

# Prestbury Remembers


## 1918



In August 1914 Prestbury hosted a Bank Holiday Fete which was attended by more than 15,000 people.



Prestbury Fete 1902

A black and white photograph of a large crowd of young men, likely at a fair or festival. They are dressed in early 20th-century attire, including various styles of hats (flat caps, bowlers) and coats. The men are standing in rows, some looking towards the camera. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the center of the image.

Young lads flocked to the fair to enjoy the last of the summer's entertainments.









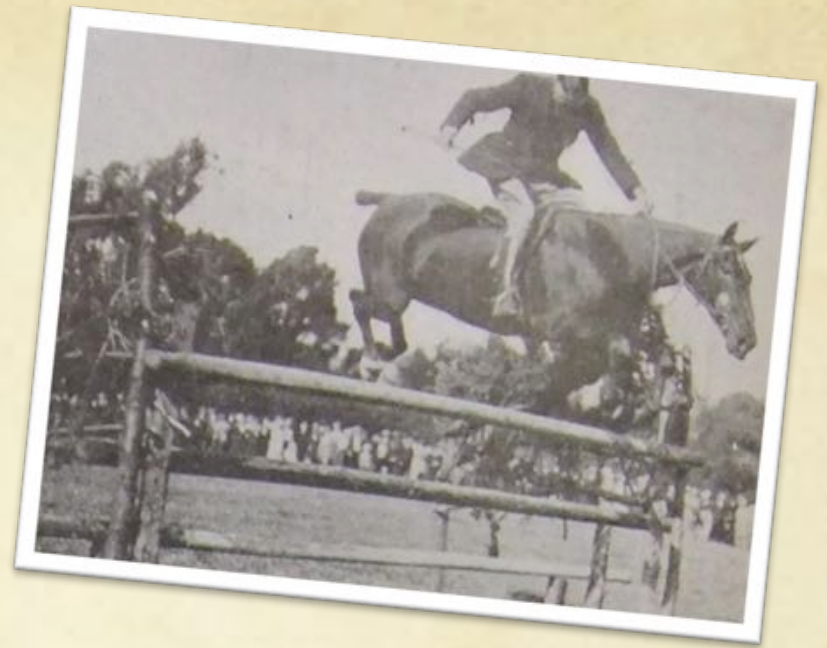
Patriotic carnival floats paraded  
from Cheltenham to Stonewall  
Fields in Prestbury



Prestbury had a strong tradition of village shows and equestrian displays



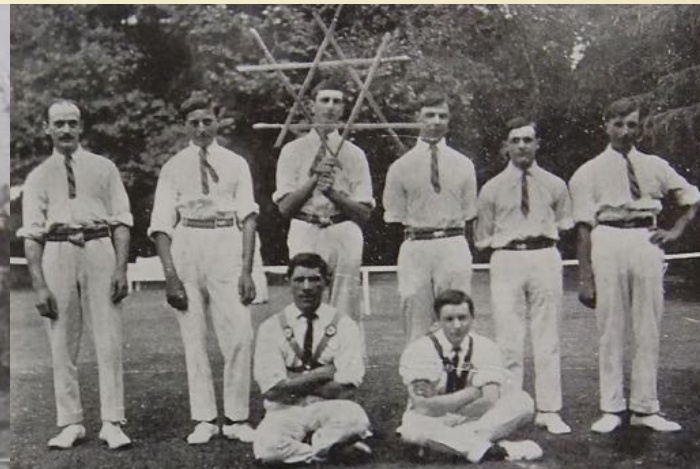





There were jumping  
trotting & driving  
displays. (Prestbury has  
even been known for  
horseback wrestling!)



The programme of events was described as “one continual round of merriment”





Within a few months many men in  
this crowd would be in uniform  
and on their way to the trenches.

**The following day  
War Was Declared.**







Propaganda  
posters started  
to appear



Enquiries were made  
about hiring St Mary's  
School for a slideshow  
to encourage local  
men to enlist.



The United Kingdom  
introduced conscription  
- **compulsory enlistment** -  
to fulltime military service  
for the first time in  
January 1916.



# The 'Derby' Scheme

After the initial wave of volunteers, men age 18 - 41 were asked to attest their willingness to serve in the Army.



Each man who registered under the scheme was given an 'armlet'.



# Training on Cleeve Hill

*The 10th 'Glosters' were billeted in Cheltenham and several Prestbury men served with this battalion.*







With their  
basic training  
complete it was  
off to the  
'Front'







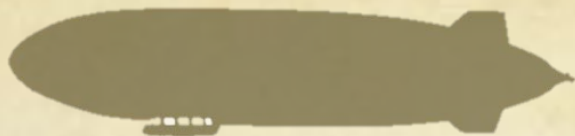
Many Prestbury families said  
their final goodbyes at  
Cheltenham railway station.

# THE HOME FRONT



*The impact of war was felt in very real ways right here in our village. It was not limited to the fighting on the front lines of some distant country.*





# PROTECTING PRESTBURY

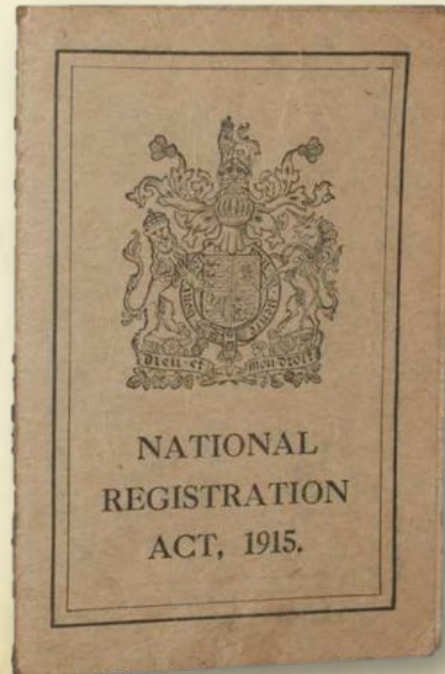
In 1916 Prestbury Parish Council discussed installing water hydrants to protect our thatched buildings from zeppelin attacks.





# National Registration

The National Registration Act 1915 provided a register of all persons between the ages of 15 and 65, who were not members of the Armed Forces. Forms were collected by volunteers and each person was issued with an identity card.



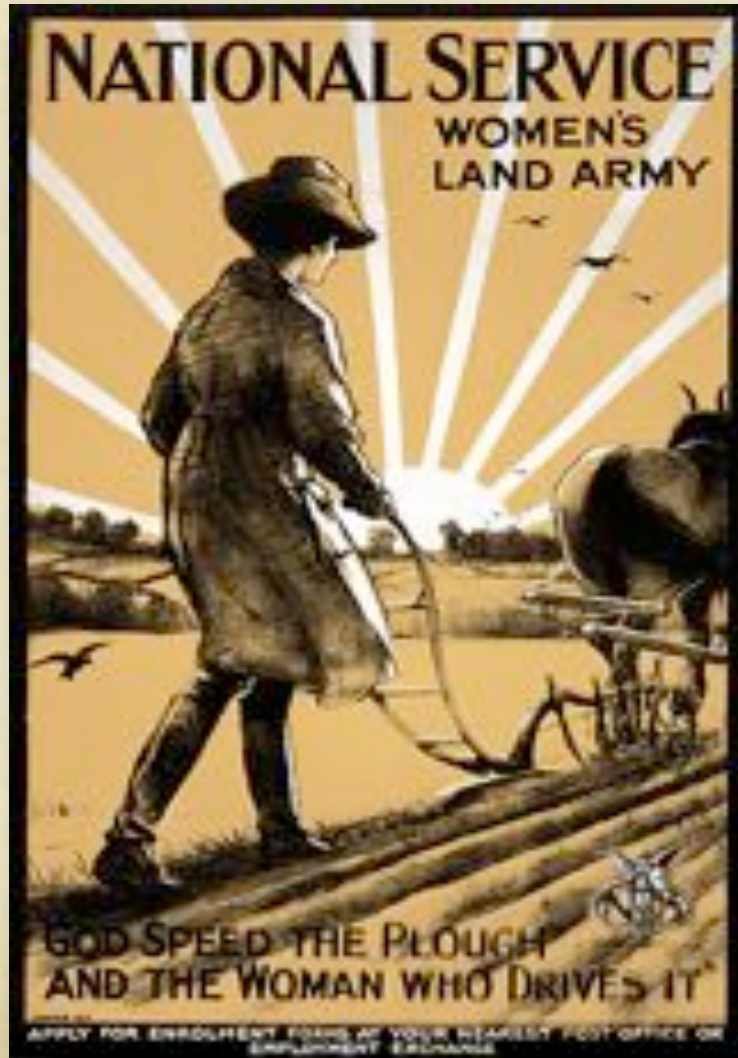


Women started to fill the gaps in the workforce and take on new roles





# Women's Land Army



In rural communities like Prestbury women would have had to help keep the farms running whilst the men were away fighting.







Gloucestershire women showed great courage and determination, learning new skills and doing manual work.

Polish & German prisoners of war were also sent to work on local farms like Church Farm in Prestbury.





# Rationing Introduced

F.E. 12

## THE RATIONS.

1. The position of the Food supply is such that the **UTMOST ECONOMY IN THE USE OF ALL KINDS OF FOOD** must be observed by all classes and by all persons.

2. In particular it is necessary that the strictest economy should be practised in the use of the staple foods: *bread, flour and other cereals; meat; butter, margarine and lard; and sugar.*

3. The weekly rations of these staple foods, which are stated in the following table for different classes of adults according to their sex and occupation, should on no account be exceeded.

4. Children should receive their reasonable rations of these foods.

Their individual needs differ so greatly that no definite ration is laid down for them.

### ADULT RATIONS PER HEAD PER WEEK.

Class.	Bread.		Other cereals.	Meat.		Butter, Margarine, Lard, Oils and Fats.	Sugar.
	lb.	oz.		lb.	oz.		
<b>MEN.</b>							
1. Men on very heavy industrial work or on agricultural work.	8	0	12	2	0	10	8
2. Men on ordinary industrial or other manual work.	7	0					
3. Men unoccupied or on sedentary work.	4	8					
<b>WOMEN.</b>							
4. Women on heavy industrial work or on agricultural work.	5	0					
5. Women on ordinary industrial work or in domestic service.	4	0					
6. Women unoccupied or on sedentary work.	3	8					

(B 11275) WL — 8559 950H 11/12 H & S [P.T.O.]

**Rationing** was introduced for the first time in 1918 due to food shortages. **Food prices went up** dramatically and coal for cooking was also in short supply.



*It would have been challenging for women to feed their families.*



# Spare Bread & Win the War!

Attacks on British ships meant less food could get through and 'hedgerow' alternatives became popular like dandelion root coffee.



# Make Your Money Fight for You!

Those who couldn't carry arms were encouraged to support the war financially



1. Because it is every man's duty to do so.

2. Because you will be helping your country to win the war.

3. Because it is one way in which you can fight.

If you were young and strong, and free from responsibilities, you would carry arms; but if you cannot fight for your country you can make your money fight for you.





# Fundraising & Donations

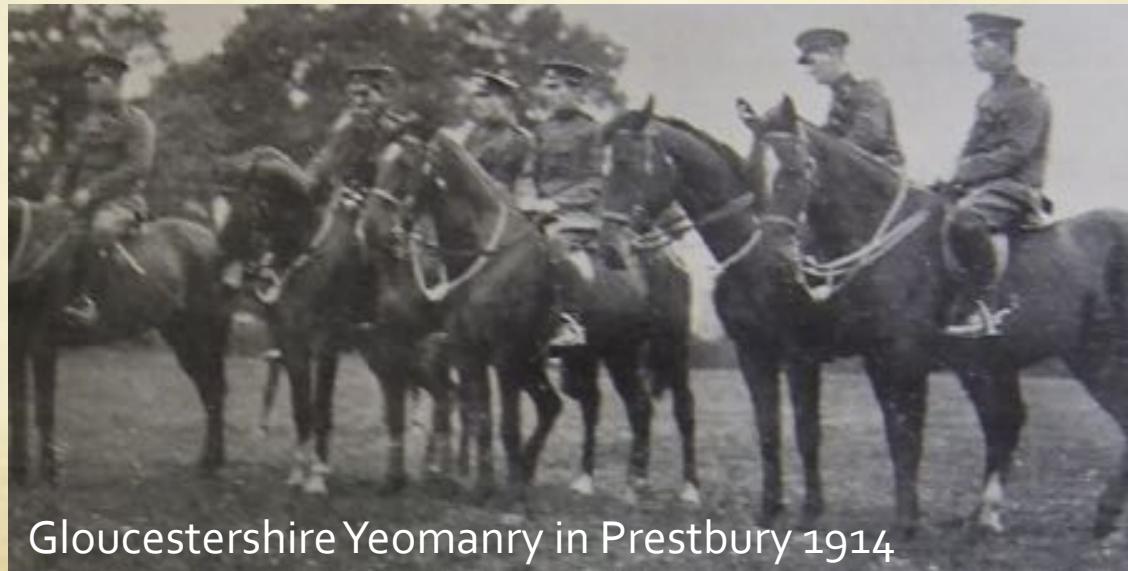
Despite it being challenging times there were regular fundraising events for the war effort. Upper class women and the older generations were especially active in this way.



*Everyone had to make sacrifices and share what little they had.*

# THE REAL WARHORSES

In 1916 more than 200 Canadian horses were brought to Prestbury to be broken in by the Army Service Corps Remounts.



Gloucestershire Yeomanry in Prestbury 1914





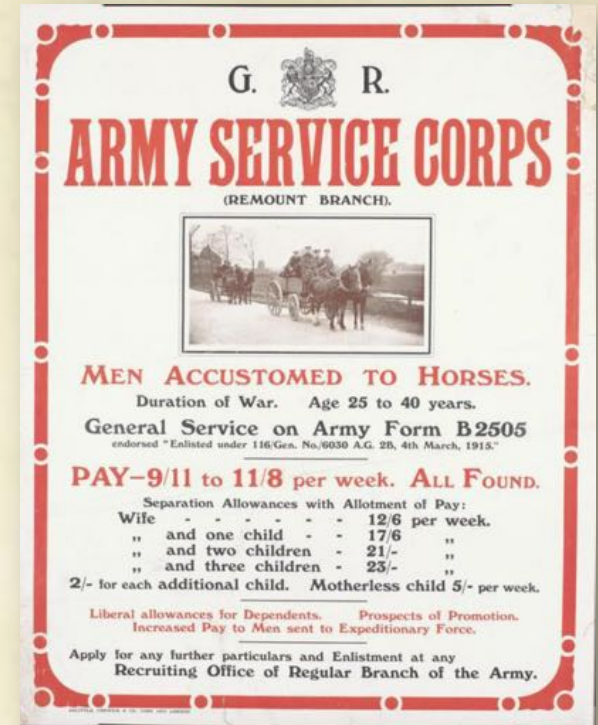
# PRESTBURY'S REMOUNTS

Frederick  
Parker was 39  
when he  
signed up to  
join the  
remounts.



Photo provided by Matthew Parker

*Frederick*



© IWM (Art.IWM PST 7821)

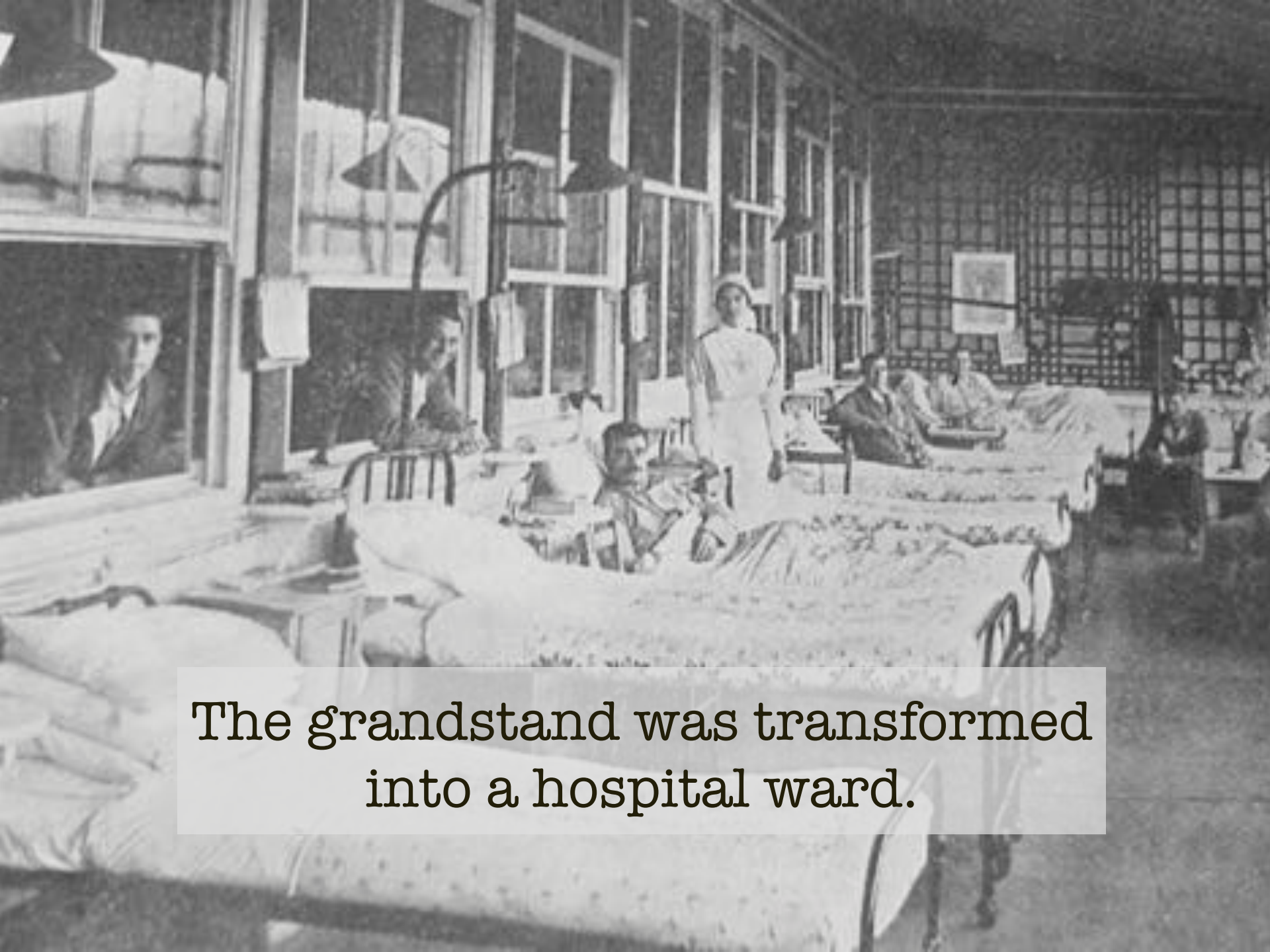
*The Parker family were experienced  
horsemen and Frederick's father had  
been groom to the Archers.*

# Racecourse VAD Hospital

The Voluntary Aid Detachment took over the grandstand at Prestbury Park in 1914. They opened with 13 Belgian and 2 British patients.







The grandstand was transformed into a hospital ward.

# Muddling Through

Despite being one of the largest VAD Hospitals in Cheltenham, for the first 6 months staff and volunteers had to make do without electricity or hot water, and relied on oil lamps for lighting.







Wounded men from  
regiments around the UK  
were sent to Prestbury.

Soldiers, sailors and airmen  
recuperated together with  
the Belgian, Canadian and  
Australian patients.



## A black and white photograph of a group of approximately 15 people, likely a military unit or medical staff, posing in front of a building. Several individuals are wearing uniforms with a cross emblem, suggesting they are medical personnel or nurses. The photo is tilted and has a white border.







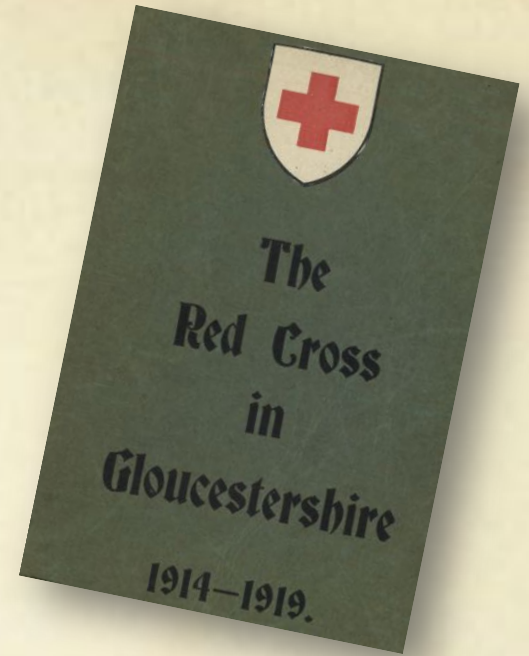
Eggs were an important part of the hospital diet, so they kept chickens. Commandant Miss Ratcliffe can be seen feeding them.



Hospital gate keeper Charles Coward didn't take a day off in 4 years!

Local Prestbury scouts helped to maintain the hospital vegetable garden

# Dedicated Nurses



Out of the 3,169 patients admitted, there were only 18 deaths. Nurses Kate Peters and Bridget Hands were both awarded OBEs for their nursing.





# + Some of Prestbury's Wounded

*We know of several Prestbury men who were reported wounded. There would have been many more unreported.*



**DRIVER C. CAMDEN,**  
A.S.C., invalided from France  
on Jan. 9th, and now in Salop  
Infirmary, Shrewsbury. Third  
son of the late Mr. C. Camden,  
late of The Burgage, Prest-  
bury.



**PTE ERNEST COOKE,**  
Gloucester Regiment, gassed in  
action on Oct. 4, 1917, and  
now lying in St. Luke's War  
Hospital, Halifax, Yorkshire,  
aged 19. He is the youngest  
son of Mr. E. Cooke, of The  
Burgage, Prestbury, near  
Cheltenham. Two other sons  
have been killed in this war.



**RIFLEMAN C. DOWSE,**  
Rifle Brigade, twice returned  
wounded from France, and  
now lying in South Devon Hos-  
pital, suffering from shrapnel  
wounds. Grandson of Mrs.  
Charman, Mansion Cottage,  
Prestbury.

# + Some of Prestbury's Wounded

*Some spent time in VAD hospitals and others would have had to adapt to life changing injuries.*



**SGT. ROWLAND GREGORY,**  
10th Glo'ster Regiment, wounded  
badly in leg and arm by  
shrapnel in action on Sept. 25  
during the big advance in  
France, and now in General  
Infirmary, Bolton, Lancs. He  
is a son of Mr. F. H.  
Gregory, Rate Collector, Prest-  
bury.



**SERGEANT B. W. TAYLOR,**  
3rd King's Own Hussars,  
wounded in hand, May 26th,  
and since then mentioned in  
despatches. Son of Mrs. Dod-  
well, Cheltenham, and hus-  
band of Mrs. Taylor, Cotswold  
View, Prestbury.



Frank  
Dowdeswell



# NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers were the main source of  
'war news' for people back in Prestbury

## The Gloucestershire Echo, CHELTENHAM LOOKER-ON.

A Note-Book of the Sayings and Doings of Social, Political, and Fashionable Life.

## Cheltenham Chronicle

Although heavily censored,  
the human cost of war started  
to filter home ...





## First Prestbury man to be reported wounded

PRIVATE [ERNEST] W. MUSTO,  
1st Gloucester Regiment (and  
of Novertton-lane, Prestbury),  
wounded in Belgium. He was  
blown off a wagon by a shell,  
the driver and four other men  
being killed.

*Ernest*

NOVERTON LANE





# First British Naval defeat since 1812

Frederick Surman was the first man from Prestbury to be killed during WW1. He was barely 18 when HMS Monmouth was sunk with the loss of the whole crew, off the coast of Chile during the battle of Coronel in November 1914.



*Frederick*

NOVERTON LANE

**THE WAR.  
NAVAL DISASTER.**



**“DON'T GRIEVE FOR ME.”**

**PRESTBURY GRENADEER'S MESSAGE.**



*"If I am killed, don't grieve  
for me, for I shall die for my  
King and Country"*

Frederick Sansom died of  
wounds sustained at the  
battle of Loos in 1915.



BOUNCERS LANE

*Frederick*



AND SO THIS CONTINUED  
for 4 more years...

REPORTS OF BATTLES<  
CASUALTIES< MISSING IN  
ACTION< WOUNDED<  
TAKEN PRISONER

# PRESTBURY PIONEERS



## OTHERS MADE NATIONAL NEWS

*Brave men from Prestbury were some of the first to be involved with the use of new and dangerous technology.*



# CHURCHILL'S SECRET SUBMARINES



Walter 'Luke' Landale was one of the officers on board the ill fated submarine E18

A young Churchill sent the submarines to patrol the coast of Estonia and try and disrupt shipments of German iron ore.



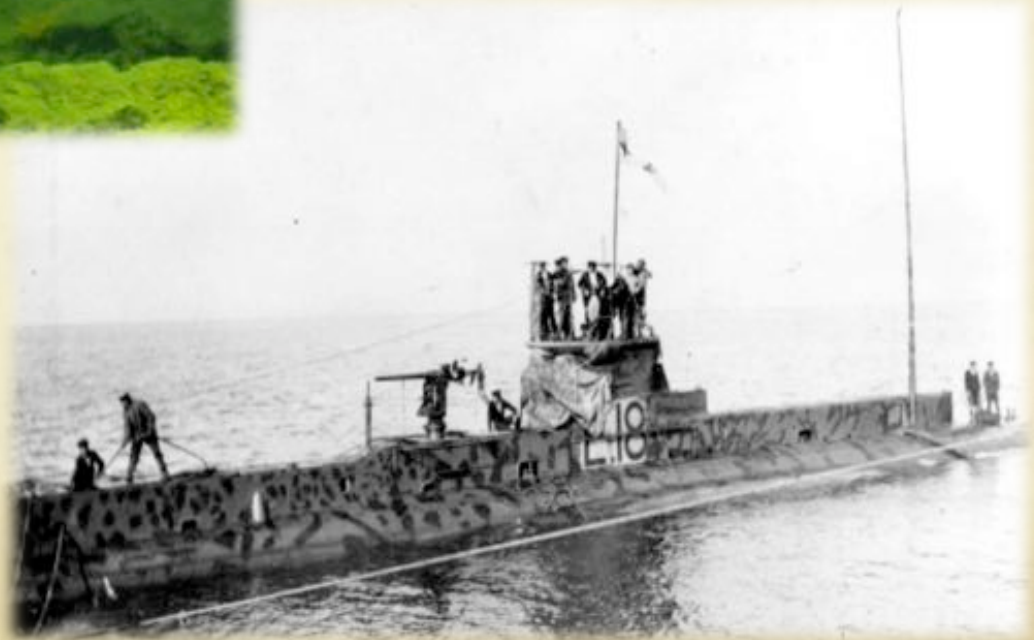
*Luke*

THE HAYES

*E18 vanished off the coast of Reval (Tallinn)  
Estonia in 1916 with the loss of her whole crew.*



Her wreck was  
finally discovered  
in 2009.

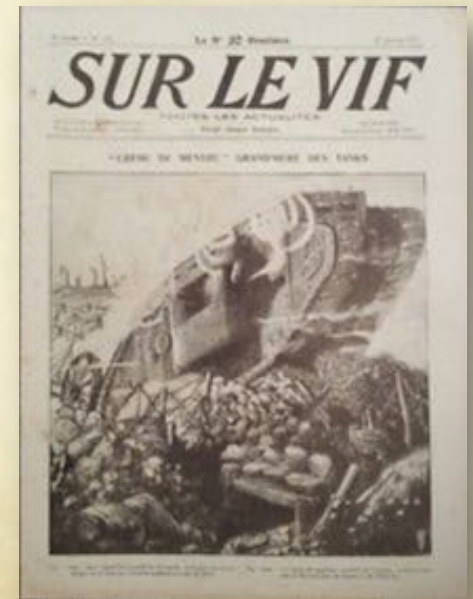


# FIRST TANK COMMANDER



Arthur McCulloch Inglis  
was the first man in  
history to lead tanks into  
battle in 1916

His Mark I tank  
nicknamed  
*Crème de Menthe*  
made front page  
news in several  
countries.



*Arthur*

NEW BARN LANE



*"Crème de Menthe is walking down the high street of Flers with the British Army cheering behind it"*

Arthur was instrumental at the battle of Flers-Courcelette and earned a Distinguished Service Order (DSO).



Arthur died of illness  
(contracted during  
war service) at a  
nursing home in  
Cheltenham in 1918  
and is buried in St  
Mary's Churchyard

There are 5 war  
graves at St Mary's



**Arthur Grace Louis** was a retired horse dealer who lived at Hygeia House. He served with the Army Medical Corps. He left a widow Caroline.



*Arthur's medal & AMC badge*



*Arthur* 

HIGH STREET



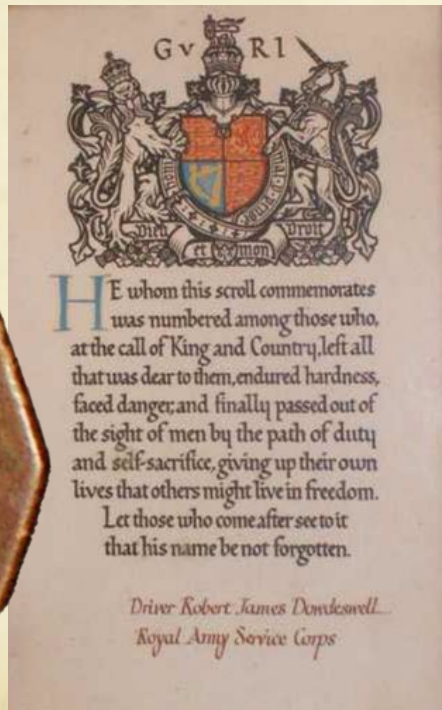
**Arthur Vincent Holman** also served in the Boer war and his home was in All Saint's Road. He left a widow, Elsie.



*Arthur*



**'Bob' James Dowdeswell**  
was a driver in the Army  
Service Corps. His home  
was in Shaw Green Lane.



*Robert* 

SHAW GREEN LANE

*Bob's dog tag and memorial scroll*

**Jesse George Webber**  
lived at 15 Guestriss  
Cottages. It's believed he  
worked as a farm labourer.  
He had five children.

Sadly his wife Fanny also  
passed away in 1921 and  
was interred in the same  
grave.

SWINDON LANE



*Jesse*





# Weddings, Worship & War Graves



# Wartime Vicar

The **Rev Henry Urling Smith** was vicar from 1891 until his death in 1919.

He witnessed local men going off to war and supported the community as news came home of the wounded, and for several families the death of their father, husband or son.







# Ring out the Bells!

Painter and decorator **Daniel Davis** rang the new year in for more than 50 years. The bells fell silent during the war but he lived just long enough to hear them ring out once more in peace time.



# Wartime Weddings

Wartime weddings were commonplace and a source of excitement for local residents in difficult times.



*Wedding of Rosa Parker*

# Prestbury Vicars

From 1919 the vicar at St Mary's **was Rev J Baghot De la Bere** who had served as an Army Chaplain 1915-19 in the Dardanelles, Egypt and Palestine.

In 1915 there was a new young pastor at the Prestbury Congregational Church **Rev. J Cleaver James.**



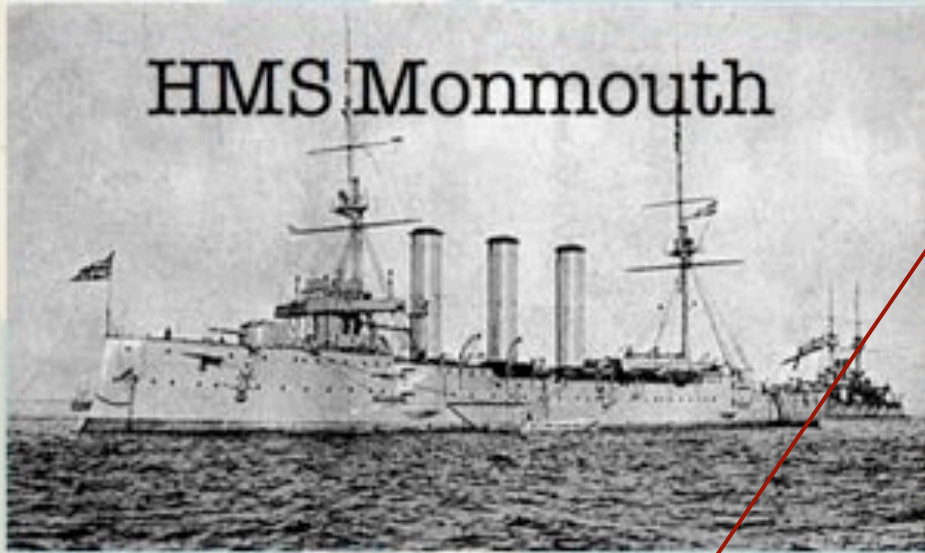


# It really was a WORLD WAR



Prestbury men fought  
and died all over the  
world alongside  
comrades from allied  
countries and the  
Commonwealth.

HMS Monmouth



7,180 miles  
from  
Prestbury

Chile



Argentina

Brazil

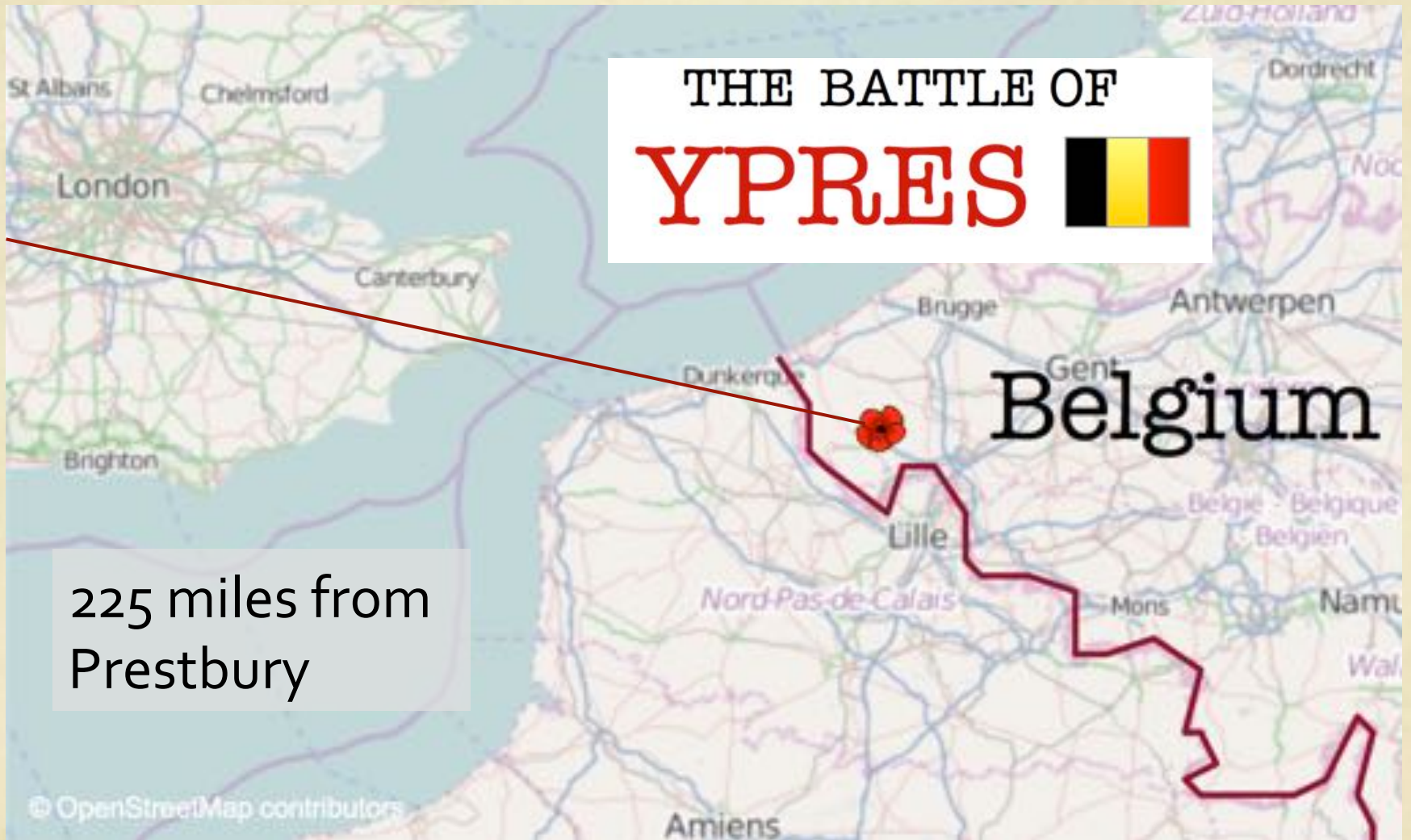
THE BATTLE OF  
**CORONEL**





# THE BATTLE OF YPRES

225 miles from  
Prestbury

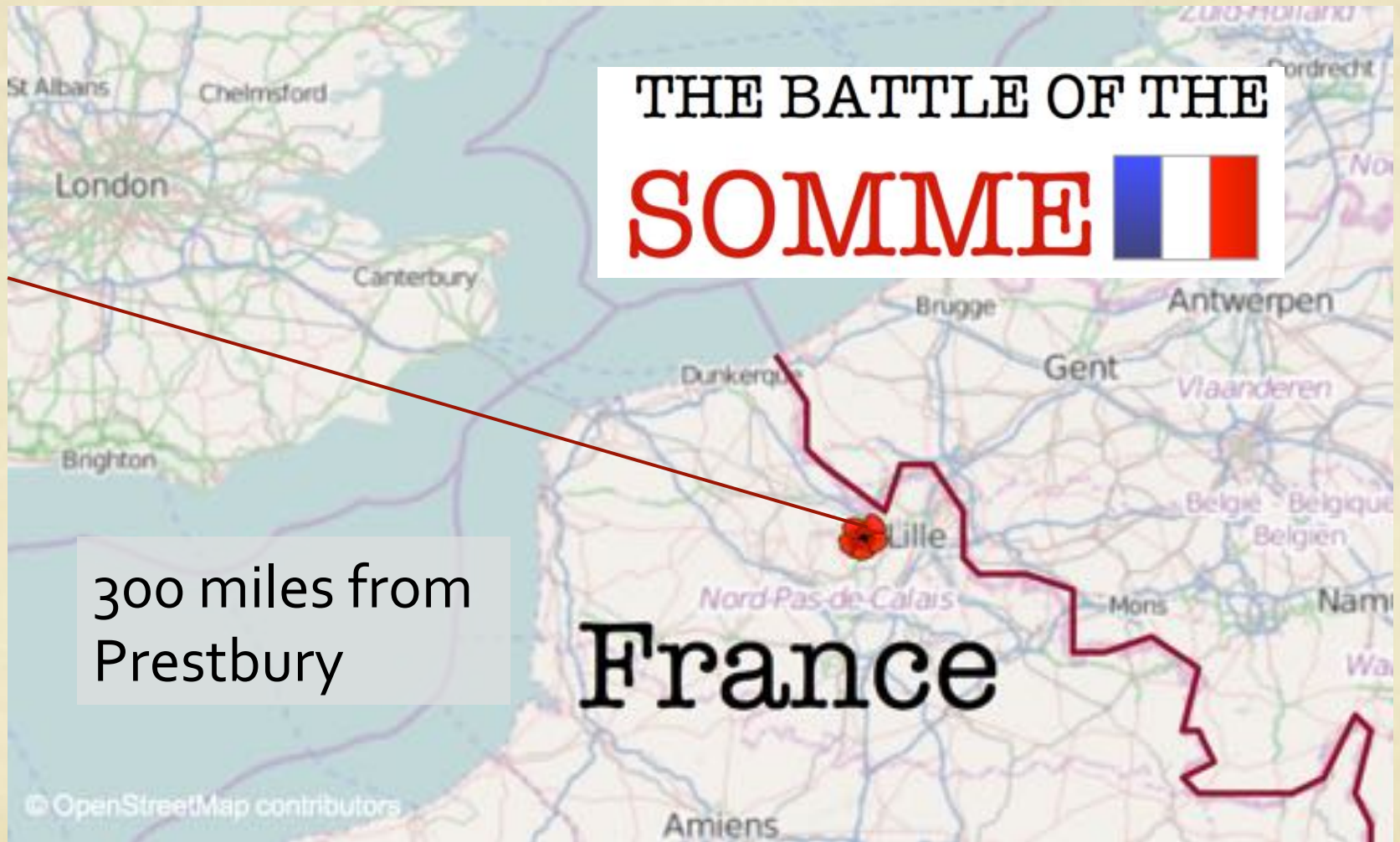


# THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME



300 miles from  
Prestbury

France





# THE BATTLE OF GALLIPOLI



1,550 miles  
from Prestbury



Turkey



HMS E18



Estonia



1,155 miles  
from Prestbury

# Other countries Prestbury men were posted to.

544 miles to prisoners of war in **Germany**

1,413 miles to **Salonika**

2,314 miles to **Palestine**

2,387 miles to **Egypt**

2,584 miles to **Mesopotamia**



There are Australian and Canadian war graves at the cemetery in Bouncers Lane.



**FUNERAL OF AN AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER AT CHELTENHAM CEMETERY.**

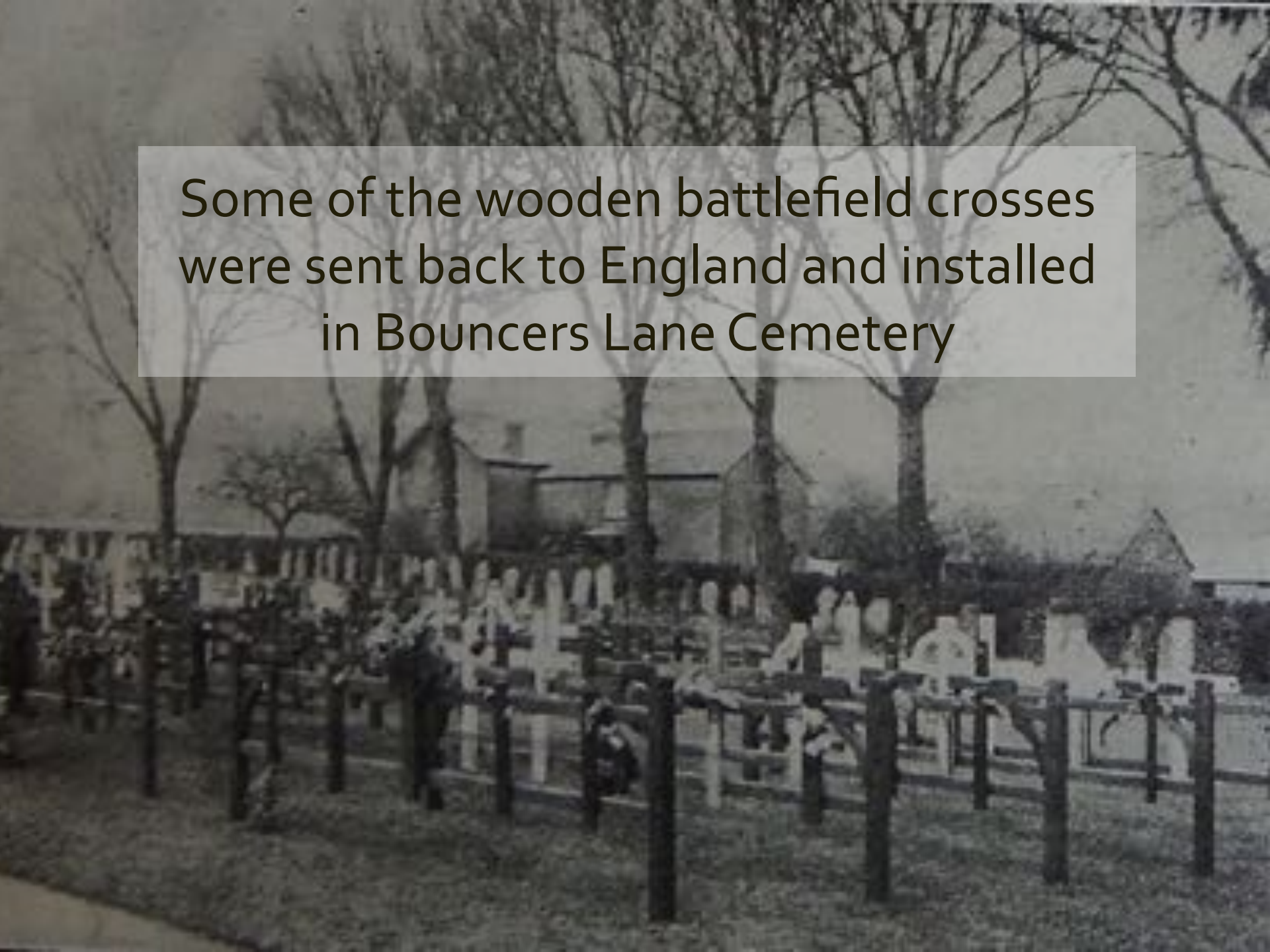
PTE. ALBERT CALLAGHAN, OF N.S.W., AUSTRALIA, DIED AT SUFFOLK HALL, CHELTENHAM, ON APRIL 24, FROM GAS POISONING AT THE FRONT. SCENES AT HIS FUNERAL ON MONDAY, APRIL 29.



Most of the men listed on our village war memorial are buried or commemorated in military cemeteries around the globe...



Some of the wooden battlefield crosses  
were sent back to England and installed  
in Bouncers Lane Cemetery



Men were captured and sent to Prisoner of War camps in Germany and Poland.



We know of at  
least two  
Prestbury  
prisoners of  
war.

Ernest Pass  
later died of  
illness caused  
by his time as a  
POW.





Canadian, American, Australian and Belgian servicemen could be found around the local area and many were nursed in our local VAD hospitals.



*Cheltenham even celebrated American Independence Day in 1918.*

# EMIGRATION



Several Prestbury men had emigrated to countries like **Canada** and **New Zealand** before the war. As a result some fought with the Canadian forces.

*The men pictured above include the sons of Prestbury post master Mr Sumption and Prestbury baker Mr Robinson*



# LETTERS HOME

Letters and parcels from home were a huge source of comfort to those on active service miles away from Prestbury.





# Dear Mother...

Some families had sons posted in different continents and had to send their letters to countries they could barely recognise on a map.



# PRESTBURY POST OFFICE



Families back in Prestbury would have anxiously awaited a letter from their loved ones to let them know that they were safe and well.

*George Sumption was Post Master in Prestbury until his death in 1916.*

# A Double Tragedy

John Sumption was wounded in 1916 (shortly after his father's death) and his wife Bessie went to France to nurse him. He sadly passed away the same year in 1916.



*John*





Some of the letters from  
**'Bob' Dowdeswell** to his  
sister Win still survive. This  
one was affectionately  
signed *'Your ever loving  
brother Bob'*.

*Loveing Brother Bob*



Bob sadly died in 1916.

Shew Green  
Prestbury

Dear Win

Just a few lines to  
let you know am still  
alive and kicking. Am going  
back Tuesday morning.  
Hope you are enjoying  
yourself along with Sam.  
The Pigeons are going on  
alright have kept the  
Birds of your Pen.



Other items  
belonging to Bob and  
his brother Frank give  
a fascinating snap  
shot into the kind of  
souvenirs and letters  
people would have  
sent back to  
Prestbury.



*Frank* +



# Brothers in Arms

The war took a heavy toll on some local families.



*Ernest*



The Parker  
Brothers,  
Darkes Farm

NOVERTON



*Frank*







## The Cooke Brothers

THE BURGAGE



Henry



William



Ernest



In November 1918  
the Armistice  
agreement was  
signed.







Finally  
bringing  
an end to  
the  
fighting

**OUR BOYS--**  
**GOD BLESS THEM !**  
WE REJOICE IN THE  
NEWS OF PEACE.  
THE BOYS ARE COMING  
HOME!

"Ring out, ye Bells,—  
Ring out the Old,  
Ring in the New,  
Ring out the False,  
Ring in the True."

**HOME !**

BACK TO OLD ENGLAND !  
BACK TO CHELTENHAM !

Our Streets Will Soon Ring  
With the Tramp of Feet !

GIVE THEM A ROYAL  
WELCOME !

Build a Memorial to the Noble  
Dead !

Provide for the Widow and  
Fatherless.

Cheer the lot of Blinded and  
Broken Men.

Let even Business Go and  
Give the Boys the First  
Place.





People from  
different  
nations and  
services  
celebrated  
together





Soldiers started to return home after 1918 but many had to wait several long months to be demobilised





Crowds of wives, parents and children flocked to local railway stations to greet their loved ones..



# PRESTBURY HOUSES

## Preference Urged For Ex-Servicemen

# WELCOME HOME

A welcome home committee was arranged and each returning serviceman from Prestbury was given a certificate of thanks from the village.



“On behalf of the parish of  
Prestbury. We offer you a warm  
welcome on your return home,  
from Active Service, and gratefully  
thank you for your faithful service  
to your King and Country, in the  
Great War of 1914-1918.

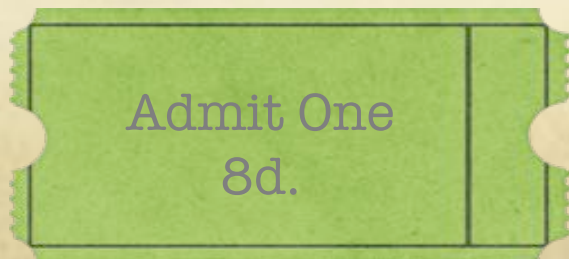
We trust that many years of  
happiness are in store for you,  
and that you may long enjoy with  
us the blessings of a Peace which  
we hope may never be broken,  
which our brave Sailors and  
Soldiers have done and sacrificed  
so much to secure.”





## 1919 Peace Fete

Just as the war had begun with a fete, it ended with one too. A huge three-day Peace Fete was held in Pittville Park.



It seems appropriate that we are marking the centenary of the Armistice in the same way.







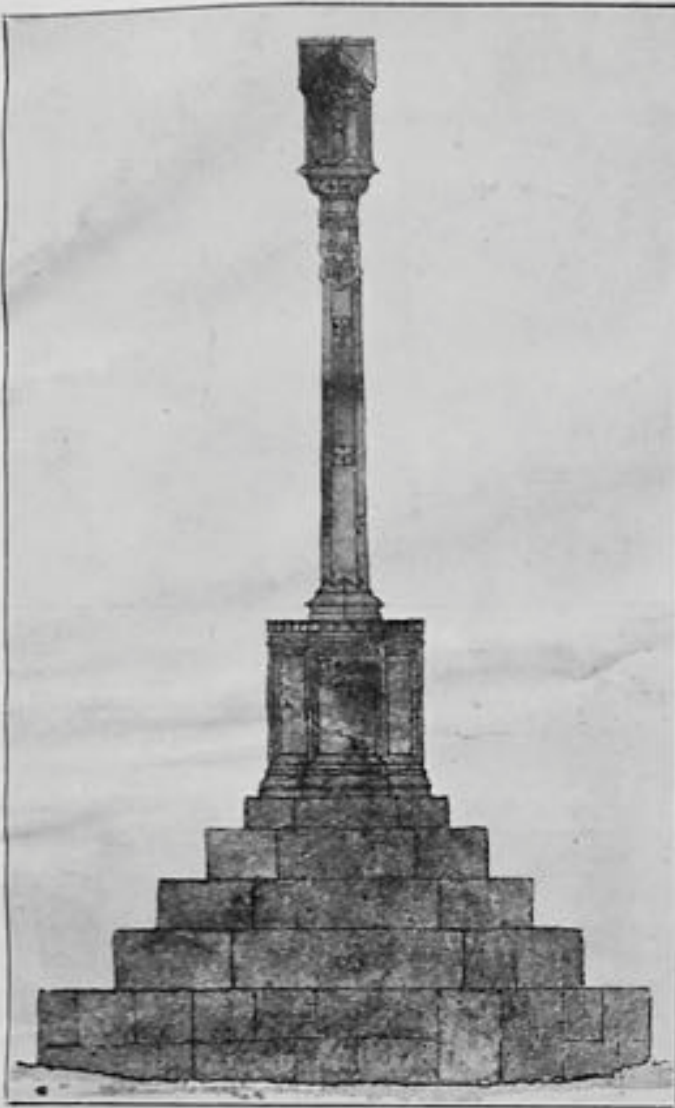
Racing returned to Prestbury Park in 1919





Designs were made  
for a war memorial.

Local architect  
John Coates Carter  
(a resident of Prestbury)  
designed the memorial,  
which was built by local  
masons R. L. Boulton  
using stone donated by  
Major Christopher Capel.



**Prestbury War Memorial.**

The Prestbury War Memorial, which is being erected in stone by Messrs. R. L. Boulton and Sons, sculptors, of Bath-road, Cheltenham, to the design of Mr. J. Coates Carter, architect, of Prestbury. It is to be erected on a site in the centre of the village. The names of fallen soldiers will be cut on the base.



Prestbury War Memorial was unveiled by the Bishop of Gloucester in 1921.

Following an act of mindless vandalism it was rededicated in 2012 after restoration by Meister Masonry

# Other Commemorations



An beautifully engraved Roll of Honour was added to St Mary's Church.

Several Prestbury men are remembered on other memorials in the area. Others are still not commemorated.



# Prestbury Roll of Honour

Laurence William Newberry Boschetti

Cyril Stanley Geoffrey Stevens

Sidney Davis

Robert James Dowdeswell

Frank Ratcliffe

Reginald Edward Guise

Lionel Bruce Maby

Ernest Jonah Pass

Dennis William Diston

Jesse George Webber

Frederick George Spencer

Arthur Grace Louis

Basil St Meryn Cardew

George Mayall

Aubrey Causton Strachan

Alexander Falkland Gulland

Guy Frederick Beckham Handley

Albert E Davis



Brothers Henry George Cooke  
& William Joseph Cooke





Percival Thomas Fildes



Raymond William Eggleton





William Melville Goodall



Albert Edwin Gibbins



Francis Arthur Hann



William Grogan



John 'Jack' Thomas James



Arthur Vincent Holman





Walter 'Luke' Landale



Noel Graham Lake





Brothers Ernest Jack Parker  
& Frank Leslie Parker





George Frederick Parker

Robert Pockett







Edward Robinson

Edgar Robinson



Frederick John Sansom



George Ernest Robinson





Frederick Thomas Surman



George Ernest Robinson





George Edward Turner



George Swann

Sidney Willis



Percy John Tustin





Arthur McCulloch Inglis



Walter Wilfred Winstone







Cyril John Baghot de la Bere

Basil Hanks





# Credits

Research & production by Rebecca Sillence

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[www.showofhands.co.uk](http://www.showofhands.co.uk) for permission to use recordings from their *Centenary* album.
- Cheltenham Local & Family History Library, Imperial War Museum, CWGC, National Library of France, State Library of South Australia, Oxford University WW1 poetry digital archive & Matthew Parkers for use of images.
- With thanks to David Drinkwater for his extensive and very helpful WW1 indexing projects. Joe Deveraux & Graham Sacker for their invaluable book *Leaving all that was Dear*





# Soundtrack created by Rebecca Sillence

With thanks to all the amazing Foley (sound effect) artists who have made their recordings available under a Creative Commons License at [www.freesound.org](http://www.freesound.org) :

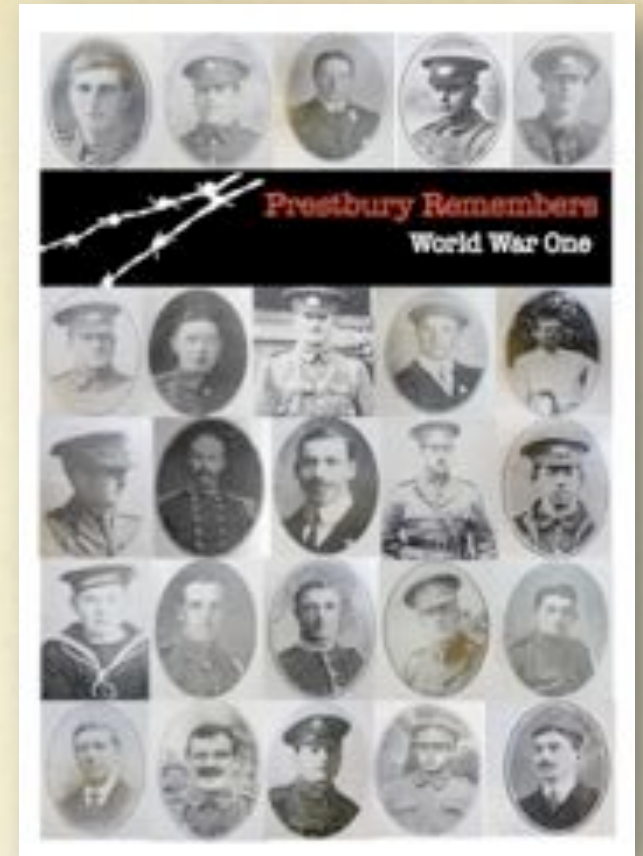
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Thanks also to my long suffering husband Richard for listening to this a million times and reluctantly being the voice of Frederick!



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