequent commemorations - such as the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the second world war and the 25 year anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, both of which fell in 2014.

It is for these reasons that this commemorative project is so important. Not just as an exercise of social history for the Club, but as a mark of respect for those men who are starting to fade into the memories of time. As one contributor to the project put it: "If you look at the picture of those boys that went to war, they could just walk in the door now, and they wouldn't really look out of place." These men, 'who will never grow old', should be the sharpest reminder for us of the most basic impact of the war - young lives cut off in their prime. Many of our contributions to this project are first-hand accounts from these men - poems, letters and extracts from biographies - which will help to give a snapshot of members or members' relations who fought. It is these voices, these precious pieces of primary evidence, which give us a vital reminder of the human impact of the war, long after the poppy display has departed the Tower of London.

Joanna Tudor-Blakeway Vice Chairman



Francis Monck-Mason

Member Francis Monck-Mason contributed articles by his father, Adrian Talbot Macartney Monck-Mason, covering his experiences during the war in Belgium, France and Macedonia. Adrian joined up on the day war was declared, and served throughout until 1919. His regiment was the 2nd. King Edwards Horse Artillery and he was initially a Trooper, ending the war as a Captain.

am going to begin at Maresfield in Sussex, which is where the Brigade was when we got the news that we were going to go across. After many months of waiting, we had one last day, and were called up on a "General Parade" trumpet call, and our Colonel told us that at last we were off, and that General Seeley (our Brigadier,) had volunteered to take us over without out horses, and that the lot of us, except the R.C.H.A., - that is to say, the Lord Strathcona's Horse, the Royal Canadian Dragons, and our selves, would leave England as soon as we were able to be fitted out with the infantry equipment which would be in about three days. There was universal rejoicing at this, for we had had a long time marking time in England. The next few days passed quickly enough, and we struggled with the infantry webbing equipment, which is served out in pieces, and there are about twenty of these, which have to be put together like a chinese puzzle. When it is all correctly done, it is a very good harness for the purpose of carrying the weight that has to be taken, and fits well, and does not chafe. But the weight is great to men not accustomed to it. I think that, with the full equipment, rifle, bayonet and 160 rounds of ammunition (which alone weighs ten pounds) we were carrying something like seventy pounds of dead weight.

We sent off all our private kit during these three days, and dispensed with all that we could. Then we had two or three dress rehearsals, and finally on May 4th., in the evening, the three regiments marched down to the little station of Buxted, which so many of us would never see again. We arrived at Folkestone late, and detrained there, onto the "Onward" one of the cross Channel boats. They got the whole lot of us on one boat, which was a tight fit. Then, as soon as we were all on board, out went all the lights, and we started, at full speed, for the French coast, with two destroyers for an escort. The night was perfect, though very dark, and all that we could see of our escort was an occasional spurt of flame, and long ghostly streak of phosphorous, which was the wake. We passed a hospital ship at anchor in the harbour in our way into Boulogne - a beautiful mass of green lights and red crosses. Here we disembarked, and waited for a couple of hours, as is usual in the ranks of the British army. Then we marched up through the town up a tremendous hill, to a place on the top, called, St. Martin's Camp. This is a bare and pleasant spot overlooking Wimereux, and the sea, and is a rest camp. It contains rows of long tents, and a shed for washing, a Y.M.C.A. marquee, and not much else. We were closely packed here, being sixteen to a tent. We had splendid weather, and this added to the novelty of it made

it a holiday for us. Bounds were very strict, and we saw nothing of the town or the people. About twice a day some aeroplanes near by came and went, and when they came in, the despatches that they had to send, went off in charge of a man on a motor bicycle. He was one of the events of the day, for he "made the long way smoke" and travelled at a pace that one would think risky on a racing track. He went up to St. Omer, which is the British headquarters. Here we had our emergency or "iron" rations served out to us. These consist of about a pound of very dry and unpalatable biscuit, a tin (1lb) of corned beef, and the little oval tin containing a little tea, sugar, and a couple of Oxo cubes. These are never to be touched except under orders, in an emergency. But they have always to be carried. They form such an unpalatable whole that I do not think many people would touch them in any case except that of an emergency!! Here the Major took a photograph of the squadron, "perhaps the last chance I shall have of taking the Squadron as a whole" he said... a nice cheerful thing to say, wasn't it? But it had the merit of being true. We put in two days here, getting various little odds and ends, and then one evening we packed up again and marched down the hill into Boulogne. We now had an opportunity of seeing the hill in daylight, and we agreed that in daylight we never should have faced it. We got very hot by the time we reached the station. We had a crowd to see us off, though the city seemed dead when we landed, except for the French reservists at the barriers with their long old fashioned rifles and great bayonets. We are a big lot of men, and even amongst the British, later on, we always elicited the remark, "what a big lot of men" or "you've some big men in your bunch." The French kiddies rang alongside us and carried the rifles of many, marching along, as proud as possible, and begging for "a souvenir" at the parting. Anything - - a button, a badge, any little trifle will give them great pleasure and raise them up to be a great height in the company of their friends as one possessed of great riches. In that quay station we waited a long while, lying about on the tram lines in all sorts of positions. We are not allowed to take our packs off,

and so we have to ease them in whatever way we can. Some of us bought wine and bread; others chocolate and oranges. It was a busy and animated scene, with officers rushing about everywhere, and a mass of the townsfolk, to whom this is all a familiar scene by now, strolling about, trying to talk to us, or going to buy food, or similar messages for us.

At dark we moved off, slowly, and with many painful stoppages. Painful, I say, because we were in cattle trucks, at the rate of thirty five men to a truck, with all our equipment and rifles. When they did put the brakes on they did so with a jerk, and if a man was dozing with his head a foot from the wall of the truck, why, then his head travelled that foot at the pace the train had been going, and was only brought to a stop by the wall of the truck aforesaid. However, at dawn next day, we detrained at a place called Strazelle, not far from Hazebrouck, and marched up to Strazelle village, where, and in the neighbourhood of which the Brigade was billeted. We were all in farmhouses, the officers in the houses themselves, and the men in the barns. All these farm buildings are on the same plan. A square of buildings with the house and stables and cowsheds on two sides, and the barns on the other two. A pathway runs right round, and in the centre there is a big pit or cess pool, into which the drainage from the other places runs.

The barns, or such as we were in, are large and lofty, and reasonably clean, though there are plenty that are not habitable. When one considers that there has been a constant stream of troops through this land, and that these barns have been slept in by many many troops, the wonder is that they are so clean, and well kept. They leave many relics on their stay, but the farm children pick up most of these. What strikes one is the enormous amount of ball cartridges that are left about. There is a certain amount of excuse for this, as the webbing pouches are faulty, and clips of five often fall out as one is putting the webbing on. But in the trenches it is everywhere also, and one comes across it everywhere one goes, even in the fields, where it is a relic of the fighting of last October. We stayed here about two days, and then moved on about two miles to a village called Merris, near Meteren, where we stayed a week. Here we heard a tremendous cannonading one day, such as one has to imagine but cannot describe. We heard afterwards that there had been a big battle on Hill 60, and that the place had been taken and retaken four times in the one day, and that at the end of the day both sides had agreed by mutual consent to leave the place untenanted for a while.

Life here on the whole was peaceful. We had marches and drills, and had the official bulletins read to us, and were reviewed in all twice. The country is very beautiful, and considering it had all been fought over, it was strangely little scarred. But all over the place one sees graves with the date Oct. 16th., and articles of kit hung on the rude crosses that mark the graves, or laid at the foot of them. And we were able to buy coffee and milk, -- beer abounded as also did wine, and we were able to get bread also, so we were well off. Later on bread was as scarce as one can imagine it, with a great army like ours thrust on the country. So we had to make the best of the biscuits that are issued, and which are not bad, only that they are so hard. From here we went to a place called St. Fleuris, falling in at Merris at dusk one evening, and marching all night, going through Merville, and arriving at our destination at dawn, having marched twenty miles in all. I did not go to bed, but found a farmhouse near by, where I got some bread and butter, and some hot rum and coffee. I then went and woke up my mate, and we returned and had more rum and coffee, and ordered an omelette. This was a very beautiful spot, and here we first saw real trenches, for a reserve line runs through, called the G.H.Q. line, and is a line of trenches that the General Head Quarters have had made, in case there ever should be a need to retreat. Even in spite of our long overnight march we were only allowed to rest here for half a day, and in the afternoon we started off again - this time to march only six miles down the road. Here we stopped a day, and late one evening moved off again, to a town called Locon. Here we saw a great deal of life, for

a whole division was passing through the place, and it seemed as if the whole of the British Army was on the move. We saw a batch of German prisoners here, well equipped men, of average physique, but looking utterly worn out, and as if they thought they were going to be killed. We were very close to the firing line and could hear the shells whistling through the air, and also the report of some big naval guns that were in our rear, --- nine miles from the firing line, 9.2's with which they pound the G. trenches. Here we stayed for another two days, and moved off one night through Locon, and onto the banks of the famous La Bassee Canal, and quite near the town of Bethune.

This was the most picturesque place we had been in, in a great orchard, set round with great poplar trees and flanked by a stream on three sides. I went into Bethune and did some shopping, and sent some letters off. From here we went, one evening right to Festubert village --- now only a skeleton of houses, with every roof and window blasted with shell fire, and with even the dead torn out of the graves in the churchyard, but the sparrows nest there all the same, and wisteria that I saw there later on reminded me of Yulgilbar. We were all this time, (in Festubert) under our own batteries, and the 18 pounders make a weird and desolate noise. The shells drone overhead and the report of the gun comes at almost the same time, a hollow and ear splitting bang. As we began to draw out of the village the word was passed along "put all white cups away, extend to ten yards interval between files, no smoking, no talking." And then again, "Lie down when flares go up." And so, very cautiously, we moved down the road to the trenches. It took us an hour and a half to cover these few hundred yards of road. It was very dark, and the road was torn up everywhere by shell holes, and they knew, too, that the English brought their reliefs down to the trenches in the night time, and so they were shelling our road, which they had the range of. For some reason or other they were using high explosive which busts on concussion and makes a great hole in the ground, instead of using shrapnel, which is too well known for me to describe it here. Had they been using shrapnel we

must have suffered very heavily right at the outset, but as it was we had only one casualty in going down to the trenches, our adjutant getting a shot in the arm. The bullets kept coming over, but very high. Bzzzz....ping, and dying away in a wall. But one soon forgets to duck one's head. Their shells are for the most part of three sorts. The high explosive, which are of two main calibres, the big, or jack johnsons, which are fired from big howitzers, and explode on concussion, making an enormous hole in the earth, and sending up a column of black smoke, and then there is a smaller edition of this. Then there is a shell that I do not know the name of, and which bursts in the air, and scatters fragments of shell with a noise like wind in the rigging of a ship, and lastly there is shrapnel, which is far the worst in its effect upon one's nerves, bursting with a rending tearing bang, and giving a great cloud of dense yellow-green smoke. The idea is of course that the high explosive will batter in the trenches and demoralise the men. Shrapnel is used to screen an attack, to prevent one, and against weak trenches. For the most part, except with their shrapnel, they made bad practise, especially the big howitzers. We saw one chance direct hit with one of these huge shells, for a party of stretcher bearers went up in pieces, the ground being blown from under them. They throw dirt fifty feet into the air. At about eleven we got into our trenches. In changing reliefs, the plan is to put each man along side of the man he is relieving, and then he can not only know exactly where his station is, but he can get any hints about that part of the trench which is to be his home for some time, and which stands between him and the enemy's bullets.

A tremendous thunderstorm came on just as we got in, and soaked us, and lasted till dawn (dawn in these parts begins about 2.45. just now.) We set to work to mend the trench as best we could, but it was very weak, and we had no bags to fill with dirt. We had a section of a German trench, which the Guards had taken from the enemy some days before, and so we were using the back of the trench as the front, and it was consequently very weak. It had only been a short while, and still bore the marks of our own infantry charge, and we found many recently buried bodies a little way below the surface. Things were fairly quiet all the morning, beyond an occasional shell.

The German trenches were eight hundred yards away and so they did not worry us. In the afternoon we were shelled heavily with shrapnel, and the effect at once became apparent on our men who were very nervous. We have a great many men who were through the South African war, and they say that that was a picnic to this. You can imagine it in the light of the fact that there was as much ammunition fired in the one day at Neuve Chapelle as in the whole of the S.A. war.

We lost seven men killed in the first twenty minutes, and in the three days we were in these trenches our casualties were 119. I was feeling rather lost, as my own particular friend was away, being a signaller, he was laying telephone wires under fire, and I could hear nothing of him. I had a very lucky escape just at this moment, for a shell burst over our head, and wounded the man next to me, and blew a mess tin and its contents into small pieces. My own escape was the most miraculous, for I was sitting on my heels close to the parapet, looking through a spy hole, when a large fragment of shell hit my rifle which was standing against the wall of the trench, on top of the stock. It travelled right through the stock, and breaking one of the butt plate screws into three pieces it went through the butt plate into the ground, driving the butt plate about eight inches into the earth. The whole of the stock was cut into fine splinters about ten inches long. These things were beginning to tell on the nerves of all of us, and some of our men broke down. It is not a very pleasant thing to lie or stand in a death trap, with the certain knowledge that if a shell bursts over your head nothing but the Almighty can save you. And they were bursting so rapidly that at times one had to wait minutes before the noise allowed one to speak to one's neighbour. After a very short while one can tell to a

few feet where a shell is going to burst, and it is only for those that are coming over one's head, direct, that one ducks or attempts to take cover. The evening was now drawing in, and we were told that we were to be relieved by "B" squadron. At this time the firing reached its climax, and the shelling was very heavy indeed. We were forced to go out of our trenches and make dugouts in the back parapet, and in the middle of this we --- my friend who had in the meantime come along, and I, together with several other men were told off as a burying party to bury seven of the men in our squadron. This was a sad task, for we knew all the men well, and they were all good fellows too. Twice whilst we were digging the pit we had to stand to arms, but it was over at length, and we left them with a board and tomb stone with their names on it. Many brave men have not even this, nor even a covering over them. Just at dark our reliefs came up, and we went back to the reserve trenches, --- some two hundred yards in the rear, and, before the capture of the one we had been in, the British front line trench. From Saturday afternoon till Sunday night we had nothing to eat, save what little each man had brought with him into the trenches, and nothing to drink save what we had started the march with, -- which many of the men had finished before we went into the trenches. And we were destined to go till Monday morning before we got food or water, and then only scant measure of both. But we were glad to get to the reserve trenches that nothing else mattered much, although we were very thirsty. These trenches were only fair ones, but were a palace to those we had just left. We told "B" squad, as they came in they were in for a h--- of a time, and as a matter of fact they were not nearly so badly shelled as we had been. On Monday we washed ourselves and made tea, and eat what we had, and got a few odds and ends to eat besides, and had quite a fair time. From here we could see the whole of our own and the German shells bursting, and this not only made the thing more interesting, but took away the cooped up feeling, which in the other trench had done so much to make our nerves give way. If you feel that you cannot put your head

up without being shot at it is much harder to keep cheerful than when you can look around on three sides of your horizon. Here we watched all the gunnery, and it was the best time we had in the trenches. The big naval guns that I spoke of as being at Locon were firing over our heads, and we could hear the shells coming and see them burst, but no sound of their firing ever came to us. With the others the sound of the report came as a rule at the same time as the noise of the oncoming shell. At night, there being a clear sky and a moon, we could see, just at one point, the flash as the moonlight shone on the shell, at a particular angle, just as if the shell were a mirror. These were high angle shells, and seemed to be about fifteen thousand feet in the air, though it is naturally hard to guess.

The worst of these days in the trenches was that they were so infernally long. When your day begins with an hour's stand to arms an hour before daybreak, and goes on till ten-thirty at night, you are apt to get very bored and very tired before it is all over. In the afternoon on Monday time began to hang very heavy on our hands, and, as is the case always when one has nothing to do, we began to get a little nervous and fretful. I think the Major must have felt this, for he sent word down that he would like every man to shave, and the bustle of shaving and washing took the men out of themselves, and did them good, I think. At dusk I was "warned" for fatigue, that is, I was told that I should have to go and make one of a party that was to go to Festubert and bring back rations to the trenches, and we went off just at dark, each man ten yards from the next, and each carrying a bag. We loaded up and got back without anyone getting hurt, and we were just saying that we would have a quiet night in the reserve trench, when rumours got about that it was not to be so, and in a very short while we got an order to be ready to move up again into the front line in support of an attack that was going to develop late in the night. So we got our packs together, and moved up very quietly. There was a great silence just at that time – the lull before the storm, and the air was pregnant with a sort of

foreboding. About half an hour after we got in the front line again, the guns began to fire behind us, and were answered from time to time. But soon our batteries opened a perfect tornado of fire, and drowned any reply. One could see, by a hasty glance from the parapet, that the whole of the German trenches were swathed in a heavy pall of smoke from the bursting charges. It all ceased as suddenly as it had begun, for they were firing by the clock. But this was only for a moment, for the enemy, judging that this heavy artillery fire was but the prelude to an attack, opened a tremendous volume of rapid fire with their rifles. We were lying down behind the great massive parapet of what had been the front of the German trench, and so were as safe as possible from their bullets, but they made a great noise, whining overhead in hundreds. We lay there for a long time, but as we were only in support of the attack, we were not wanted as long as things went well, which they did, and at dawn we began to move up into the trenches and were told that we had to make ourselves as secure as we could for we should be there all day. To men who have been once in the trenches there is not much need to say that it is necessary to make themselves secure. They know that humanly speaking their lives depend on it.

And now I come near the end of my story, for just about this time, as we were filling a few bags that we had found, I got a bullet wound in the back of the head, which bled a good deal, and necessitated my going to have it dressed. Like the stepping into the boat which bears one to Hades, in the fable, once one has got to the dressing station, there is not return, and I found that I had left all my things in the trench, thinking that I should be allowed to go back, and found that it was not possible. I asked the M.O., and he said, "Well, I strongly advises you not to." When an officer, and this man was a Colonel, "strongly advises" one can take it as a command, more or less. So I went back to the hospital in Bethune, in a car, and from there to a clearing hospital near Hinges. There I slept the clock round without knowing it, and was put on the train for Boulogne at six in the evening.

We had a perfectly awful journey down, for there were eight wounded men, of whom I was by far the least seriously hurt, in a second class carriage. You have only to know a French second class carriage, and to imagine our condition in order to get a fair idea of what we suffered. Most of the wounds were bad hand or foot wounds, -- you see we were all sitting cases, though there was one man in the corner who had one eye shot right out, and would never see out of the other. We reached Boulogne at about seven in the morning, and were at once bundled off to a canvas hospital at Wimereux, the same that we had looked down on from the heights of the St. Martin's camp only a few weeks before. Here we were well looked after, and well fed, which was a blessing. I was examined and had my head dressed the same morning that we arrived, and next day they put me under Chloroform, and took several bits of bone form the cut. They cleaned it out and put a stitch in. I had been allowed to have a large dinner by accident just before the operation, and on coming to consciousness as naturally horribly sick. However, all this was forgotten in my surprise at being told that I was for England by the next boat. Next morning accordingly, I was driven down to the pier, and embarked, but the weather being very rough we were not allowed to start, for fear that through passage should open the wounds of the men who were badly hurt. So we stayed in the harbour for a day, but set off early next morning, the sea having moderated. Indeed, we had a good crossing, though a cold one. In a very short time we were manoeuvring for the opening between the Dover piers, and were soon discharging our cargo at the new station. Hospital trains were waiting, and went off as soon as filled. Mine kept me nine hours on board, and landed me in Sheffield, after a very comfortable journey, stopping for tea at Bedford, where the folk were all very good to us, and supplied us with a very good tea, and came and talked to us, and gave us cigarettes. Here my narrative ends, and you must imagine me rapidly convalescing, as I did, in point of fact. My letter will link up at the end of this with the present state in which I find myself.

WWI Remembered



Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor

Member Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor offers memories of his stepfather, Edwin Charles Taylor. Ted Taylor fought in major battles, including Passchendaele and saw action in Mesopotamia.

n the nineteen fifties, in our house, there was only one war, the Great War. My brother and I would sit rooted to our chairs whenever Dad could be persuaded to talk about his time in that War that
was supposed to have ended all wars.

Edwin Charles Taylor was the tough eldest of six siblings, born at the end of the nineteenth century. He had been in the crowds that had lined the streets at Victoria's funeral and, having left school at an early age, had worked in his grandfather's dairy in Kensington until volunteering for the 13th County of London Regiment ("Princess Louise's"), soon after the outbreak of war. Dad would speak about Passchendaele and Vimy Ridge, which would put the regiment in France from 1915 at least and still there for the third battle of the Somme.





Our photographs show him later during his deployment to Mesopotamia, in his tropical kit and as part of a Lewis gun crew in Turkey.

Only the Almighty can now confirm his accounts of the Hell that those young innocent men met in the sodden trenches of Wipers, but we are both left privileged to have heard those tales first hand.

The tales of Tommy Atkins are not new: Teddy Taylor's seem to not only underline the eerie chill of dank mornings in the trenches; cutting a foothold to scramble out of the mud at the officer's whistle; tramping dizzily forward not only because you were told to, but because if you didn't you'd be shot for 'cow-diss'. Dad spoke of the officers' shooting parties and how they would still dine in style when the bag was good. He also saw soldiers shoot themselves in the foot rather than face the enemy again.

Upon taking the King's shilling, he had trained at the cavalry barracks at East Hounslow with mules and donkeys as horses were becoming scarce. Boots and harnesses were already being made of a concoction that relied upon good waxing for its continued reliability and which, in the trenches, soon turned to the papier mâché it really was. Cleanliness was essential but impossible and soon grease from the limbers' axles would be smeared down the seams of trousers to trap the lice.

Teddy Taylor produced a fine piece of embroidery on blackout material which is shown (above left), so clearly leisure time was not wasted. My

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brother now has the pocket hunter that reached him in a cake sent from home for his twenty first birthday; the watch survived its journey, but the wrapping made the cake '...a bit mouldy,' he said.

We are not able to pinpoint Dad's transfer to Mesopotamia. Gruesome photographs from his Brownie 116 box camera pictured the heads of a diplomatic mission ranged upon shelves by the departing Turks; the remnants of the heads of unfortunates who had fallen into pits to be skewered and buried to the neck. He would describe cooking eggs in the blistering sand and a raging thirst; how he had seen mirages, but, more realistically, dreamed of the early morning water carts of the street cleaners in the London markets. A valuable thirst-quencher was what he described as the prickly pear, a variety of cactus common in North Africa. Under cover of darkness, soldiers would crawl out into open land to pick these delicacies. On one occasion a sudden flare had revealed that the fruit that Dad had been tugging hard to dislodge was, in fact the swollen tongue of a corpse which had been rotting in the heat: casting caution to the wind he had fled back to his lines! We believe that it must have been in this theatre that he sustained his injury from the sniper's 'dum-dum' bullet that had left the shards of metal in his thigh that he took to his grave many years later.

It is a miracle that Ted Taylor, like many of his generation, not only survived those extraordinary experiences, but returned to live a sane and moderately untroubled life. Certainly, he was a little deaf; certainly my brother and I, at a very early age, were fully conversant with every aspect of arms drill (with our broom handles!). We knew the words to every bugle call: 'come to the cookhouse door boys'; 'fall in A, fall in B, fall in all the company'; 'you can be on defaulters as long as you like, as long as you answer your name' is a selection; whenever I hear the reveille, I still hear, too: 'get out of bed, get out of bed, you lazy buggers'.

Yes, we too, became thenceforth army barmy. And still are. But because of it and those yarns, we can reach across the years and almost hug him still.



Hillier B.A. Wise

Member Hillier Wise offers memories of his father Emanuel Wise and uncle Michael Berker, who both saw action during the Great War.

ike so many other young men my father joined the colours in 1914 (the Middlesex Regiment) but being so young he was not sent immediately to the Front but with the other young recruits was sent to Devon to assist the farmers with the harvest and hay making. (It was a famous good summer.) On one occasion the local farmer came round with some scrumpy in a stone container for the lads. Father not being used to it had too much and he always related how his fellow soldiers covered him with hay and let him sleep it off! Some time later he was sent to Belgium and billeted with another soldier in a village. He recounted that the landlady made them a special dinner of brains which they felt unable to eat and put it on the fire. Unfortunately, she came in to enquire if they liked as it was merrily sizzling away. She was quite puzzled that as they happened to be two Jewish soldiers as to where their horns were. (Was it a misunderstanding of Exodus 34.29 where the Vulgate mistranslated horns for beams as we see in Michelangelo's statue of Moses? Yet Boticelli's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel show it correctly.)



In 1917 father contracted Trench Fever which was rife at the Front and was sent back to England. Amongst his papers I found a card from the Trench Fever Association enquiring into his health as late as 1919; interesting that those afflicted had not been forgotten. In 1919 he was still in the army assisting in the demobilisation of the troops. His elder brother had luckily survived the war and was already demobbed and he and the family wanted father back home. The officer in charge of the demobilisation office would leave father to do most of the work while he went off to play golf! Father was so annoyed that he eventually put his own name down which was accepted and he himself was demobbed to the chagrin of the officer involved! Like so many other ex soldiers of WW1 father seldom mentioned the trenches. I still have two illustrated books of that war which as a boy I was forbidden to look at and they are truly most unpleasant. If I ever grumbled at something, especially at meal times he would comment. "There was worse in the trenches" Some war records were blown up at the Front and he and many others were denied a particular campaign medal as well as a small pension. The latter was very small but it was the principal that mattered. (Even today we see how niggardly those in authority can act when it comes to recognising specific service in the last war.) Father was a staunch supporter of the British Legion, now the Royal British Region, who worked on the problem for years but to no avail. When WW2 broke out, he offered to join the army but was considered too old. However, he became the local ARP.

Lastly two things I particularly remember. Whenever father passed the Cenotaph in Whitehall he never missed raising his hat in salute. When I was a boy and he was late I would ask my mother where he was. She would so often retort, "He's probably met someone he knew in the army." which was often the case.

My mother's kid brother had emigrated to New Zealand just before WW1 broke out. After three attempts at joining up, being too young, he eventually joined the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and found himself back in Europe. He was severely wounded and sent to hospital in England where he fell in love with one of the nursing sisters. (It is said that she used to borrow his watch "my watch". "No" said, "Our watch!" A very difficult situation then as a nurse could be dismissed on the spot for fraternising with one of the boys "in blue." They were eventually happily married. My aunt was a splendid woman and ended her career in a hospital as acting Matron. When my uncle died some 50 years later he still had some shrapnel in him and at his funeral, representatives of the New Zealand Army actually attended. He never lost touch with them.



Hugh Easterling

Member Hugh Easterling offers his thoughts on some of the key issues associated with the outbreak and progression of the war - in conversation with Joanna Tudor-Blakeway.

ugh, you have provided a great deal towards this project, in thought and writing, and you kindly donated a close relation's memorabilia (seen overleaf) from the Great War. Can you tell us a bit about your personal connection to the war and what has interested you in getting involved in the Great War project.

I was happy to donate a close relation, Frank Harrison's memorabilia to the Club. One is a wallet he carried on active service and another a regimental broach he gave my mother. There is also an analysis from the British Legion of how he was killed in the closing stages of the Battle of Arras in May 1917. I have also given a small collection of Great War and South African War medals belonging to a rather distant relation.

Along with others of my generation, I was interested in the Great War at school and at university. Particularly fascinating are the causes and the issue of responsibility for the terrible catastrophe that has been called the defining event of the twentieth century.

You have been engaged in a lot of reading about the Great War. Can you tell me your thoughts about how it started:

Yes, I think there are a number of key points in the run up to the war in August from the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, on 28 June 1914:

(a) That there was a war was due to the readiness of Germany to give unqualified support to Austria-Hungary to "settle with Serbia" which it saw as a threat to the credibility and stability of the empire, but at the risk of provoking Russia, which was allied to France. Acceptance of Austria Hungary's ultimatum would have virtually turned Serbia into a client state.

(b) That the German general staff, whose influence on German foreign policy was steadily increasing and whose members were becoming increasingly neurotic that Germany was faced with encirclement, saw that there was an opportunity to make a pre-emptive strike against Russia, whose increasing power, militarily and economically, was regarded with alarm.

(c) That faced with the prospect of war on two fronts, the German general staff believed that the so-called Schlieffen plan, based on a vast outflanking movement, must be brought into play in order to defeat France quickly so that the whole German army could then be deployed against Russia.

(d) That Britain had only a small army was not seen by Germany as a deterrent to embarking on a war expected to be of short duration. The British were able to enter the war, once the Liberal government had majority support following the German invasion of Belgium. The support of Lloyd George was essential to keep the left wing of the Liberal party in line with the government. In reality, the British entered the war because of self-interest. This seems clear from reading the speech of the foreign

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Memories of and by Club Members

secretary (Sir Edward Grey) to the House of Commons. Liberal concerns about the rights of small countries and traditionalist concerns about the balance of power gave almost total support to going to war. It looks clear that even if Germany had not invaded Belgium, Britain could not have remained neutral in the conflict for long.

(e) That Germany, Austria Hungary and Russia were run by authoritarian governments. At the same time, general staffs were able to convince policy makers of the powers of the offensive.

(f) Sobering is that the crucial decisions made in the weeks after the assassination were taken by a small number of men. Taking Austria-Hungary and Germany, the countries that led Europe to war: The two most important members of the Austro-Hungarian government, Berchtold, the chancellor, and Conrad von Hotzendorf, the army chief of staff, were hawks: the former was a high-flown aristocrat; the latter was able to use his personality and knowledge of the incoherence of government to exert great influence over domestic and foreign policy. In Germany, the head of the general staff, Moltke, who pushed for war with Serbia and the invasion of Belgium, was a fatalist and unstable. Following a nervous breakdown, he was dismissed in September 1914. In the Kaiser, Wilhelm II, an emotionally fragile man, one sees characteristics that one associates with the German ruling elites: excessive militarism, vaunting ambition, and a neurotic feeling of insecurity.

Was there widespread belief that the war would be over by Christmas?

Yes. You must remember that we had never seen a war on the scale which faced the country. By the end of 1914, the check to the German offensive into France at the battle of the Marne, reflecting logistical shortcomings in the Schlieffen plan, the disastrous failure of the French offensive against



Germany and the enormous losses of the French and British at the first battle of Ypres brought it home that there could be a long war. In the east, hopes of the Russian steam-roller, for which the French had held great expectations, were ended at the battle of Tannenberg in August 1914, in which a vast encircling movement destroyed an entire Russian army.

Two factors make it clear that the war would be a prolonged contest. First, that the area where the war would be fought in France and Flanders was small and that the technologies of warfare, artillery, the machine gun and barbed wire, led to trench warfare and favoured defence, leading to terrible casualties. Offensives would be directed to attrition, as at Verdun, or oscillate between attrition or breakthrough, as at the Somme in 1916 or Passchendaele in 1917, where a breakthrough could have led to the capture of the German submarine bases. Meanwhile, one recognises the importance of the ability of the German, British and French governments, through the acquisition of extensive powers, to mobilise their economies for war purposes, thus becoming better organised and more cohesive, at least up to 1917. The British siege economy was a credit to its government.

Recognition of the difficulties Britain had in fighting a land campaign in Western Europe led the decision to use the country's maritime strength to open up a "back door" in the Middle East by capturing the Dardanelles. It would reopen communications with Russia and enable help to come to embattled Serbia. Poor generalship resulted in failure by the end of 1915.

What are your views of the performance of the German military machine?

The Germans made serious errors in grand strategy: in going to war in the first place, given that there were would eventually be limits to their resources in face of the combined resources of the allies if there was not a short war; and in embarking on unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1917.

However looking at the development of the war in 1915 to 1917, Germany had the good sense to strike the right balance between the eastern and western fronts, excepting the murderous Verdun offensive in 1916. The German army was highly competent in organisation, staff work, logistics, training, intelligence and weaponry, particularly heavy artillery. Ludendorff, the effective head of the German army for much of the war, is said to have been a man of ferocious competence, although liable to get carried away with success and lose a sense of proportion.

That German war policy was determined by the scope that eastern front offered for a war of movement together with the need to support increasingly enfeebled Austria- Hungary. Policy was to maintain the defensive in the west and go on the offensive in the east, with dramatic victories in 1915. Austria-Hungary was saved and the collapse of the Russian army two years later, after the Russian offensive in 1916, was a major reason for the Russian revolution. The scope for movement made possible the British defeat of the Ottoman armies in Palestine in 1917-18. The impressive performance of the German army in mounting offensives on the eastern front was accompanied by the skills which it employed defensive tactics to repulse French and British offensives in 1915-17: defence in depth and in 1917 withdrawal to a new line of defence, with trench lines replaced by defended zones with the bulk of the infantry being kept back out of range of artillery.

Were there any turning points in the war? What about Russia's withdrawal from the war?

I would suggest three turning points.

That the decision to embark on unrestricted submarine warfare on all vessels approaching the British Isles, together with the crazy offer of an alliance to Mexico against the United States, brought about the entry of the United States into the war. The Germans understood the risks they were taking. It looked like an act of desperation.

More a matter over time was the learning curve the allies experienced during 1915-17, in improving the underlying ways in which their armies operated, in staff work, developing new methods, skills, and launching new weapons, including tanks. This was evident in 1917, the early stages in the battle of Arras in April, the local victory at Messines in June and at Cambrai in November. Yet for a time progress was frustrated by Haig's policy of grinding down the German army at Passchendaele.

Russia's withdrawal from the war made it more pressing that Britain and France had the support of the United States to offset the loss of Russia's resources. Military defeat, administration inefficiency, the unwillingness to introduce or promise to introduce reform, coupled with detestation of the growing influence German-born empress and the "holy man" Rasputin, prevented the emergence of a national unity which might have carried Russia through the war. The Russian army was not prepared for a war of attrition and it lacked a clear command structure. The new government of bourgeois moderates created in February 1917 was unable to establish its authority in face of the challenges from the soviets. The attempted offensive against Austria-Hungary in June broke the Russian army and mutiny was followed by disintegration and the breakdown of the Russian polity. The German decision to allow Lenin to come to Russia in April brought the man whose genius established Bolshevik rule, although at the price of a humiliating peace treaty.

What are your thoughts about the final blows to the German war effort?

That Germany and her allies were so quickly and decisively defeated by the end of 1918, despite the successes over the allies between March and June, using troops no longer needed to fight the Russians, was due to four factors.

That by July 1918 the German army was exhausted. It was no longer able to embark on an offensive. German expertise in warfare was never more evident than in the Ludendorff offensive in March 1918. The Germans employed techniques that put an end to trench warfare, including special mobile infantry to destroy communications and new light machine guns.

Increasing turmoil on the home front. By the winter of 1917 unity between the army and civil authorities in the Reichstag and much of the population was wearing thin. Prolonged hardships and leftist political ideology were leading to strikes and demands for political reform. The war was no longer to be won by superior military skill but was a contest of endurance between industrial societies in which control of armed forces "melded seamlessly" into control over production. The burden of conducting war and its weakening effects on the German economy were such that public spending mostly on the war rose to very substantial levels as a percentage of national income, with only a limited proportion being met by taxation owing the resistance of business.

The Royal Navy's dominance at sea and its ability to maintain the blockade, so exerting pressures on Germany's heavily industrialised society. The navy had foiled the challenges the Germans had made: first to areas outside the North Sea, defeating the Spee squadron at the battle of the Falklands in 1914; and, second, when the German High Seas fleet withdrew to base after meeting superior numbers and almost being outmanoeuvred at Jutland in May 1916. It was the Royal Navy with considerable skill, mainly through the introduction of convoys, that defeated the German submarine challenge in 1917.

The vital importance of the participation of the United States following its entry into the war in April 1917. Its contribution in resources and men gave confidence to its hard-pressed allies in ultimate victory, a consideration that also convinced Ludendorff that Germany could not win the war. Without the United States, it is conceivable that Germany might have been able to force France to accept peace in 1918. In another year it might have been possible with Britain.

As it was, Britain and France had strong war leaders in Lloyd George and Clemenceau. Lloyd George had created the infrastructure that maintained the British war effort.

What are your thoughts on Haig?

Dour, inarticulate, very determined and inclined to optimism, Haig was a cavalryman. Before the war he had acquired a reputation as an administrator. Judgements on Haig's performance in1915 and 1916 should be seen in the light of the allied decision to launch an offensive in 1916 and the need to relieve pressure on the French at Verdun and, as I have already said, that the British army was on a learning curve. Haig's belief in the possibility of breakthrough at the Somme was not shared by other generals. He deserves criticism over his handling of the Passchendaele offensive: for losing the element of surprise by a long bombardment and by not stopping the offensive once the battlefield was affected by terrible weather.

Haig had lost such credit in 1917 that Lloyd George took over the strategic conduct of the war. Yet he gained in stature in 1918. In March he accepted Foch as the commander-in-chief. From mid-July after the German offensives had shot their bolt, allied offensive action marked by tactics in which attack when successful was followed by attack somewhere else and by consolidation and a step-by-step approach, as should have happened after the successful attack on Vimy in April 1917. Victory at Amiens in August and the penetration of the Siegfried Line in September and October, in which the British took the lead in the final allied offensive against Germany, were marked by the advances the army made in tactics: in better artillery-infantry liaison techniques and in better infantry-tank cooperation.

Are there particular points that you feel are sometimes missed by students looking at the Great War?

It must not be forgotten that Britain had a real case for going to war in 1914 in order to prevent a German domination of Europe. I think this is brought home when one examines the terms set out in the Bethmann-Hollweg memorandum of September 1914. As summarised in Max Hastings' *Catastrophe*: France was to cede to Germany the Briey iron deposits, Belfort, a coastal strip from Dunkirk to Boulogne, and the western slopes of the Vosges Mountains. Her strategic fortresses were to be stripped, cash reparations would be extracted sufficient to ensure that France would be "incapable of spending significant sums on armaments for the next eighteen to twenty years". Elsewhere, Luxembourg would be annexed and Belgium and Holland would become vassal states. Russian borders would be drastically shrunken. A vast German colonial empire would be created in Africa. A German economic union would be formed extending from Scandinavia to Turkey.

Hugh has written six other discussion papers which are available to those interested via Jackie McQuarrie at the Club office: The Approach to the Great War, The Great War 1914 – 1918, Notes on Developments in the Great War, Air Warfare, Opposition to the Great War, Assessment and Books and Suggested Reading on the Great War.

Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor

The Apollo University Lodge, the Freemasons Lodge of Oxford University, lost 79 members in the Great War; Joe Mordant Crook, who has previously spoken at the Club, is in the process of writing a history of the Lodge that will cover the War. This summary is kindly provided by Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor.

ost of us smile tolerantly over the masons and when we make our way along Great Queen Street, maybe on our way to the opera or a Market restaurant, look out for the morning-suited gents with their ominous great briefcases full of secrets. They hog the bars nearby late every afternoon, thumbs in waistcoats, slick grey hair and glittering shoes. But do we give a second thought to the monolith to which they resort at their allotted time? Freemasons' Hall, that great stone building on the South side of Great Queen Street extending round into Wild Street is in fact one of the largest memorials to those who perished in WW1. First known as the Masonic Peace Memorial, completed in 1933 and dedicated at a ceremony attended by three Royal Freemasons, the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII), the Duke of York (George VI) and the Duke of Kent, the building's centrepiece is the Shrine by Walter Gilbert (Victoria Memorial – *the*

The Decimation of Oxford Freemasons

"Freemasons' Hall, that great stone building on the South side of Great Queen Street extending round into Wild Street is in fact one of the largest memorials to those who perished in WW1"

wedding cake - Buckingham Palace), which contains the Roll of Honour of the many hundreds of Masonic war dead. All Oxford Freemasons will know that pride of place on this Roll goes to the Apollo University Lodge, where most of the 79 lives of members who perished, are recorded. I say *most* because it is only recent research (by Colin Perrin) that has finally accurately listed those men, whose names, Colleges and Regiments are listed opposite:

I have full obituary details of these men and many photographs should any reader wish to further identify them.

Geoffrey Bourne-Taylor

MEMBERS OF THE APOLLO UNIVERSITY LODGE KILLED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

2/Lt Horace Aubrey Back, age 35 Capt. Richard Vincent Barker, age 34 Major Lord (Henry Barnes), DSO, age 35 Lt Col. Percy William Beresford, DSO, age 42 Lt Aubrey Francis Blackwell MC, age 27 Rev. Philip John Thomas Blakeway TD, age 50 Lt Rowland George Reece Bowen, age 22 Lt Edward Fenwick Boyd, age 24 Lt Michael Lloyd Braithwaite, age 34 2/Lt Peter Handcock Broughton-Adderley MC, age 27 2/Lt William Jacob Bryan, age 27 2/Lt John Stamp Garthorne Burrell, age 31 Lt Col. Richard Chester Chester-Master DSO & bar, Age 47 Lt Esmé Fairfax Chinnery, age 28 Major Henry Francis Clifford, age 45 Capt. John Stanhope Collings-Wells VC, DSO, age 38 Capt. William John Hutton Curwen, age 32 Capt. George Arthur Murray Docker, age 37 2/Lt Alan James Ingram Donald, age 21 Lt Col. Earl of Feversham, age 37 Lt Henry Gamul Farmer, age 28 2/Lt Reginald William Fletcher, age 22 2/Lt Charles Jefford Fowler, age 28 Major Philip Kirkland Glazebrook DSO, age 37 Cheshire Yeomanry

Gloucestershire Regt BNC Royal Welsh Fusiliers New Coll. Royal Field Artillery Trinity Royal Fusiliers Magdalen **Royal Field Artillery** Oriel City of London Yeomanry Magdalen Royal Fusiliers Exeter Northumberland Fusiliers Univ. **Royal Flying Corps** New Coll. Scots Guards Exeter Royal Fusiliers ChCh **Cheshire Regiment** Exeter Kings Royal Rifle Corps ChCh Coldstream Guards/RFC BNC Gloucester Yeomanry ChCh Bedfordshire Regt ChCh Royal Fusiliers Magdalen **Royal Fusiliers** Oriel New Coll. Manchester Regt Kings Royal Rifle Corps ChCh Seaforth Highlanders New Coll. Royal Field Artillery Balliol Royal Fusiliers Trinity New Coll.

Capt. Roby Myddleton Gotch, age 26	Sherwood Foresters	New Coll.	2/Lt Myles Lewis Wigan Matthews, age 23	Royal W. Kent Regiment	Univ.
Lt Reginald Cumberland Green, age 31	Bedfordshire Regt	Exeter	Maj. The Hon. Sir Schomberg Kerr McDonnell		
Capt. Francis William Lindley Gull, age 28	Rifle Brigade	ChCh	GCVO, KCB, age 57	Queens Own Cam Highldrs	Univ.
Lt Cyril Gwyer, age 32	Grenadier Guards	ChCh	Lt Eric Archibald McNair, <i>VC</i> , age 24	Royal Sussex Regiment	Magdalen
Lt Kenneth Rees Habershon, age 26	Rifle Brigade	New Coll.	2/Lt Edward Guy Melland, age 26	Cheshire Regiment	New Coll.
Capt. Archibald Robert Hadden, age 28	London Regt	ChCh	2/Lt The Hon. Charles Thomas Mills <i>MP</i> , age 28		Magdalen
Capt. Edward Hain, age 28	Devon Yeomanry	New Coll.	2/Lt Henry Gwyn Jeffreys Moseley, age 27	Royal Engineers	Trinity
Major Evan Robert Hanbury, age 30	Leicester Yeomanry	New Coll.	Capt. John Norwood <i>VC</i> , age 38	Westminster Dragoons	Exeter
Sapper William Hanna, age 25	Royal Engineer	The Queen's	Lt The Lord Congleton, age 24	Grenadier Guards	New Coll.
Lt George Edgcombe Hellyer, age 23	Hampshire Regt	ChCh	Lt John Nicol Fergusson Pixley, age 29	Grenadier Guards	Merton
Revd Oswald Addenbrooke Holden, age 43	Chaplain	Exeter	Lt George Henry Fosbroke Power, age 21	Middlesex Regiment	New Coll.
2/Lt Lyulph Walter Mowbray Howard, age 29	The Queen's	New Coll.	Lt Harold Leslie Rayner, age 26	Devonshire Regiment	CCC
Capt. John Leslie Johnston, age 30	Ox and Bucks L.I.	Magdalen	Lt Col Lord Ridley <i>DL</i> , age 41	Northumberland Yeom.	Balliol
Lt The Hon. Edward James Kay-Shuttleworth			Lt Joel Harrison Seaverns, age 22	Royal Fusiliers	ChCh
age 27	Rifle Brigade	Balliol		Machine Gun Corps	Univ.
Capt. Archibald Edward Kennedy, age 35	Arg. and Suth. Highlanders	Oriel	Lt Henry Langton Skrine, age 34	Somerset Light Infantry	Balliol
Lt Henry Cyril Dixon Kimber, age 22	Royal Field Artillery	Univ.	Lt Lothrop Lewis de Berniere Smith, age 23	Rifle Brigade	Magdalen
Capt. William Gabriel King-Price, age 39	Manchester Regt	Merton	Lt Harold Rolleston Stables, age 28	Royal Fusiliers	New Coll.
Lt Andrew Brooks Knowles, age 31	17 th Indian Cavalry	Lincoln		-	Magdalen
Capt. Ronald Owen Lagden, age 26	Kings Royal Rifle Corps	Oriel	2/Lt Daniel Pike Stephenson, age 25	N. Staffs Regiment	Lincoln
Lt Guy Francis Lawrence, age 25	Grenadier Guards	Trinity	2/Lt Arthur Amyot Steward, age 35	Royal Flying Corps	Magdalen
Capt. John Francis Leather, age 24	Royal Army Service Corps	Balliol	2/Lt Kenneth Douglas Thomson, age 29		Univ.
Major Richard Percy Lewis, age 41	Devonshire Regiment	Univ.	Lt Col Lord Alexander Thynne DSO, age 45	Wiltshire Regiment	Balliol
Maj. Lord Charles Henry Lyell, age 43	Royal Artillery	New Coll.	2/Lt Bruno Wolfgang Wahl, age 36	Indian Army	Balliol
2/Lt Kenneth Fitzpatrick Mackenzie, age 24	Queen's Own Cameron Hrs	Trinity	2/Lt Gordon Stafford Woodhouse, age 26	Royal Field Artillery	Lincoln
Lt Norman Lindsay Mackie, age 24	Machine Gun Corps	Hertford	Lt William Reginald Fitzthomas Wyley, age 24	Royal Field Artillery	Balliol
Lt Duncan Mackinnon, age 30	Scots Guards	Magdalen	Lt Edward John Henry Wynne, age 22	Grenadier Guards	ChCh
2/Lt Arthur Christopher Paul Mackworth, age 31	l Rifle Brigade	Magdalen	Lt Raymond Gilbert Hooker Yeatherd	Queens Bays	ChCh
2/Lt Charles Robert Crighton Maltby, age 26	Rifle Brigade	Worcester	Capt James Hamilton Langdon Yorke MC, age 33	•	Oriel
2/Lt Ferdinand Marsham-Townshend, age 35	Scots Guards	ChCh		-	





The Sopwith Camel by Eric Simson

Member John Simson has submitted a poem written by his uncle, Eric Simson, regarding the Great War.

The Sopwith Camel

Nimblest and surest of all the swift chasers, Leaping the clouds in celestial surf, Quicker to handle than four-footed racers, Keener than any proud lord of the turf.

Nothing can equal the exhilaration, Borne on such wings over valley and hill, Ready to answer without hesitation Each sudden whim of my fanciful will.

Diving you set all the rafwires vibrating, Toned to the note of some tremulous chord; Turning and twisting or rolling gyrating, Swifter than thought at obeying my word.



Professor John Brande Trend

Book by Margaret Anstee and summary prepared by Stephanie Kenna

Professor John Brande Trend saw active duty at the battle of Ypres and other major battles of the first world war. He joined the Club in 1922, and was an active member, arranging recitals of Manuel De Falla's songs and bringing TS Eliot to the Club. Margaret Joan Anstee has kindly donated a copy of her book 'JB: An Unlikely Spanish Don, the Life and Times of Professor John Brande Trend' to the Club library.

orn Southampton, 17 December 1887; educated at Winchester House School, Southampton 1897-1899, Hillside, Godalming 1899-1901, and at Veritas House, Charterhouse, 1902-1906. Trend's early preferences were for the natural sciences and music but it was the former which he elected to study at Christ's College, Cambridge, from 1906 to 1909, winning an Open Exhibition. However, during his time at Cambridge music took over under the influence of the musicologist, Edward Dent (Professor of Music in Cambridge, 1926-1941) who became his lifelong friend. Trend was also a talented linguist.

At Charterhouse Trend was a keen member of the Rifle Corps and he

subsequently served in France in the Supply Corps from 1914 to 1917, later training for the Royal Artillery at Horsham before finally moving into military intelligence work. He described his experiences in his diary for 1914 and in his letters.

After the War, music drew Trend to Spain where he fell in love with and immersed himself in every aspect of Spanish life and culture. In 1933 he was appointed the first Professor of Spanish in Cambridge; by the



time he retired in 1953, he had transformed the Spanish faculty and extended its remit to Central and South American literature and history.

Trend was a member of the Oxford and Cambridge Club from 1922 until his death in 1958. Below are a few extracts from the book giving insights into his colourful character and life:

"I am overjoyed at getting your letters – 3 of them by now....You can imagine how reviving they are out here, when one is entirely occupied with victuals & vegetables, forage, coal, & even 'debit de boissons', for overdoses of rum have led to such impious orgies that I've had to turn publican & issue it myself. These things, and a little drill in the farmyard in the gray dawn to get people out of bed, are the whole of my existence. We are very much where we were before: but have moved out of the smelly little town to a farm not far from the trenches. They are, I think, the third line: but have been used for nothing beyond photography for the *Daily Mirror*. My chief is, fortunately, away. He's not at all simpatico. Four fifths of the Brigade have gone up to the front trenches & I am left to feed the remaining fifth, & all the horses. As the other man took the car away with him, I go round to the different regiments on a horse: which is quite good fun when it's fine & (as one is alone) one can always sing if it's wet: tho it was most exasperating to go jogging round a corner, chanting the 'RaggleTaggle Gypsies' at the top of one's voice, & run into some of the staff.

"The farm people are quite Christians: & one gets more attention than the others by being able to talk to them, or rather, by knowing how to approach them without insult. I'm alone at present except for a Kentish Yeoman farmer who is concerned with our transport...a primitive, pleasant sort of savage, who thinks nothing beyond whisky & horses & women... a Giles of the stage door. The other evening he was reading the 'Ashford Advertiser' and ...(I forget what else): & said 'Well, Ai laike the local paper.' I held up the 'Cambridge Magazine' I was reading & said, 'So do I'." (Letter to Edward Dent, 10 February 1915)

"I saw a good deal of the affair which began on 25th....the whole roadspace was taken up by wounded men, struggling and straggling in. Others came in horse ambulances, others were only bloody shapes on stretchers. Everyone seemed dazed from the effects, even the slightly wounded & even the untouched men, who were still wandering back: it was a revolting and disgusting sight....There was one officer on a stretcher, his left field-boot & the whole leg soaked in blood, and blood over the rest of him. His only sign of life was a convulsive kick with the right leg when a battery of big guns fired ear-splittingly in a chalk pit by the road-side. Others were half-naked, or had more bandages on them than clothes and their wounds bled as they walked or were carried, along. Some actually dripped as they went. Then the military appearance of the men was rather odd. Many were capless, and many more were still wearing their grey flannel respirators [deleted] gas-helmets tucked up on top of their heads, like turbans. Some wore German helmets; others had Service caps perched on top of their respirators. One or two grasped lengths of poisonous-gas pipe, for both sides had gassed each other vigorously. I saw others carrying signal-flags, and white striped field-telegraph poles as crutches. A few had rifles, and equipment, and still-fixed bayonets; but

most had come back without all that, and shambled along like old & broken men. Another thing which hasn't got into the papers yet is that any number of our infantry simply walked away, officers and all.....It seems pretty clear, again, that some of our machine-guns were turned on them for it. These episodes are probably included in what French in his 'Order of the Day' called the 'vicissitudes' of every great fight. We are all becoming prussianised & brutalised – machine guns were used on those men, too, who had surrendered and were afterwards recaptured by our own men. They were shot down, and bombed unmercifully, this was all the deliverance they got when their friends found them."

(Letter to Edward Dent, 7 October 1915)

"You don't hear anything about 'clean' fighting now. Everyone in the cavalry realises at last that his only business is to kill as efficiently and extensively as possible. No one has any romantic illusions about that now. Any means is justified, provided that it is effective. The war is so horrible that it must be finished as soon as possible. And you hear very little about was 'doing us good' or 'keeping us fit' except in Lord Northcliffe's dispatches from Verdun. War may bring out the best of some people, but it inevitably brings out the worst of most people.

"As you know, I am really a conscientious objector; though my conscience, not being religious, may not be recognised by the Act or my Major Lionel de Rothschild. The fact that I have been out here for eighteen months doesn't alter it. Perhaps we have all sold our souls to Unreason, as converts do in the Roman Catholic Church, to save themselves the trouble of thinking; or perhaps we thought we could be better advocates of peace by seeing with our own eyes the futility and ingloriousness of war. But the orthodox will not listen to us even now, for they know as well as we do that whichever side wins it will be a victory for the stupid people." (Letter to Edward Dent, 15 April 1916) "JB continued to work strenuously to make [Manuel de] Falla's music better known in England. For instance in September 1923 he organised a recital of Falla's songs at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London, sung by his friend the tenor Clive Carey, whom he coached personally. In this he was meticulous for, as he explained to Dent, 'With those things of Falla's, and other Spanish songs, it's the words that get the song across; & the words must hit people at the back of the room, even if they don't understand Spanish.' He also coached Newton, the pianist, not to 'Hurry the tempi & spoil the rhythms'." (Extract from Margaret Joan Anstee, *JB: An Unlikely Spanish don: The Life and Times of Professor John Brande Trend*, Brighton: Sussex Academic, 2013, p113)

"For over a decade JB wrote a Musical Chronicle quarterly for *The Criterion*, later known as *The New Criterion*, the leading literary journal of the period. He was paid a fee of two guineas for every thousand words.

The Criterion was founded in 1922 by T.S. Eliot, who edited it for the whole of its life until 1939. The two men corresponded frequently and lunched and dined together, often at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, where they were both members: in May 1932 JB sought Eliot's support in throwing out a proposal that smoking should be allowed in the South Library." (Extract and picture from Margaret Joan Anstee, JB: An Unlikely Spanish don: The Life and Times of Professor John Brande Trend, Brighton: Sussex Academic, 2013, p123)





Robert Warner

Member Robert Warner submitted two letters by his grandfather, Sir Edward Courtenay Thomas Warner, written in the trenches in 1914 to his family. Sir Edward rose to be a major and eventually became regimental Colonel of the Scots Guards.

25 December 1914

Dear Mother

We have spent a very queer Xmas Day. When we changed our trenches last night the Germans were making a great noise singing and shouting over to us "a Merry Xmas". Our men answered and they shouted invitations to come across that they would not fire. One of my scouts went unarmed and had a talk with them, the Officer giving him a glass of whisky and some cigars. The result has been an informal and quite local armistice. We have been walking about quite openly all day, going about our ordinary business, digging etc, and some of the men meeting the Germans halfway between the trenches for a chat – we have also exchanged newspapers. I did not go and talk to them myself, partly because I did not want to encourage the men to do it as after the ice had been broken, the whole company wanted to go, and partly because I did not want to talk to the Germans - I don't think it is interesting to meet them in a friendly way, although I have no violent feelings against them personally, just a vague dislike. The truce still continues, it was supposed to end at 4pm but we have an understanding that if one side does not fire the other will not. I do not know how long this will go on but of course we have to be on the lookout for tricks and post sentries etc just the same as we do not trust them very far. I did not get much sleep last night as I was out repairing wire entanglements in front of our trenches until 2.30 am. Your letter of the 18th arrived yesterday also pheasants just in time for Xmas dinner. When I woke at 6.30 this morning the first thing I heard was one of the men singing "When shepherds watched their flock by night". It was odd because the hymn had been running in my head the night before, as I felt rather like a shepherd when I walked back to my dugout and saw the men in the trenches by moonlight, only they are not much like sheep! It is very cold, hard frost and sunshine today much better and healthier than the wet especially in these trenches, which are in a very dirty state and very wet. It will take us some time to get them anything like right, but fortunately I have found a farm close by with lots of straw, faggots for burning and putting in the bottom of the trench, and wood for roofing dugouts the latter splendid stuff out of a wheelwright's shop. I am having a new dugout made but it will not ready until tomorrow night. We have made a good kitchen and dining room combined, but still require a coke stove which we shall get out of a ruined house tomorrow. It was a pleasant change walking about outside the trenches all day without having to think about bullets. I am sorry to say Taylor was killed in the attack, we were able to bury him today, Hanbury Tracy was taken into their trenches wounded and died two days later and I fear Dick Nugent was killed also, as they told us today they

took no officers prisoner that night. Peace on earth and goodwill toward men seems rather hard to reconcile with most of the Christian world at war on Christmas Day.

Much love to all. Your loving Edward

October 28th 1914

Here is quite a civilised letter written in ink. I thought you would like some account of the battle we have just fought. Of course all the names of places, etc., have to be left out, and I only know what happened just where the battalion was. We had a little fighting before, but the show only began on the evening of October 22nd when G. and R. F. Companies left our flank and went into reserve at a farm just behind the line of trenches. We went in open order and were heavily shelled, but without loss. We were turned out several times that night but all false alarms. On the 23rd we dug trenches, a second line, and about 1.30 p.m. were turned out to do a counter attack as the line was reported broken. We advanced through a thick wood with bayonets fixed but did not get into touch with the enemy as we found the trenches intact. Lost a few men from shell fire. That night G. Company turned out to dig trenches where there was supposed to be a gap in the line. We were living in a ditch waiting for orders where to dig when our own troops opened heavy rifle fire from our left. We got back to our farm being lucky only to lose a few men. The trench digging was given up and R. F. Company went into the firing line before dawn.

About noon on the 24th we were told that the line might be lost and that if so we should have to cover the retirement; gathered that in this event we should have the Company wiped out, so spent an unpleasant afternoon in our trenches. Nothing happened and some fresh troops arrived in the evening. After dark we relieved R.F. in the first line of trenches, as we came up there was a lot of firing and we had to lie flat while a few bullets whistled over for about an hour. We spent a quiet night in the trenches and on Sunday morning sniped some Germans about 500 yards away, bagged an officer. At 1 p.m. the bombardment began and lasted till dark. They had the range almost exact and blew several trenches into the air. I suppose 100 shells burst within a few yards of me shaking the whole ground and coming in groups of four as a rule. My trench was not touched but next to me was destroyed, he had to be dug out and most of his men killed or wounded. About 5.30 p.m. we hard cheering on our right and gathered that a counter attack was taking place.

Soon after a considerable body of men were seen approaching and word was passed to us that they were our own troops so we did not fire. Three came right on to the travers of my trench about 3 yards from me and I saw the German helmet. We at once opened fire. I shot the first man, the second was bayonetted and the third taken prisoner as he laid down until the first flurry was over. We drove the lot back in about 15 minutes with the exception of about 200 who were captured having got through where the trenches were blown in. It was awkward knowing some were behind us as we did not like to shoot for fear of hitting our reinforcements, in my trench I and one man looked out behind, the remainder watching the front. They had a machine gun in front and one had to duck occasionally when one heard it, also our gun behind was sweeping with shrapnel and every shell just touched our parapet, so I had to watch for the flash and shout, "Duck." The other companies lost some officers and men when rounding up those that had got through, which was awkward work in the darkness only relieved by burning houses.

We were relieved shortly before dawn by L.F. and R.F., the Colonel

going with them. It was clear to us and was reported that at daylight the trenches would become untenable as the enemy had the range exactly. From 8 to 9 a.m. on the 26th the German guns wasted some ammunition at some unoccupied trenches just in the rear of the line, but they then discovered their mistake and literally blew our trenches to pieces. What exactly happened we do not know, as only one officer has returned from the firing line, but I trust many are prisoners, as the rifles were very difficult to fire on Sunday night owing to the sand and most of them were I expect buried on Monday morning. (Redacted) and about 200 men held on all day to the second line expecting to be attacked, but nothing happened except a few casualties from stray shells and bullets. We did not hear what had happened in front until the evening. After dark we were ordered to retire and went back six miles and bivouacked in a farm; on the morning of the 27th we retired another mile and are now in a field reorganising with 11 officers and about 500 men. Fresh troops have come up and I believe all is well with the situation. We are feeling a bit depressed, but are quite well, and in a few days shall be ready to have another go. I believe the matter of the guns has been put right. I saw of the South Staffords (severely wounded but he will (Redacted) recover) and was able to help him by lending him my Burberry etc., so send me another coat when you get this. We could laugh at any member of their infantry, it was the "Black Marias" that did us, and our trenches should have been on the reverse slope to prevent the guns ranging them exactly. Had a letter from (Redacted) dated 22nd I sent a wire which I hope arrived.

P.S. I am commanding R.F. Company

Military History Group

The Club has a number of groups, which serve to bring together members with mutual interests. The Military History Group is a small group of up to 20 people who receive a presentation, mostly from a Club member, followed by dinner and a discussion on the evening's talk. Any Club member is very welcome to attend. To find out more about the group, please email: 938@938.me.uk

With thanks...

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THOSE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB & STAFF WHO FELL IN THE WAR 1914 – 1918

CECIL·DOUGLAS·BAKER·GRENADIER·GUARDS·CAPT LESLIE·ARTHUR·BALLANCE·4TH·BN·KINGS·ROYAL·RIFLES·CAPT



71 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5HD Telephone 020 7321 5151 Email club@oandc.uk.com www.oxfordandcambridgeclub.co.uk

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