



Spring 2007
Volume 2
Issue 1

"THOROUGH"

"Education must elevate the mind, must improve your faculties of thought, must clear your vision and make you understand your place and duty in the world."

Field Marshal Lord Kitchener of Khartoum.



Gerry Clark, the Association's Honorary Historian, represented the Association at the 90th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of the Somme at Thiepval in France and sent us the following report.

THIEPVAL, JULY 1ST 2006

A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Sitting sipping a cold beer in the main square of Albert, a pretty girl speaking delightfully accented English hands out leaflets advertising a display of Scottish and contemporary dancing at the Studio de Danse in the Rue Gambetta. It could almost be any small country town, in any part of France.

No amount of poring over books on the events of that time can adequately prepare the visitor for his first glimpse of the countryside over which the battle of the Somme was fought. Notwithstanding all the white cemetery squares that dot surrounding hills, the sheer ordinariness of it is shocking. Ovillers, La Boisselle, Poizieres, Guillemont, Auchonvillers—names that resonate down the years—turn out to be small, dusty and wholly unexceptional. Did tens of thousands of young men of 13 infantry divisions, of which seven were formed from the newly trained "Kitcheners Army", really fight and die for such places?

It's only when you get close—close enough to read the descriptions of specific events, the inscriptions on thousands of headstones—that this air of unreality is rudely shattered. Suddenly, the sheer horror of the events that unfolded in these now—peaceful fields begins to oppress the spirit.

Saturday, 1st July 2006—like that other Saturday, 90 years earlier—dawns hot and sunny, without a cloud in the sky. First decision of the day. Should one wear a suitably sober suit and tie, or something more appropriate for the 90 degree heat? As a mere bystander to events, the weather wins out. Many others reach the same conclusion, but this safety in numbers can not

Kitchener inspecting the new recruits of the King's Liverpool battalions, recruited as part of his drive. They were destined for the Somme.



Thiepval memorial to the British Soldiers missing at the Somme. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

dispel a nagging feeling of something approaching shame.

Armed with plenty of bottled water, we make our way to the car parks outside the vast Airbus factory in Meauite, to meet the coaches that will shuttle us to the Thiepval memorial for the main Ceremony of Remembrance. We arrive in good time to find thousands already there. Orangemen in their bowler hats and sashes, here to honour the men of the 36th Ulster Division, rub shoulders with nieces, nephews, grand-children and great grand-children of others that fought and died here. And moving through the crowds, like ghosts, are men and women in the uniforms of that bygone time: moustachioed poilus in their "horizon blue", nurses in their starched white head-dresses and aprons; Tommies in their heavy khaki.

The formal ceremony before Lutyens' great monument begins with the arrival of the standard-bearers of the Royal British Legion and a flypast by two replica World War I aircraft— a Sopwith triplane and a SE5a biplane. Speeches and prayers follow, including a more than usually sensitive and thoughtful address by HRH The Prince of Wales. The crowds are so dense that one can see little, but to be there, to hear the words spoken, is enough. They were:

"Standing here on this hallowed ground we gather to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, it is impossible not to be almost overwhelmed by a mixture of deep emotions— of humility and awe, of sadness and pride... but also of a deep determination to honour the memory of those who gave their lives here so long ago and in such unthinkable conditions.

The magnitude of the Allied losses on the 1st July 1916 are unimaginable in these days of instant communication and

the ever-present media, but even 90 years ago they caused a most profound shock to our nations and left scars that remain with us today. It was not just the huge scale of the losses (some fifty thousand casualties in one day, of which twenty thousand were killed or missing, presumed dead), it was also the fact that for the first time in our history, we put mere boys into an assault against the bomb, bullets and the terrible wire entanglements, equipped with little more than raw courage and a deep trust in their young leaders.

Hundreds of young men. Friends from neighbouring farms and streets, factories, tram works and coal mines, volunteered together to form battalions of Pals; they went over the top together and died together, in many instances before they could even reach the enemy trenches.

Being here today can only go a very small part of the way in helping us imagine how this beautiful countryside was devastated. Great swathes of our countryside, its mountains and glens, dales and fells, its villages and towns lost an entire generation of their men-folk,...

in fact nowhere was left untouched, as their sons, brothers, husbands and fathers fell in one terrible day... as did unmentionable numbers of men from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and India. All this indescribable carnage is made ever more poignant in a personal way— and for many of us here today by the fact that my wife lost three great uncles in these terrible battles and I lost one. In Rupert Brooke's immortal words—

*"These hearts are woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched furs and flowers and cheeks. All this is ended."*

There are monuments to their memory throughout the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth; their headstones, in hundreds of cemeteries across the Somme, are testament to their sacrifice. Their simple epitaphs, so movingly crafted, tell the story of these splendid young men 'who died so those of us who are left may grow old' - in peace. This Thiepval monument alone bears the names of more than 72,000 British and South African soldiers who have no known grave and who are still missing from the battles of 1916-1918.

Gerry Clark places a wreath on behalf of the Association.



There are very few now living who survived the First World War, but nothing could give me greater pride than to have met and known, a considerable number of these remarkable people who endured and suffered so much. However, the story of their suffering, their tenacity and courage, lives on— not just on Remembrance Day, but also as a most important part of our educational curriculum. More school children visit battlefields of Northern France today than ever before. Here they learn of the legacy of those fine soldiers which has passed down to us. Here, on these fields whose names resonate with that sense of duty, loyalty and comradeship...with that wonderful example of 'putting others first'; of simple good manners and humanity; that cheery spirit on adversity, and a gentleness and compassion for the weak, the homeless and the defeated; here our children take on their inheritance.

Whilst the Somme has become a site of pilgrimage for many British and Commonwealth visitors every year, it is also home to the villagers and townsfolk of this lovely part of France whose forebears suffered and lost so much in the course of the unutterable hell which engulfed them. Many of you are here today to share this commemoration— and I can only thank you all for what you do and continue to do each year to maintain the memory of all our brave soldiers who fell on this dreadful battlefield 90 years ago today. We will never forget them.” Then, the great and the good depart, and in what is perhaps the most touching part of the proceedings, the Thiepval memorial is given over to the ordinary men,

women and children who have come in their thousands to honour their own particular dead and missing. We place our wreath on behalf on the Kitcheners Scholars Association, stand for a few minutes gazing up at the vast, sombre edifice, bearing the names of over 72,000 British war dead who have no known grave, and then depart.

Gerry Clark
(Honorary Historian)



Photo credit : The Battle of the Somme (1916)

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

24 March 2007

Dear Scholar,

In the chairman's letter it is customary to review briefly the events of the year. The highlight of 2006 was of course the Annual Dinner held at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, at which the Scholars and guests commemorated the 90th anniversary of the death of Kitchener. I am pleased to report that we had a high turnout of young Scholars and guests. Their decision to attend was rewarded by an entertaining history by Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, the Governor of the Royal Hospital. The main speaker of the evening was Mr Charles Messenger, the eminent historian and writer.

Following the annual memorial service in June, held as always at St Paul's Cathedral, we visited the Charles Dickens Museum, which is located in Doughty Street, WC1, the only house still standing that Dickens actually lived in.

On Remembrance Day as usual, the KSA gathered to pay our respects in front of the statue of Kitchener on Horse Guards' Parade. Those attending enjoyed an excellent lunch afterwards in a restaurant in Trafalgar Square.

Having dealt with the events, I turn to the subject of money. A number of Scholars have sent in cheques for Scholarship certificates often with an additional donation to the Kitchener Fund included.

As more and more of us turn to electronic communication, shopping on the Internet is becoming a modern convenience. It is now possible to shop online and benefit the KSA at the same time. A charity fund raising website www.easyfundraising.org.uk lists the KSA as an organisation that can benefit from the commissions retailers pay. The blurb on the site says

*"We provide a FREE service where you can shop with your favourite online stores and at no extra cost raise funds for any charity, good cause or group you choose to support. You still shop directly with each retailer as you would normally, but simply by using the links from our site first each retailer will make a **cashback donation** to the cause you wish to support."*

Please give it a try!

THE KITCHENER SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER - WWW.KITCHENERSCHOLARS.ORG

Following some good work from Simon Piggott on the Committee, more KS are now paying the correct subscription of £10 p.a. although many are still paying more 'historical' amounts. If you think there is a chance that you are not paying the correct amount, please drop a line to the Secretary, who will be pleased to send out a banker's order form.

The Secretary has also done a lot of work in preparing a proposal to put to the next AGM of the Association to convert it into a registered charity. At present, the Kitchener Fund is a charity but the KSA is not, with the result that the Association suffers a small amount of income tax on bank deposits. If the KSA were a charity it would also be able to recover the basic rate tax paid by Scholars on their subscriptions, thus boosting the Association's income significantly. In order to be a

charity the Association needs some trustees. If you think you are suitable and would like to be considered for this role, should the AGM approve conversion, please let us know as soon as possible.

Finally, we would ask that all Scholars remember the Kitchener Fund or the KSA when writing their wills. Bequests of all sizes are gratefully received and obituaries of Scholars are carried in these newsletters.

Jonathan Price

ITEMS FOR SALE

KSA ties
Dark blue or maroon ties printed with the KSA gothic "K"
£6 inc p&p
KSA brooches £4
2cm diameter red enamelled brooches with gilt gothic "K"
£4 inc p&p
Please contact the Treasurer (address below)

PRINT DEADLINES

We welcome contributions to the newsletter. Please send your letters/emails/photos to Jonathan Price (contact details below).
Submission deadlines :
1st March for Spring Edition
15th September for Autumn Edi-

The 2004 Annual General Meeting and Scholars Dinner will be held on 27th April at the Inns Of Court and City Yeomanry Mess, Lincoln's Inn, London. We look forward to meeting you there.

The Annual General Meeting will start at 6.30 pm followed by the dinner at 7.00pm. The cost for a four-course meal plus wine is £45, with a reduced charge of £15 for current scholars and their student guests.

A vegetarian option is available if requested in advance. A cash bar will be open from 6pm.

Dress black tie or lounge suit (no medals). There will be an opportunity before dinner, to visit the Inns of Court & City and their small museum. A pay to park facility is available in Lincoln Inn Fields and the nearest underground station is Holborn.

Please let the secretary know by Monday 19th April if you will be attending the Dinner or any of the other events either using the enclosed reply slip or online.

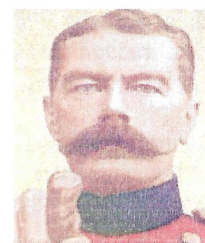
Reservations should be accompanied by a cheque made payable to the Kitchener Scholars Association.

Revising the Kitchener Scholars Association's tradition of having a summer event which, in the past, has included tea at the House of Lords and in the Bishop of Oxford's garden, the Association is pleased to announce that we will be holding a lunch at Darwin College Cambridge at the kind invitation of the College bursar. Darwin College is a post graduate, co-educational college with approximately 400 students, which stands on the river Cam. It was founded in 1964. Dr Chester White KS, who is a professor of the College and has organised the event, is looking forward to welcoming Kitchener Scholars there.

Chairman & Treasurer
Jonathan Price

Secretary
Gerry Brierley

Vice Chair
James Watson



Reply Slip.

Please tick the appropriate boxes for the events that you would like to attend or send an email to Gerry Brierley on brie@onetel.com. A prompt response is appreciated to so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

	Attending	Not Attending
AGM and Annual Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual Memorial Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remembrance Day Parade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kitchener Scholars Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tour of Darwin College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I require a vegetarian option at the Annual Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My name is.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Email.....



KITCHENER SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

Diary for 2007

Event	Location	Date	Time
AGM and Annual Dinner	Inns of Court and City Yeomanry	27th April	6.30 pm 7.00 for 7.30- pm
Annual Memorial Service	St Paul's Cathedral	3rd June	2.30 pm
Kitchener Scholars Lunch*	Darwin College Cambridge	7th July	12.30 for 1.00 pm
Remembrance Day	Kitchener Memorial Horse Guards	11th Nov	10.50 am

*Free Tour of Darwin College after Lunch