

Notes on Remembering the Great War in Bucks, 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting, held at Viney House, Aylesbury on 25 March 2017

The Lord Lieutenant, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Bt. welcomed those attending the meeting, especially anyone attending for the first time.

Professor Ian Beckett (Bucks Military Museum Trust) reported that there were now 121 contemporary images on the Bucks Great War Virtual Trail (plus the modern view of the same locality), and it was anticipated that there would eventually be about 140. The functionality of the trail had also been much improved. It was hoped that, at the end of the project, a book could be produced with the Centre for Bucks Studies. This would also include those additional images which could no longer be matched such as groups photographed outside long-demolished furniture factories in High Wycombe, and interior scenes from wartime locations such as VAD hospitals.

It was also reported that the Trust would be mounting a major exhibition at the Bucks County Museum from 30 October 2017 centred on the 1/1<sup>st</sup> Royal Bucks Hussars in Palestine, with particular reference to the charge at El Mughar on 17 November 1917. It was hoped to show both the Dugdale painting of the action from the Trust's own collection and the better known Beadle painting from the Institute of Directors. There would be a smaller photographic display on the Bucks Battalions at Passchendaele at the Old Gaol at Buckingham in the autumn.

It was further reported that, apart from the commemoration of Edward Brooks VC at Oakley on Friday 28 April, of which details would be given later in the meeting, there would also be a commemoration of Frederick Youens VC at High Wycombe on Sunday 9 July 2017.

It was additionally reported that there would be another 'Great War Village' at Armed Forces Display at Aylesbury Rugby Club on Saturday 17 June 2017. As this coincided with Trooping the Colour, the aircraft from the RAF Battle of Britain Flight as well as the Red Arrows would be able to pass over the ground on their return from London. Sponsorship for Armed Forces Day as a whole had gone well. There was some discussion regarding the commemoration of the armistice and the end of the war. It was suggested that, as the 2018 Armed Forces Day would be held at Milton Keynes and there would also be major events in 2018 for the centenary of the creation of the RAF, it would be better to

commemorate the end of the war when Armed Forces Day returned to Aylesbury in 2019.

Laura Cotton (Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies) together with the Great War Buckinghamshire Project Officer, Katharine, reported that approximately 100 biographies had been researched thus far by project volunteers. In recent months, the travelling exhibition based on the project had been displayed at County Hall in Aylesbury, at Aylesbury Vale College, and at the Great War event in Marlow. The exhibition would be constantly updated with relevance to events in 2017 and 2018 and was always available to groups and organisations wishing to display it.

It was expected that the website linked to the project would be developed in 2017, with the possibility of the public being able to add material. There would also be a searchable database linked to the 'Casualties of War' project funded through the Arts and Humanities Research Council 'Gateways to the First World War' Centre at the University of Kent. For this, the digitisation of the 1/1<sup>st</sup> Bucks Battalion Casualty Books had been completed, and work would be undertaken shortly to analyse the material.

Bucks County Council (Valerie Letheren) would be supporting the centenary commemoration of the creation of the RAF (1 April 1918) involving both RAF Halton and Strike Command at High Wycombe. A service would be held at St Mary's Church, Chesham on Sunday 15 April 2018, while all units of the RAF taking part in the national commemorations in London from 1-8 April 2018 would be concentrated at Halton prior to events.

Burnham RBL (Bob Slater) would also be making the centenary of the RAF the central part of its 2018 activities with an event on Saturday 7 April 2018. In addition, there would be a celebration of the armistice on Saturday 3 November 2018 but a separate commemoration on Sunday 11 November 2018 thus differentiating between celebration and remembrance. Attention was also drawn to the forthcoming opening of the Royal Star and Garter Home at High Wycombe, although technically the centenary of the original Richmond Home had been in November 2016.

Great Missenden (Jill Robertson) reported that the Chiltern Open Air Museum had taken possession of the Great War Nissen Hut but it would take at least six months to renovate it. The village was working on a Great War display for the hut, which would include the story of the Nash Brothers as well as Whin's

Vegetable Drug Plant Farm and Maud Grieve's School of Medicinal Herb Growing. The Bucks DVD would be shown at the display in the village commemorating those men lost in 1917. Hopefully, the main war memorial renovation would also be completed.

Hedgerley Historical Society (John Lovelock) reported that the study of the 10 men from the village who had died should now be published in October 2017. The new CWGC headstone for Private Bowden had been unveiled in November 2016. Work would now be undertaken on the memorial to the boys of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society Home, most of whom served with the Canadian forces. The Stevenson family of Hedgerley Park had played a leading role in the establishment of the War Memorial Hall in 1921 on land donated by Lord Burnham, and it was hoped to develop an exhibition on the hall. Jill Robertson would be giving a talk on her research on Great Missenden servicemen on Wednesday 17 May 2017.

Marlow (Mike Hyde) reported that the BMMT, CBS and Marlow Remembers WWI Association joint Great War Roadshow on 18 February 2017 had been very successful. The Association had also given a presentation to Sir William Borlase's Grammar School. There would be a display on the Causeway in Marlow on Sunday 30 July 2017 on Passchendaele but the Association was also working on home front material this year.

Milton Keynes Council (Sam Crooks) would be shown the Bucks DVD at its full meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2017.

Oakley (John Mole) reported that the Edward Brooks VC commemorative paving stone provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government would be delivered to AVDC on Monday 10 April, and would be displayed at the Octagon until transferred to Oakley for the commemoration. HLF had provided a grant of £8,000 to help cover the website, the provision of tiered seating, marquees, printing, etc. It should be noted that the main road into the village from Long Crendon would be closed for the official parties, and access for others would be by way of Brill. The events would begin at 1010 on Friday 28 April 2017 with a march to St Mary's Church for an outside field service commencing at 1100, the unveiling by the Lord Lieutenant, and the laying of wreaths, etc. The main event should be concluded by 1200. RBL, The Rifles, and the Brooks family would all be represented. There would also be a short play by pupils of Oakley Cof E Combined School and an exhibition. This

would focus not just on Edward Brooks but also on Oakley and Boarstall during the war, and Albert Ball VC, whose relatives now lived in the village. Details could be found on the new website, [www.oakleyvc.org.uk](http://www.oakleyvc.org.uk)

SOFO (John Sheldon) reported that there would be a battlefield tour to the Western Front, including to Fayet, where Brooks won his VC, from Wednesday 26 April 2017. In addition SOFO would be putting up the second half of its centenary display on the Great War in November 2017, focussing on 1917 and 1918.

SSAFA (John Stevens) reported that digitisation of the records of the county's 13 wartime branches would be completed by 2018.

Stewkley (John Sheldon) reported that, as at Marlow, the village continued to hold a short ceremony at the war memorial on the day a man from the village was killed. The updated story of those from the village who were killed would be made available to the Great War Buckinghamshire project database in due course.

Trenchard Museum (Francis Hanford) was under threat of closure when RAF Halton was sold off in 2022. It was hoped that groups in the county would be able to assist in the preservation of the museum and its contents.

Waddesdon Manor (Catherine Taylor) reported that the focus in 2017 would be on the Balfour Declaration. Work on creating a roll of honour for the 142 wartime servicemen so far identified as estate workers continued.

It was agreed that there should be another meeting in October 2017.

[Given the discussion on the issue of the armistice as opposed to the formal end of the war, a note is appended]

## A Note on the 'End' of the Great War

Armistices represented a cessation of hostilities and not peace per se, the formal end of hostilities being when the relevant peace treaties were signed. The end of the war with Germany was taken as the most significant, hence 'Peace Day' in 1919. Under the Termination of the Present War (Definition) Act of 1918, Orders in Council legally determined the war's end with different belligerents. That of August 1921 officially ended any state of war for Britain. Even then, complications relating to Turkey and a treaty renegotiation after the Greco-Turkish War meant no formal resolution until 1924.

30 September 1918 Armistice with Bulgaria

30 October 1918 Armistice with Ottoman Empire

3 November 1918 Armistice with Austria-Hungary

11 November 1918 Armistice with Germany

25 November 1918 Surrender of last German forces in German East Africa

28 June 1919 Signing of Treaty of Versailles (Germany)

12 July 1919 End of Economic Blockade of Germany

19 July 1919 'Peace Day' in Britain

10 September 1919 Signing of Treaty of St Germain (Austria)

27 November 1919 Signing of Treaty of Neuilly (Bulgaria)

10 January 1920 Order in Council relating to Germany

30 April 1920 End of Compulsory Military Service in Britain

4 June 1920 Signing of Treaty of Trianon (Hungary)

16 July 1920 Order in Council relating to Austria

26 July 1920 Order in Council relating to Hungary

9 August 1920 Order in Council relating to Bulgaria

10 August 1920 Signing of Treaty of Sèvres (Turkey)

31 August 1921 Order in Council officially declares end of state of war for Britain

24 July 1923 Signing of Treaty of Lausanne (Turkey)

6 August 1924 Order in Council relating to Turkey