

The Estaminet Times

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Calderdale



Editor's Notes

As I write this editorial the commemorations of the centenary of the 1918 armistice are in full swing across the country with some of the displays being quite breathtaking as well as extremely moving. Calderdale has been no exception with churches and other local organisations making quite wonderful efforts to honour the sacrifice of the young men and women of our district. Our society has been heavily involved in providing information and assistance to several of them. More about that later in the newsletter.

However, there have been a couple of disappointing aspects recently. The first was the decision by the Cambridge University Students Union to vote down a motion to promote Remembrance Sunday as they feared it glorified war. They have quite clearly missed the whole point of the event and obviously do not realise that it is a commemoration and that without the sacrifice those young men and women made we would not have the luxury of living in a safe and comfortable democracy where they are able to express their opinions so freely.

Secondly, at a recent commemorative event, I was engaged in conversation by a person who said that as a member of a Great War historical society I would of course know that the British army were 'lions led by donkeys'. I replied that I didn't agree and pointed out that the conversation between two senior German officers from which the quote was taken didn't actually take place and that it was in fact a fabrication made up by an alleged military historian of the sixties to which the reply was well of course you must agree that Haig was incompetent.

I had to disagree once again and it turned out that their view of the war stemmed from participation in the play 'Oh What a Lovely War'. Wonderful entertainment but in no way factually correct. It is extremely disappointing that such perceptions persist amongst the majority of the population in spite of the efforts of historians and people such as ourselves to alter them.

Rob Hamilton

Halifax Courier Series

Just over 4 years ago we approached the Courier to propose a series of articles about the war as reported in the paper. We thought perhaps a monthly article but to our surprise the editor of the Courier asked for a weekly series. With some trepidation we agreed and led by David Millichope we commenced our daunting task. It was clear from the start that we would need a bigger team than just myself and David to write the series and we managed to coerce, sorry persuade, John Sunderland and Elaine Beach to join us. So off we set, each taking one months editions of the Courier at a time, identifying suitable articles, researching the subject and ultimately writing the material which eventually appeared in the paper. If my own experience is typical there was much head scratching, furrowed brows and kicking of the cat in frustration (metaphorically of course as no animals were harmed in the making of this production), however, although there were a few technical issues at times, we always delivered good quality material and never missed a deadline, featuring every week without fail. My thanks go to my fellow contributors and especially David Millichope for editing the series and providing unfailing encouragement and support to us all. The Courier as a thank you, printed a 4 page spread in the edition of 9th November which can be seen in the following pages.





peace. In 1918 he had joined

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One wonders if its joys will ever return or if the war will have killed them" ... Oh, and Halifax lost 10-0 at Hunslet in the Northern Union Football Rugby League to you and me.

Brontë Mystery THIS SHORT item caugh my eye with no other reason initially, than to fill my word quota. Little did I know what it would lead to. The item concerned an auction at Sotheby's which had listed two

DIARY DATE

the Bronte Parsonage M are part of their Bonnell Collection: the remainder yet to be investigated I has which may be able help the estigation furthe

Museum's Centenary Day

to mark the end of the 'For King and Country' Exhibition

members of the Halifax Gre

War Heritage Society will

Room to help you, explain al

aboutyour items and record

Please bring your Mem

Bankfield Museum, Akrovd

HX3 6HG. No appointment

needed. Free of charge

Park Boothtown Road Halifa

ong to the WW1 Galleries at

iries : 01422 64745

Calderdale's WarEffort.

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Ann Bronte, Subsequently

Dickens specialist, promin

bookseller and autograph

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becked against the catalogue

Charles Sessier a Charle

Memorabilia Event **RESEARCH ROOM OF THE**

HALTFAX COURTER

NEWS

49

WW1 GALLERIES, TOP FLOOR, Saturday 24 November 10am -4pm Your ancestors participated in our Nation's endeavoursduring the years 1914 to 1918, Would you like to find out about their exploits? Have you any photographs. diaries, postcards, trench art, uniform items, medals, souvenirs or other artefacts relating to their military or civilian service? As part of Bankfield







NEWS 51

Commemorating the end of the First World War - a century on

The daunting task of bringing you news from the war years

BACKGROUND By Tim Worsnop

IN 2014 the Courier and the

Halifax Great War Heritage Society embarked on an ambitious project to record the period covering the First World War as it was reported and five days! in Halifax at the time. Now with the centenary of Armistice Day 1918 just two days away. this huge body of work which began four years ago is almost

at a close. From the outset this was, in their own words, a quite daunting task. Their missio to sift through four years of Couriers from 1914 to 1918 and piece together pivotal momen in this tumultuous passage of history and the effect they had on day to day life back home in Halifax. The diary that emerged ran virtually in real time 100

The Balifax Courier. E.

And State of

of Austria)

HERE ARE some statistics on a revolving basis with each about the size of the project The Halifax Great War writer tackling a month at a Heritage Society undertool Each column from •They have now been hard at work for for 227 weeks. research, to writing and submitting took approximat 12 hours which means that

HOW IT WORKED

That's four years, four months in total the Society spent a In that time they have ead millions of words ombined 113 days working on the project. and generated something approaching 250,000 words The WW1 pages never failed to make the paper from start to finish, despite one or Columns were written two hitches along the way.

David and his co ars on. Retired teacher David Millichope, who has edited the Society's weekly bulletins said at the off: "When we first went Rob Hamilton, Elaine Beach and John Sunderland have immersed themselves in the period, dilligently reading into the Central Library, all we could see was a sea of print." But each week from July each newspaper for relevant stories, researching them and 4, 1914 (the edition that explaining their significance reported the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand "Tracking the war years of the Courier in real time, it

an off the second second

feeling at the time and the effect was immediate, sharp and at times visceral. "This has given us a greater sense of what the people of Calderdale went through, their passions, anxieties and hardshins. Some made the ultimate sacrifice of course but the stories we unearthe reminded us of how lucky we are to live in a world made possible by the sacrifice eryone, from all walks of life. All four are extremely proud of their hard work: "In many

was as though the people of Calderdale have been talking

directly to us in our own living

rooms," said David. "They told us what they were

ways the series epitomised what our organisation was trying to achieve. It was exploring the local impact of the war nutting it in the

context of the wider war and interpreting it for the wider public, Personally I feel that The Balifax Courier. doing it in real-time like a diary created a great sense of how things develop created a greater · 15515.05

This successors with the second secon "Learning about local reactions Government. to government initiatives and

the lifestyle of the generosity and spirit of local folk. At the beginning of the war it was knitting socks for soldiers, food parcels and time has been ev opening. In the first few months of the War the women's money raised through the Courier fund. And latterly responses to request for help for soldiers it was demonstrated by th and the participation creation of a publically funded of children in

collecting money were And there w stories, Like Little Khaki fascinating. As the George (he dressed in all the gear despite being just three weeks went by more and more interesting aspects were revealed when the war started) and was

a champion fundraiser. And Many events caught the team's eye. Rationing stories abounded and censorship the story of conman Richard Flannagan who despite being became more prevalent as casualties rose to an unprecedented scale in the a private conned his way int a job as a recruiting officer for the territorials in Halifax, ever latter years of the War. The promoting himself to captain group also noted how a country that had largely been run by He was eventually found out and sent to prison when the local administration for the real recruiting officer turned up and it was discovered he wasn't on the payroll! first time found itself direct) affected by edicts from central •The Society is grateful On a lighter note the group were moved by the endless to Calderdale Libraries and Information Service, Calderdale Museums Service and Pennine Horizons for support, advice, resources and generous use of premises and is appreciative of the financial assistance it has received from Calderdale Small Grants Scheme and the Bearder

Charity. •The work is not quite finished for the team yet. Over the next few weeks they will record how life after the Great War continued in Halifax

THE TEAM

DAVID MILLICHOPE. EDITOR. **DAVID FROM Hipperholme, is** married with two daughters and two grandchildren. He trained as a biologist and became a secondary schoolteacher in Halifax in 1971 where he's lived ever since teaching at Crossley and Por and later Rishworth School. the public learn more about it. "Personally I feel very proud of In 1990 he left education and what has been achieve set up a photography/vide business before retiring in 2007. His interest in the Great War developed after finding that several of his family had served in the war and in some cases died. For greater understanding he studied fo ROBERT HAMILTON

OBERT IS a 63 year old MA in First World War Studies retired firefighter who worked at Birmingham University. With the Centenary of the Great War for the West Yorkshire Fire rvice for 34 years. He lives in Greetland and is married with two daughters and two grand daughters. He's always been interested in military



list when he the conflict is a myth and I am decided to retire a trying to educate people abou few years ago. But since from his hometown Bradford the true nature of the war. I to Halifax he always had an interest in local history.The WW1 project came about when he and his partner attended a meeting at Bankfield

"It has proved to be an Halifax, where they were asking exciting but also daunting for volunteers to help identify hundreds of photographs of old Halifax. The project ende but after a leaving lunch one of those working on the project suggested they did some to commemorate the start o



RETIRED TEACHER Elaine now lives hotwoon Stainland and Barkisland. She has had two children. who both, long since, left home. She decided that



ding time and so responde

to an advertisement from

Bankfield Museum to catalogue their photograph collection.

There she met David and John

and learned of David's interest in WW1. "Reading Couriers from 1914 to 1918 has been

fascinating. Learning about local reactions to government initiatives and the lifestyle of

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and the participation of children in collecting money were

interesting, varied subject matter and satisfaction that

responses t

War the women's

The newsletter of the Halifax Great War Heritage Society Commemorating the Great War Centenary



Commemorating the end of the First World War - a century on

approaching in 2014, he was interested to mark the occasi in some way. Along with four others, he initiated what was then known as the Halifax Great War Trail Association in early 2012 - later renamed as the history and by his late Halifax Great War Heritage Society. Its aim was to find out how the Great War Impacted on Halifax and the Calder Valley through local stories and to help

d by the team. At a quarter of a million words it must represent one o the most complete accounts of a local community's experience of the Great War."

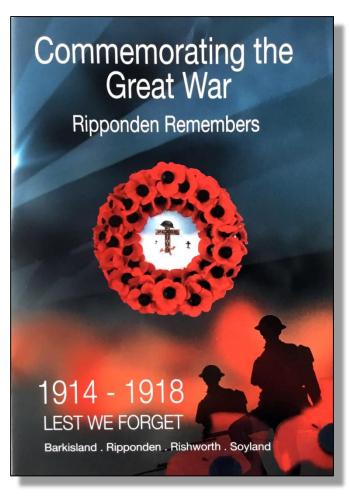
saw the weekly feature as a means of doing this and also to highlight the effect of the war on the ordinary men and wo were left behind at h

project and now it's completed I can look back with pride and a sense of achievement and I have to say a bit of relief as well on a job well done." JOHN SUNDERLAND WITH AN Honours degre graphic design, former B

WW1 and the Halifax Great War Heritage Society as it is now known was born. That was in 2012. "We approached the Courier with a germ of an idea which turned into the pages you

Ripponden Centenary Booklet

Back in February of this year Ripponden Parish Council advertised for help in compiling a centenary commemorative booklet and we offered our assistance and supplied information about some of the areas they were interested in. The result was the publication of 'Commemorating the Great War – Ripponden Remembers' which includes much material supplied by ourselves. Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the Parish Council offices at 107 Halifax Road Ripponden.



Halifax Business

Improvement District

As we reported in our Spring newsletter Halifax BID, an organisation tasked with improving Halifax town centre, asked for our assistance with a centenary exhibition. We were able to persuade them to feature stories about local people and not the usual focus on the casualties of the war. I have to say they did us proud. Using space in the Borough Market they set up a very good display of boards around a small seating area showing information about local people from all walks of life who were involved in some way in the war.



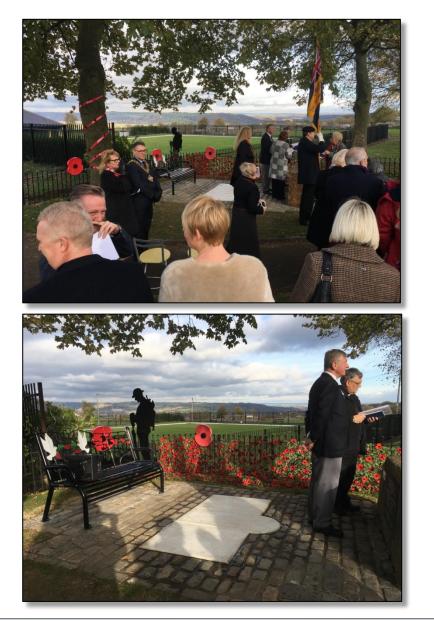


Sowood Womens Institute Poppy Trail

On 4th November David Millichope and myself attended the official launch of the poppy trail at Stainland Memorial Recreation Ground followed by a visit to an exhibition at Sowood Community Centre. We had been invited earlier in the year to give tips to the members of the institute on how to research the men from the district who had lost their lives and we also helped out with information about some of the men.

The ladies of the institute have done a truly wonderful job commemorating the fallen of their district with not only 4 walking trails but also commemorative benches, ceramic poppies and blue plaques along the routes. They are well worth a look, more information can be found on their website.

https://sowoodwi.com/poppy-trail





Feature

Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines

When war was declared in August 1914 the British air force, known as the Royal Flying Corps sent a total of 63 aircraft to France with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). These primitive machines made of canvas and plywood, held together with wire and powered by unreliable engines were a far cry from the modern aircraft we are familiar with today.

The whole advent of aerial warfare was brand new and both sides strived to master the technicalities and tactics of this new dimension. One particular problem which the British were trying to solve was how to destroy the giant German airships known as Zeppelins, named after their creator Count Graf Von Zeppelin, which were capable of flying long distances carrying bombs that they could drop on defenceless civilians below. They were able to fly high enough to be out of range of anti-aircraft guns and the planes of the time lacked the necessary firepower to shoot them down. One intrepid aviator decided to try a novel way to solve the problem, he would not try to shoot them down but bomb

them instead. On the night of 7th June 1915 Lieutenant Reginald Warneford of the Royal Naval Air Service pursued and destroyed Zeppelin LZ.37 by dropping 3 bombs on it which caused it to explode and fall in flames. The concussion from the explosion damaged the engine of Lt Warneford's plane and he was forced to land in a field 35 miles behind enemy lines but was able to effect repairs and make his way back to a friendly airfield. Boys Own stuff indeed and the following day the King awarded Warneford the Victoria Cross for his exploits. Alas only 10 days later Reginald was dead, killed in a flying accident near Paris. He was buried at Brompton Cemetery, London, one of the very few servicemen whose bodies were repatriated to be buried at home.

The Warneford name was a familiar one in the Skircoat area at the time as Canon John Henry Warneford had been the first vicar of All Saints Church, Salterhebble from 1846 until his death in 1899 and his daughter Minnie still resided in the area and worked tirelessly for the St John Ambulance Brigade. The Reverend Warneford was Reginald's great uncle and Minnie his second cousin. She campaigned for there to be a memorial to her famous cousin in Halifax and Clog Yard, King Cross was renamed Warneford Square in his honour in August 1915. The Square is long gone, demolished in the re-development of King Cross and

the site is now occupied by the car park for King Cross library but if you look carefully at the adjacent buildings you will see that the street sign has been retained to perpetuate the memory of this brave man.

By 1918 the Royal Flying Corps had expanded to almost 4000 aircraft and there was a corresponding increase in the number of pilots required. One of them was George Washington Benson whose family lived at Hadlow, Albert Promenade, Skircoat. He had originally enlisted in the West Riding Regiment and crossed to the Western Front in December 1915. He subsequently transferred into the Flying Corps and during a training flight in March 1918 he decided to pop home for dinner. Although great strides had been made in the design and construction of aircraft they were still small machines by today's standards and he was quite easily able to land on Skircoat Moor, leave his aircraft, enjoy his meal at his parents home and then take off to return to his airfield.

Flying was a seat of the pants experience in those days with few regulations to control where planes could fly or land. A far cry from today's heavily regulated society. George survived the war and passed away in 1971 in Whitby.

In July 1918 another plane landed on Skircoat Moor but this time with tragic consequences. The pilot, Harold Heydewrych, had lost his way and descended to try and ascertain his whereabouts. Aeroplanes were still a novelty and a large crowd gathered curious to see one of the flying machines they had heard so much about. When the plane took off a policeman and some soldiers attempted to clear a lane for it but some of the crowd ran into its path forcing the pilot to take evasive action. His manoeuvre undoubtedly saved many lives but he unfortunately struck four-year-old Arnold Stancliffe of Walton Street, King Cross. Arnold was transported to the Infirmary and his mother rushed there to see him but unfortunately he died the next day from his injuries.

Rob Hamilton