



News from the St. Tudy History Group Research Team

St. Tudy Church was recently visited by Thomas Rowland from Australia who left his name and contact details in the Church Visitors Book. He commented that his relatives had originated from St. Tudy, and luckily Michael Straughier told me about the entry in the book.

I then contacted Thomas, and several e-mails back and forth from the Pyrenees, we got onto the topic of the Montage in the Church and that we do not have names for all those we have photographs for. Thomas's descendants were from the Hocken family, and thought he saw a family resemblance in one of our Soldiers on the Montage. He then asked the "oracle", his mother in Australia, to look at the photos on our History Group website, and she confirmed his thoughts. The only Hocken on our Montage is No 49, Harry Hocken. After looking through various online resources, there was one man who it could be, but he was called Herbert, and had been in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Looking closely at an improved image I made from our Montage picture, I could see his cap badge vaguely, and also that he had a red cross cloth arm patch. Thomas told me that unfortunately there was another Australian member of the family lost later in WW2 called Stephen Hocken. I found the website where he was commemorated and luckily there was a photo of Stephen on there. I then used the same computer package to sharpen the image, colour and also animate both of the photos I had, and they were practically identical. Eureka! Herbert must have been known as "Harry". It was commonplace in those times to have a nickname that was used instead of your birth name.

This got me thinking about the Montage and how unique it is. We know who framed it – W. Cutler of Bournemouth, but why this firm, why Bournemouth, and why don't we know who put all the photos together and organised the Montage. I have now got Bournemouth and Hants archives hunting for information on this company and have been going through old newspapers online for 1918, 1919 and 1920. Just to throw the "researcher's spanner" into the works, in my newspaper search I have found several references to memorials in St. Tudy. It looks like the Methodist Chapel unveiled two memorials in January 1919 – one to "The Fallen" and one to "Those Who Served". Then in November 1919, the "Roll of Honour of our Glorious Dead" was unveiled in the Church. Were all of these memorials combined to make the Montage in the Church, or have some been lost in time?

I would love to hear from anyone who has any information on what actually happened. In the meantime, thanks to the marvels of modern technology in the form of e-mails, computer photo packages and online records from military websites, we now have identified another of our brave young men who served our country in WW1. However, in the end, it was the good old fashioned tried and tested St. Tudy Bush Telegraph that started it all off in the first place!

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