

# THE TIGER



*Papaver somniferum "Victoria Cross" grown during lockdown*

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND BRANCH  
OF THE  
WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION  
ISSUE 105 – AUGUST 2020

## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Welcome again, Ladies and Gentlemen, to *The Tiger*.

Tempting though it is to add my personal comments on the selfish minority (the so-called “Covidiot”) of our local population who have condemned the good citizens of Leicester and parts of Leicestershire to further loss of liberty and inconvenience, I am mindful that the pages of this Newsletter are not necessarily the correct platform for my opinions on this matter. Suffice it to say, however, I hope the miscreants concerned can be traced and punished as a reminder to all that the laws of this land apply to the entire population without exception. Needless to say, in these circumstances, our July Branch Meeting will not be taking place.

Moving, therefore, to more pleasant matters, Valerie & I were pleased to receive, from member Elaine Merryfield, this month's cover photograph of a Victoria Cross Poppy, grown by Elaine during our period of lockdown. This most striking of poppies features a white cross in the centre of its bright red petals and its inclusion this month is particularly appropriate since it coincides with the conclusion of a series of articles by our regular contributor, Roy-Anthony Birch, on the subject of horticulture and the Great War.

Those of you amongst our readership who are familiar with Kew Gardens may also be aware that the Temple of Arethusa. Constructed as a folly in 1758 for Princess Augusta (Princess of Wales and mother of King George III) it also contains a War Memorial commemorating the fallen of the Kew Guild and the Staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Amongst the 37 men remembered here is the subject of Roy's article, which begins on Page 14.

Unveiled on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1921, the Memorial was designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, the Scottish architect whose work for the then I.W.G.C. includes numerous cemeteries in Italy, Greece and Egypt. Also, the Memorial to the Missing at Doiran (Salonica), the Naval Memorials to the Missing at Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham as well as the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle. His work at Kew was certainly appreciated, with Charles Curtis (the President of the Guild) declaring that Lorimer “*had given us a very beautiful design, and the memorial was in every way a fitting one to the gallant fellows who died that we may live*”.



*The Temple of Arethusa  
containing the  
Kew Gardens War Memorial*

One final thought before I close . . . The Victoria Cross is, as everyone knows, awarded “For Valour”, a quality that has been seen in abundance amongst us in recent months despite the best attempts of disease and idiocy to defeat us. As a symbol of remembrance for all we have endured (and may yet face) surely the arrival of a Victoria Cross Poppy is an apt reminder that, out of apparent disaster, something beautiful can still grow and survive . . .

Take care, stay safe and remain healthy until we can meet again.

D.S.H.

## HOMES FOR HEROES BY THE SEA . . . COMMENTS FROM OUR READERS

We occasionally receive comments from our readers (usually complimentary, but not always!) which are most welcome and which we do, indeed, encourage. David's Peacehaven article, in last month's edition, certainly seems to have awakened many fond memories of previous visits to the town, and nearby area. Here is a selection of edited extracts of those sent in by email (permission sought and given) but we have received many more by phone and text message:

From WFA member Lynn Roffee:

*"Brian and I both enjoyed your article very much - Bexhill is a favourite of ours, and when we next go there, we shall go round to Peacehaven and have a look around. Sadly, it won't be for quite a while due to the situation and we have no desire to be amongst the masses like we have seen on the news at Bournemouth. Whilst in the Bexhill area we visited a large Cemetery with many CWGC graves".*

From reader Eric Hanson:

*"Thank you for the latest issue of The Tiger. I was very interested in the article about Peacehaven. My great uncle Albert won a consolation prize in the competition referred to; when he died in the 1970s his widow, Great Aunt Lilian, had the deeds and I was able to obtain letters of administration for her and the land was sold for £500 which as you can imagine at that time was a great help to her."*

From Dilys Ward, a regular on our annual Armistice Tours to the Battlefields of the Flanders:

*"Many thanks for The Tiger. I don't know where you find the time to do all that research. Such a lot to look forward to reading. I did not know about Peacehaven!"*

From Lloyds Bank Manager, retired, Bill Richmond:

*"As usual, The Tiger was a good read – I was particularly fascinated by David's article on Peacehaven. In 1962/63, I was "volunteered" to work in Worthing by Lloyds Bank and although I visited Peacehaven a number of times (it was only 15 miles away along the coast), I never knew how it got its name. Staff numbers had been depleted by the Great War with the result that all banks recruited young men heavily in the early post war years to fill vacancies. By the early 1960s, these men were all due to retire about the same time - hence the need to fill their places. Some of the retirees were persuaded to stay on for a couple of years whilst the rest of the jobs were filled by "northerners" until such time as people in the local area could be trained."*

Please do not hesitate to send in your articles, comments and observations as all are very much appreciated and, if reproduced, will no doubt be enjoyed by our countrywide readership of over 300. We will also be pleased to include any pleas for help or assistance regarding research (preferably Great War related) or the identification of artefacts etc. Any book reviews, recent or otherwise, are equally welcome and do be assured that permission will always be sought, prior to publication, as to whether or not your name and/or contact details are given.

V.E.J.



## **“HERE, OBEDIENT TO THEIR WORD, WE LIE”**

A tale of two notable classicists

by

Valerie Jacques



Born in Stroud on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 1875, to a schoolmaster father (later the vicar of Great Gransden in Huntingdonshire) and a mother who was the daughter of a Cornish cloth manufacturer, our first subject is John Maxwell Edmonds. One of six children, he was educated at Oundle School where he showed an aptitude for the Classics although frequent bouts of the ill health, which would blight the rest of his life, delayed his university career. In 1894 he went up to Jesus College, Cambridge, as a Classical Scholar taking a first class in his Tripos four years later. On leaving Cambridge he held assistant masterships at King’s School, Canterbury, from 1899 to 1903 and at Repton School, Derbyshire, from 1903 to 1907 before his health again broke down. Upon recovery he returned to Cambridge with his wife, Ethel, née Stowell, whom he’d married in 1905. Once there he lectured in Classics at various Colleges devoting the rest of his life to scholarship and teaching with gardening becoming his main choice of recreation. He would remain in Cambridge for the rest of his life apart, that is, for “an absence” between 1918 and 1919 . . .

It was later revealed that Edmonds had spent “his absence” working for M.I.1(b) - subsection Interception and Cryptanalysis - at the War Office’s Codebreaking Bureau in London. Edmonds’ exact role remains unknown although Ethel, who accompanied him to the Capital, worked for M.I.2 dealing with the diplomatic ciphers of the Scandinavian countries. Both would remain there until the Summer of 1919 when it was decided to combine M.I.1(b) with the Admiralty’s cryptanalysis section, Room 40, and rename the department the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS). This would later evolve into our more familiar Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ).

Now contrast Edmonds’ life with that of the Greek lyric poet, Simonides, born around 556/552 BC in the town of Ioulis on the Greek island of Ceos (now known as Kea) in the Cyclades Archipelago of the Aegean Sea. In nearby Carthaea was a choregeion (a building where choirs were trained) and where, it is believed, Simonides taught. In addition to its musical culture, Ceos had a rich tradition of athletic competition, particularly running and boxing, and Simonides is credited with pioneering a choral lyric known as The Victory Ode, first commissioned for a boxer. Victory Odes became popular and were often performed in celebration of athletic victories and occasionally in honour of a victory in war.



*Simonides*

At the age of around thirty, Simonides was lured to the court of the tyrant Hipparchus, a patron of the arts, where he was earmarked as a wise but a miserly type, possibly as he chose to charge a fee for his professional poetic services. Following the assassination of Hipparchus, in 514 BC, Simonides moved to Thessaly where he enjoyed the patronage of two powerful families. His reputation grew through his ability to describe the most basic of situations with poignant simplicity and, when required, to exert feelings of great sorrow in minimal words. He thus became the popular choice for composing epitaphs for fallen warriors such as this, written for the Lacedaemonians at The Battle of Thermopylae, fought in the Autumn of 480 BC:

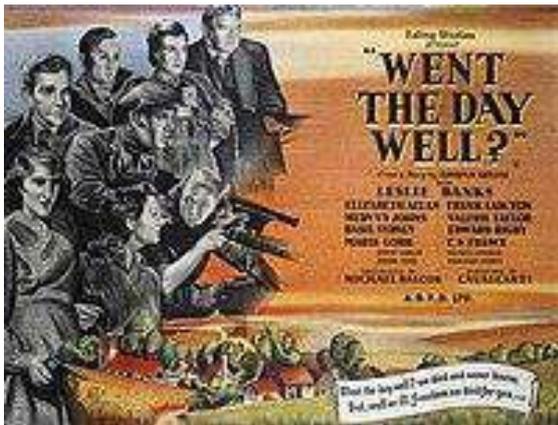
*“Tell them in Lacedaimon passer-by  
That here, obedient to their word, we lie”*

Another translation from the Greek reads:

*“Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,  
That faithful to their precepts here we lie”*

Simonides is credited as the first major poet to compose verses which were to be **read** rather than recited and was the inventor of an early system of mnemonics. He also added four letters to the revised Greek alphabet and developed a set of new ethical standards. His final years were spent in Sicily where he died in his 89<sup>th</sup> year. He was buried outside Acragas, on the site of modern day Agrigento, his tombstone now lost.

Fast forward over two thousand years to 31<sup>st</sup> October 1917 when A.E. Housman’s “*Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries*” appeared in The Times. This short poem was written as a tribute to the British Expeditionary Force on the third anniversary of the First Battle of Ypres and John Maxwell Edmonds had been responsible for translating it into Greek elegiacs. His version was published in *Classical Review No: 31* of that year.



The following February, The Times published “*Four Epitaphs*” composed by Edmonds, all covering different contexts of death. Each displayed his artistic gifts and flair for writing and, in just a few lines, his ability to invoke powerful emotions. The opening line of his second epitaph was used as the title of the Ealing war film of 1942 “*Went the Day Well?*” These words, oft quoted in *in memoriam* notices during the Great War, would go on to be commonly used for the tragic fatalities of the Second World War. You may have noticed them on many village and town War Memorials:

*Went the day well? We died and never knew;  
But well or ill, England, we died for you.*

By August 1919, Edmonds had composed several more epitaphs with some appearing in *Inscriptions Suggested for War Memorials* published by the Victoria and Albert Museum in the December. The article included the following, written for a British Graveyard in France:

*When you go home,  
Tell them of us, and say:  
"For your to-morrows  
These gave their to-day".*

Familiar words indeed and as you may suspect, Edmonds is credited with the authorship of the famous epitaph on the War Memorial within the CWGC cemetery at the hill town Kohima. Look closely, however, at the words on the memorial itself and you will note that they slightly differ

from Edmonds' original. This was not the first time that they'd been altered, which always greatly displeased him, as it altered the tone of the direct message he'd originally wished to convey. Also, his authorship was disappointingly not acknowledged at the time but was attributed to Major John ETTY-LEAL, the General Staff Officer (Grade 2), of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. In 1944 it was thought that ETTY-LEAL, also a classical scholar, had put forward the suggestion of using an ancient Spartan Epitaph but that he'd simply incorrectly remembered the translated words. Field Marshal Lord WAVELL, a former commander of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, and another classical scholar, had doubts about the origin and undertook some research of his own. He subsequently received a letter from a Professor JESPER, of the University of Glasgow, who was a leading authority on Greek Epitaphs and who attributed the source of the Kohima inscription to Edmonds.

There are three "official" versions of the now famous and often quoted Epitaph:

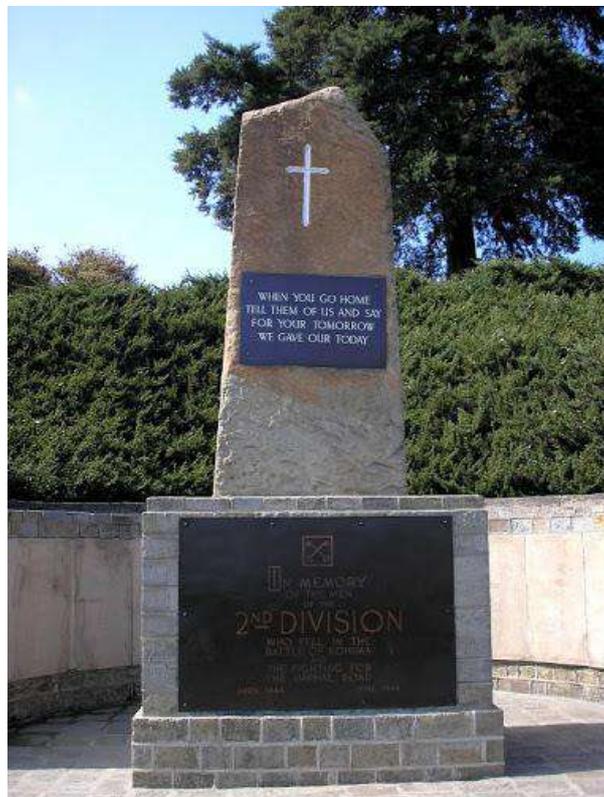
Version 1: Edmonds' original, circa 1916:

*WHEN YOU GO HOME TELL THEM OF US, AND SAY  
'FOR YOUR TO-MORROWS THESE GAVE THEIR TO-DAY'*

Version 2: The inscription first carved in 1945 onto the Naga stone of the Memorial at Kohima and subsequently inscribed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Memorial in the Garrison Church at Aldershot:

*WHEN YOU GO HOME TELL THEM OF US AND SAY  
FOR THEIR TOMORROW WE GAVE OUR TODAY*

Version 3: The Kohima Memorial Inscription, beneath the cross, which we see today (see below). This was the epitaph inscribed on a temporary Memorial Tablet which General Slim had unveiled



at Kohima in 1944. It was later agreed, with the consent of General Sir Cameron Nicholson, Commander of 2<sup>nd</sup> Div in 1944, that the carved words were indeed slightly incorrect and, in 1963, a new panel was sent out from England and erected over the original engraving by the CWGC:

*WHEN YOU GO HOME TELL THEM OF US AND SAY  
FOR YOUR TOMORROW WE GAVE OUR TODAY*

Edmonds outlived Ethel and there were no children from their marriage. He died on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 1958 and his funeral service, held in the Chapel of Jesus College, Cambridge, was attended by many luminaries of the day.

As we commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day on 15<sup>th</sup> August we will no doubt hear the “*Kohima Epitaph*” recited at various locations (and in various versions) as well as on Radio and TV. Do, please, spare a moment to not only remember all those who paid the supreme sacrifice, and the terrible atrocities carried out in the Far East, but also to consider that the original words were written **not** to commemorate a Second World War battle but were composed towards the end of The Great War by a Cambridge classicist turned wartime codebreaker and the Greek lyric poet who had undoubtedly influenced him.

Here are three more of Edmonds’ Epitaphs  
written during The Great War

For a general grave on Vimy Ridge:

*“You come from England;  
Is she England still?”  
“Yes, thanks to you  
that died upon this hill”*

For those who died at the Battle of Jutland:

*“Proud we went down and  
there content we lie  
‘Neath English sea if not  
‘neath English sky”*

For a village War Memorial:

*“Ye that live on ‘mid English  
pastures green  
Remember us, and think  
what might have been”*



Chairman’s Note:

A connection exists between the family of John Maxwell Edmonds,  
Leicestershire and the Great War.  
All will be explained in the next edition of *The Tiger* . .

	<p><b>THE MILITANT SUFFRAGISTS WHO SET UP ENDELL STREET MILITARY HOSPITAL (PART II) by Lynn Roffee</b></p>	
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The first 100 patients at Endell Street Military Hospital were received on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1915 and they were convalescents from various other London hospitals. Later that night convoys of wounded men from France started to arrive and by the 14<sup>th</sup> May it had 246 patients. Many of the men had been badly wounded, sustaining gunshot wounds, horrific injuries caused by shells, often resulting in life-changing injuries. Many men suffered from gas gangrene, sepsis and shock and other diseases as well as psychological trauma and suicidal tendencies.

By the autumn of 1915 Australians and New Zealanders fighting in the Gallipoli campaign started to arrive at the hospital. It was clear they had suffered greatly and were underweight and “*diseased*”. Records show that about two thousand Australian soldiers passed through the hospital. It is clear from Anderson’s book that she paid attention to the cultural differences of the wounded soldiers and had formed an opinion about these men:

*“These men were better educated than British soldiers. Mentally they were more formed and were accustomed to independence of thought. Their attitude towards the women, among whom they had been thrown so unexpectedly, was friendly and chivalrous. They enjoyed the hospital and they appreciated the work which was being done there, but they could not understand why the vote was withheld from women, and in face of their eager questioning the medical staff was unable to adhere completely to its rule of avoiding propaganda talk on the subject of women's suffrage. They were almost the only men who wished to discuss this and other political subjects with the doctors and sisters”.*

Extract from an article in the Queensland Figaro - 27<sup>th</sup> November 1915: -

**“In a Women’s Hospital  
How Australasians wounded Appreciate Endell Street**

*“If anybody wants to grumble at this place, he’d better not do it before me”.*

*This an Australian soldier, a big stringy man from the bush, in the Courtyard at Endell Street where many Australian and New Zealand wounded soldiers are now quartered (says the “British-Australasian of 7<sup>th</sup> October). Any mischievous person who might have wished to arrange a ‘scrap’ which would have undoubtedly have followed any expression of dissatisfaction in the presence of this still-militant hero would have a hard matter to find the grumbler. The Australasian has a reputation for knowing when he is well off and apparently has decided, individually and en-masse, that at Endell Street he is co circumstanced.*

*The first novel note is struck by the gate attendant, who proves to be a tall and imperturbable young woman in the neat khaki-coloured uniform of the Women's Hospital Corps. It would indeed be difficult for any unauthorised person to win a way past this pleasant but firm janitor. Her appetite for official authorisation having been satisfied, one is introduced to the vista of a*

*courtyard bathed in sunshine, and occupied by wounded soldiers in open-air beds and pleasant easy chairs. A glass shelter runs across the yard, which is further shaded by a number of plane trees. The men are listening to the music of a string band, the members of which are the professional musicians of the orchestra of their neighbouring Prince's Theatre, who have generously given up an afternoon of their leisure to please the wounded men.*



*The entrance to Endall Street Military Hospital*

*Gradually one becomes aware of the fact that these musicians, and the blue-clad heroes they are entertaining, are the only men about the establishment. More khaki-clad orderlies flit about the place, emphasising the fact that there is no work, in a hospital at least, that cannot be done as well by women as by men. A glance at the list of doctors and surgeons, both resident and visiting, shows that they are women, and among them are some of the most famous women doctors of the United Kingdom.*

*Endell Street is the outward and visible sign of the crystallisation of the experiment into a great military hospital. It is run from end to end by women and is a standing example of the medical sufficiency of the sex in such an emergency as at present.*

*This knowledge adds additional piquancy to the chats with the wounded Australasians in the hospital, many of them to whom the very idea of a woman doctor had been quite unfamiliar until fate introduced them to the organisation of Endell Street. It was interesting to learn that, after the first shock of the novelty, all had taken kindly to the feminine regime, that some were even tempted to make rather telling comparison with their previous hospital life. All were putting on weight as a result of the liberal and scientific diet which they enjoyed, and all were keenly alive to the attention of minor details, the sum of which, contributes so largely to their comfort and happiness in hospital, and their speedy recovery.*

*Of this the attention to details, the "British-Australasian" has recently been afforded an example. The demand for Australasian newspapers among the wounded Australasians is keen, and not very liberally satisfied at present. It is not confined to Endell Street but is evidenced in all the hospitals where Australasians are under treatment. But Endell Street is the only hospital in the experience of the "British-Australasian" which has taken immediate steps to supply the demand from its managerial side.*

*The patients at Endell Street, include many men of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade, who landed on Gallipoli Peninsula in the third week of August, and almost immediately took part in the fighting which resulted in the capture of Hill 60, and the consolidation of the British positions in one long stretch of twelve miles from Suvla Bay to Gaba Tepe".*

In the summer of 1916, the hospital was asked to trial BIPP (bismuth and iodoform paraffin paste) which was to be smeared over wounds to prevent infection. Once rubbed over the wound the



*Dr Flora Murray, back to camera,  
administering chloroform*

dressing could be left without redressing for 10 to 21 days; it allowed the wounds to heal quicker and reduced the painful redressing process. With the number of men receiving treatment for gunshot wounds, it is hardly surprising that Anderson became interested in the treatment of these wounds and endorsed the use of this treatment. She wrote an article about the use of BIPP which was published in the *Lancet*. Later that year Sir Alfred Keogh visited the hospital to see the results of the extensive trial of BIPP it had carried out, which had resulted in good outcomes and “he congratulated the staff success of the hospital”.

Perhaps predictably, some Army Chiefs and others predicted that the hospital would not last six months. Murray and Anderson were very focused on the outcomes they wanted to achieve; they wanted the hospital to be a success – to save lives and provide excellent welfare to the wounded men; to show that women could efficiently work as doctors and they vindicated themselves to the doubters. The wounded men were initially shocked to see the hospital staffed by women, but they very quickly were grateful for their treatment. Word soon spread, and whilst the media at the time classed the hospital as something of a curiosity, the wounded men hailed it enthusiastically and it was popular for the professional care that was provided. It was perhaps surprising then, as it might be to read now, that the hospital environment was one of hope and kindness. Murray and Anderson disliked rules and, perhaps surprisingly, they didn’t draft any rules of “Guidance of Staff” for the staff. In 1917, Anderson and Murray were awarded the C.B.E. for their war work.

Sir Alfred Keogh wrote the following letter to Anderson shortly before he left the War Office: -

*Dear Garratt Anderson*

*I appreciate very highly the very charming message you and Doctor Flora Murray have sent me in your letter. I shall go down to see you and say good-bye before I actually leave the War Office.*

*I should have liked to have seen you and your work very often, but you will know that with six foreign campaigns on hand, and an immense amount of work in addition in connection with home affairs – which perhaps were even more difficult than the foreign ones – it has not been possible for me to visit you more than I have done. I have not been unmindful of you I can assure you. I have often talked of you and heard your work discussed, and it has always been to me a great pride to know how successful you have been.*

*I was subjected to great pressure adverse to your movement when we started to establish your hospital, but I had every confidence that the new idea would justify itself, as it has abundantly done. Let me, therefore, thank you and Dr Flora Murray – not only for what you have done for the country, but for what you have done for me personally. I should have been an object of scorn and ridicule if you had failed, but I never for a moment contemplated failure, and I think we can now congratulate ourselves on having established a record of a new kind.*

*I think your success has probably done more for the cause of women than anything else I know of, and if that cause flourishes, you and I can feel that we have been sufficiently rewarded for our courage.*

*Yours sincerely*

**ALFRED KEOGH**

*19<sup>th</sup> January 1918*

In her book, *Women's Writing on the First World War*, Sylvia Pankhurst recalled Flora Murray "with her excessive quietude and gentleness, she had overborne many seemingly cast-iron Army traditions. In defiance of all precedents, she gave equal treatment to Officers and privates, placing them side by side by the same ward".

Many of the patients were there for long periods of time, so some sort of entertainment and activities were considered necessary. The WHC had given a lot of thought and commitment to providing the men with a wide range of events which aided their morale and speedy recovery. Some men were taught new skills such as rug making and basket making. There was a well-stocked library, comprising some 5,000 books offering a wide range of subjects. There was always something being organised including concerts, pantomimes, or a band playing and in four years, 511 events had been held and enjoyed by the men. There were many visitors too, including the King and Queen, and Princess Victoria, the sister of the King.

Between May 1915 to December 1919, 26,000 patients had been treated at Endell Street Hospital and over 7,000 major operations had been carried out; minor cases were unrecorded. When the war ended the hospital remained open to treat the victims of the Spanish Flu pandemic and finally closed its doors in January 1920. During the time Endell Street Hospital had been open Murray and Anderson had taken on 39 doctors. When the war ended the returning men wanted their jobs back. This meant that women doctors were dismissed from military/general hospitals to go back to the lives they had led before the war. Murray wrote in her book in 1920 that not one of those 39 women doctors was working in general surgery in hospitals that treated men or in general medicine after the war.

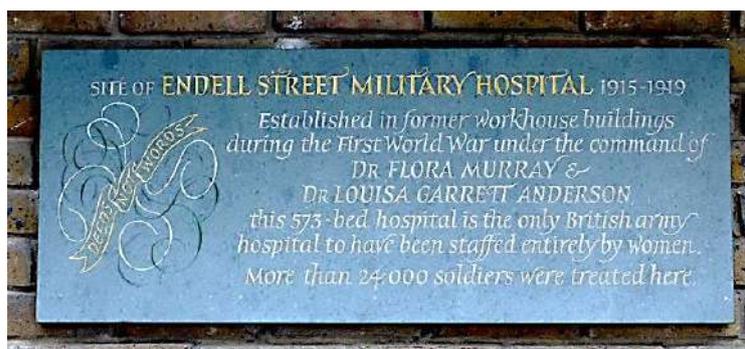


*Flora Murray (left)  
& Louisa Garratt Anderson (right)  
amongst their staff*

Murray and Anderson returned to practice at Harrow Road Hospital until the funds ran out and it closed in 1922. They went to live in Penn, Buckinghamshire. On 28<sup>th</sup> July 1923, Murray died in a nursing home in Hampstead, London, and is buried at the Holy Trinity Church in Penn. Anderson died on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1943 at a nursing home in Brighton.

Both Murray and Anderson were truly remarkable women, and perhaps like many people, have not received the prominence in society which they rightly should have been afforded. They were trail blazers for women doctors during the war and helped change gender restricted attitudes in medicine.

No photographs of the hospital itself appear to exist today. The only indicator of its existence is this plaque, erected in November 2008, at a block of flats named Dudley Court, built on the Hospital site and located behind the Oasis Sports Centre on High Holborn.



When searching for items on “Endell Street” on The National Archives website, six names of men serving in the Leicestershire Regiment, who were patients at Endell Street Military Hospital, appeared in the search results as per the following table shows: -

<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank, Serial etc.</b>	<b>Details of Injury &amp; Outcome</b>
?? Cramp	Private 201396 1/4 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment	1 <sup>st</sup> London General Hospital, Camberwell. Gunshot wound to ear and face. Perforated the pinna with a Gunshot wound and penetrated left cheek. Wound received 22/4/17 near Loos. Transferred to Jaw Hospital 3/7/17
Job Dilkes	Corporal 11636 7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment	Gunshot wound to arm received 14/7/16. Patient treated in several hospitals in France and England. Underwent several operations.
H Garney	Sergeant 21304 11 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment	Also 1 <sup>st</sup> Southern Hospital & General Hospital, Birmingham. Valvular Disease of the Heart and Gunshot wound of leg. Admitted for 2 periods of treatment in England. Underwent amputation of leg and fitted with artificial limb
Arthur Garratt	Lance Corporal 12208 11 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment	Admitted with gunshot wound to the right thigh. Wound received 14/7/1816 near Bazentin-le-Petit. Patient attended hospital in France and England. Recommended for trans. to auxiliary hospital
Martin Tulley	Private 12717 8 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment Then served in Labour Corps 436394	Multiple gunshot wounds Left thigh and groin area. Attended hospital in France and England. Discharged for duty 27/11/16
Thomas Wynn	Private 47430 11 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment	Admitted with Gunshot wound to lower left leg received 20/3/18. Patient attended hospital in France and England. Multiple operation including plastic operation. Trans. to Military Convalescent Camp, Eastbourne 2/10/18

*Sources available upon request*

## ON THE NOTICEBOARD

### THE GREEN TIGER

A recent message from Captain Bob Allen of the Royal Tigers Association reads as follows:

*I am writing to tell you that due to the lockdown arrangements made by the Ministry of Defence, we have been unable to use our Royal Tigers' Association office. It has therefore been impossible to produce and distribute a printed Spring edition of the Green Tiger. However, the Spring edition has been prepared and published on the Regimental website, where it can be seen at:*

[The Green Tiger Spring 2020 mid 1 page 001 - Royal Leicestershire Regiment](#)

*Do forward on the GT link to your members if you wish. If you hover over the right top corner of the pages they will turn for you.*

*It is our intention to incorporate the complete Spring edition into a printed "bumper" Autumn edition, so it is hoped that a hard copy version will be available in November 2020.*

*Meanwhile, please enjoy this edition, and keep well.*

### "THE LAST POST"



Readers may be interested to learn that the latest edition of "The Last Post", the Newsletter of the Leicester City, County and Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project, can now be read via the Project Website [www.atriskwarmemorials.co.uk](http://www.atriskwarmemorials.co.uk) via "The Last Post" tab. Another excellent read!



## A GARLAND OF REMEMBRANCE by Roy-Anthony Birch



One of the less often visited World War I memorials, though well enough known to some, is Scottish-born architect Sir John James Burnet's imposing edifice at Cape Helles, from which this tribute to 20,000 Missing British and Dominion servicemen takes its name. Sited towards the southernmost tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula within striking distance of Morto Bay, the Memorial commands the approaches to the Dardanelles; key to the conquest of Constantinople via the infamous "narrows", which Allied Navies were never able to "force" (or to breach), let alone to dominate, during a Campaign whose futility was openly acknowledged, long before its end.

Thus we return to my current topic and to a region whose climate, as we observed last time, is not so far removed from our own, especially in the Spring; when the foothills of the Peninsula and sometimes even her "forbidding Heights" can be wreathed in an abundance of flowers and foliage, many as likely to occur on either side of the English Channel as in parts of the Aegean. Some of the most poignant references in private correspondence and contemporary diaries are to what are now our most cherished symbol of remembrance. Even in early May 1915, at around the time of the First Battle of Krithia, the slopes of Achi Baba could accurately be described as "*ablaze with brilliant poppies*" in a landscape to which distance, at least, lent some enchantment. But with the turning of the seasons, it could not last. Just as the Allies' hopes of eradicating obdurate Turkish strongholds almost invariably bit the dust; so the brutality of the Aegean Summer seared and scorched its relentless way through everything in its orbit; men and animals and plants alike.

By August 1915, therefore, the once lustrous poppies were shrivelled into brittle rust-coloured remnants of their former selves; mirroring, almost literally, the condition of so many of the men, now pushed well beyond the bounds of even military endurance. To be seen as able simply to walk could be enough to be classed as "fit", with dysenteric diarrhoea being the most virulent in a range of maladies ravaging ANZAC units especially - and the 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Brigade in particular, sometimes to the extent of invaliding out as many men as their Commander, Lieutenant-General Birdwood, might expect to lose in battle. And it was largely with the ANZACs - including the Australian enfeebled 4<sup>th</sup>, that responsibility would lie for delivering what Sir Ian Hamilton, C-in-C Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, with characteristic but ill-founded optimism, called "*The knock-out blow*".

It is not my purpose here to give a detailed analysis of what was, in effect, the Allies' last throw of the dice, midway through the little over eight month Gallipoli Campaign. My aim is merely to give an idea of what the troops had to contend with. Yet even the briefest summary of the August 1915 northward thrust against the Sari Bair Ridge and beyond serves to illustrate shortcomings in the conduct of the Campaign, many of which were quick to surface almost from the start, only to be revisited in the sweltering high Summer. And again; at awful cost. Not that any of this is to detract from Lt.-Colonel (later General) Skeen's original plan of attack, which was reportedly met with general approval. But I stress; as an original blueprint. The plan's undoings stemmed mainly from it being expanded far beyond its originally envisaged proportions, with greatly augmented forces - now a minimum of 100,000, to be deployed over an infinitely wider field of operations; not only from the pre-existing bases at Helles and Anzac Cove, but via the creation of a completely new sector at Suvla Bay on the Peninsula's western seaboard.

None of this would have necessarily been disadvantageous. But here, and certainly not for the first time, we meet an essentially piecemeal and increasingly unwieldy operation falling apart

through lack of coordination and cooperation between those in high command, with the C-in-C Mediterranean being conspicuously culpable in this regard. Hamilton's habitual resort to secrecy lay at the heart of tensions with several of those immediately under him; not least the recently appointed and non-battle hardened Sir Frederick Stopford, due to command the newly embodied and similarly unblooded IX Corps at Suvla, who seems to have been kept deliberately in ignorance of tactical detail almost to the proverbial 11<sup>th</sup> hour. Lt.-General Sir Bryan Mahon, commanding 10<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division within Stopford's IX Corps, and Adjutant-General Woodward expressed themselves frustrated at similar treatment. Granted, aloofness can be a defining characteristic among senior commanders. But others, all too often, have to pay the price: those on slightly lower rungs of the ladder, with their careers, and the "P.B.I." with their precious lives.

With men often driven to delirium through lack of water – a couple of sips a day was not uncommon; near rancid rations, grossly inadequate medical provision, typified by a chronic shortage of stretchers, and the nauseating latrines, added to what I have already outlined, and little wonder that many regard Gallipoli as the harshest and most demoralising of all the 1914-18 wartime theatres. Certainly, the deprivations suffered by the infantry - roasting in their trenches "*hot as ovens*", can defy description. Yet there was one man, of particular interest to us, who was not cowed, and perhaps sensing that little time remained, was determined to make every minute count.

Charles Frederick Ball was born in Loughborough, Leicestershire, on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1879; the third of five sons – there was also one daughter, of Alfred Bramley and Mary Bowley (née Kirby) Ball, who moved to the East Midlands from north London having married in 1876. Charles' father practiced as a pharmaceutical chemist, trading from no. 14 High Street, Loughborough, but died when young Charles – familiarly known as "Fred", was 10. Fred, as I shall therefore call him for the present, was educated at Loughborough Grammar School where a flair for all manner of sports became almost immediately apparent, coupled with an obvious aptitude for languages. His love of sport, as an enthusiastic player of cricket and of golf especially - he was a popular member of The Finglas Golf Club, was to remain with him for life. But his defining passion, again exhibited from his youth, was for botany, which fostered a distinguished professional career and a study which he refused to abandon even during army service.



*Charles Frederick Ball*

Fred Ball began his professional career at Messrs. Barron & Sons' Nursery at Elvaston in Derbyshire, remaining there for three-and-a-half years before moving to Messrs. Barrs' Nurseries at Long Ditton, near Surbiton, Surrey, for a further year. His next move, when still only 20, in July 1900, was to The Temperate House at London's famous Kew Gardens, where promotion to Sub-foreman in the Herbaceous and Alpine Department came in 1902. (Alpines were indeed to become his particular speciality). There followed a short-lived interlude (c. 1903) during which he worked alongside his brother in a market gardening venture in Nottingham which some said proved insufficiently rewarding, financially, to support both men. Others, however, suggested that the nature of the work itself was unrewarding – "*not to his taste*", which one can readily believe, given the international nature of his developing career.

Fred's return to Kew might therefore have been somewhat predictable, and led to his being made foreman at The Royal Botanical Gardens at Glasnevin, Dublin, in December 1906. Having secured the appropriate professional qualifications, in June 1907 he was appointed Assistant to Sir Frederick William Moore (1857-1949), Keeper of The Glasnevin Botanical Gardens from 1879-1922 and sometime President of The Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland. Sir Frederick duly became one of Fred's closest friends and a much valued colleague.

Fred had greatly enjoyed foreign travel during his school days and was to travel extensively in Europe throughout his adulthood, aiming to extend his knowledge of genii with which he was already familiar, and in the hope of discovering new varieties – new, that is, to Britain and Ireland, which indeed he did. His particular interest in Alpine varieties, mentioned earlier, drew him repeatedly to Switzerland especially, and to the Alpine slopes of Italy and France. So keen was he to expand his knowledge that annual vacations were regarded less as opportunities for rest and recreation, but more as ones for still further continental expeditions. Just as Fred's own horizons broadened, his fame spread abroad, even to countries which might retain a certain “novelty value” today. A visit to Bulgaria in 1911 must have been a particular highlight, even for this seasoned traveller. Accompanied by Herbert Cowley, a colleague from Kew, Fred was granted a personal audience with King Ferdinand I, whose Balkan state, perhaps ironically, was to be aligned with the Central Powers in October 1915. Fred's presentation of several of the rarer specimens gathered during his peregrinations, with information on methods of cultivation in their native settings, must have fascinated many at a lecture he delivered to The Royal Horticultural Society in London, though quite how many specimens etc. were donated to Kew, rather than to Glasnevin, his obvious preference, I cannot currently say.

Hybridisation was another area in which Fred was particularly active, with certain experiments meeting “*with much success*”. Results of some of the experiments gained popularity in his own lifetime, with several being named after him, and one in particular being planted in his honour in 2002. This was *Escallonia Rubra*, derived from saxifrage (a.k.a. redclaws), which was set in a small hedge of shrubs in Loughborough's Queens Park, and marked by a small brass plaque commemorating both the planting and Fred himself. On a particularly poignant note, it was reported shortly after his death that there were, at Glasnevin, “*still unflowered crosses made by him of Berberis, Mahonia, Calceolaria, Ribes, Campanida, Escallonia, etc., which are full of promise*”. (These plants are, firstly, a variety akin to the buttercup and secondly a genus closely related to the first; then, a variety native to South America highly prized for its beautiful slipper-like flowers; a genus of the saxifrage family bearing blackberries and sometimes gooseberries; probably an anemone; and another variety of saxifrage).

In November 1914 (some sources show September), Ball volunteered and became a Private in the 7<sup>th</sup> “Pals” Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers; sometimes known - perhaps unofficially, as “the footballers” because of the number of local players in it. With initial training at The Curragh and then in Hampshire, the battalion sailed for the Mediterranean aboard *S.S. Alaunia* on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1915 and having transferred to *H.M.T. Fauvette* was put ashore by cutters at Suvla Bay on 7<sup>th</sup> August. As with many battalions, Ball's was given no time to acclimatise and was promptly sent into the line to give supplementary support in the operations against Sari Bair and Chunuk Bair etc., mentioned earlier. Together with other units, the Dubliners secured their immediate objective at Chocolate Hill, only for it to be relinquished later in August. Ball survived the engagement unscathed; likewise the fighting at Kizlar Dagh (13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> August), where intense close range Turkish rifle fire evidently failed to mar his relishing his beloved botany. Even at this late hour, he arranged for a

consignment of plants and seeds etc. to be sent to Sir F.W. Moore in Dublin, thereby enhanced his - Ball's - own reputation, and greatly enriching the Glasnevin collection.

Although the date of Private Ball's death – 13<sup>th</sup> September 1915, is not disputed, information given in some sources, that he was killed “in the battle for Scimitar Hill”, is potentially misleading. The actual Battle of Scimitar Hill took place within a single day - August 21<sup>st</sup> 1915, as part of what was, in fact, the largest “set piece” battle, in terms of numbers, of the entire Gallipoli Campaign. Ending in abject failure: it was also the last. What actually happened, according to



*Charles Frederick Ball*

seemingly reliable contemporary reports. is that Private 16445 was wounded as a result of fighting which undoubtedly continued in the vicinity of Scimitar Hill after the official battle. Yet even this requires clarification. We read: “*It appears that poor Ball had been in the thick of the fighting and that his detachment was sent to a rest camp for a short respite. While in the rest camp, he was struck by a fragment of a shell on 13<sup>th</sup> September, and so seriously wounded that he gradually sank and passed away the same day*”.

Charles Frederick Ball died aged 35: (not 36 as stated in several sources, including the CWGC). He was buried at Lala Baba Cemetery (grave reference II. A. 8.), close to the area in which his battalion had fought at Suvla on the Peninsula. He is commemorated on two war memorials in his native Loughborough - at The Carillon Tower and the Independent Grammar School, and on the WW1 Memorial in St. Mobhi's (Anglican) Church in Glasnevin, Dublin.

C.F. Ball's reputation was underpinned by a substantial journalistic output and most especially through his Editorship of *Irish Gardening*. It was to the offices of this publication and to Glasnevin that an abundance of letters was addressed, mourning his loss and recognising his considerable contribution to gardening and horticulture, even beyond British shores. I offer these extracts: “*His was such a quiet, retiring, and yet deep and powerful nature, that it is a great loss to the world [that] he should pass away so young*”. “*He is the first of my fighting friends to be killed. I had a real liking for him; his soft voice, kind brown eyes, chuckling laugh, and fine nature; all appealed to me*”. “*It was a particularly fine thing for a man of his peaceful habits to join, and only those who knew him well will ever thoroughly appreciate how much he gave up and what a wrench it was to him to throw up the work he loved so much*”. “*His keenness was infectious and his loss to horticulture in Ireland and especially to Irish Gardening will be deeply felt*”.

A quote from Ball's obituary in *Irish Gardening* reads: “*The high reputation in which this Irish periodical is now held is largely due to his skill and enthusiasm. Ball had a wide circle of friends in this country and by them, his quiet, gentle manner, his open-handed generosity, his willingness to help and to guide, were keenly appreciated*”. Finally, in paying a personal tribute, Sir Frederick Moore, Ball's friend and guide for most of his adulthood, wrote: “*It may be truly said; few men have lived a better life or died a nobler death*”.

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