



July 2022

## TADS Newsletter

Website - [www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)

**Next Meeting - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July at 8 pm, at  
St. Paul's Church, The Green, Tadley.**

### **‘Twyford Waterworks’**

**By Matthew Feldwick**

Twyford Waterworks is an Edwardian pumping station containing a unique selection of buildings and machinery 2.5 miles South of Winchester. The site was given the status of a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1973 and in 1985 the Twyford Waterworks Trust was incorporated as a charity to run it. The Trust obtained a lease for the redundant parts of the site in 1992. With the privatisation of the water supply industry, the works passed to Southern Water Services, who are the present owners of the site and who still extract 5 million gallons (25 megalitres) from the original boreholes.

Although built and extended over 30 years, the main buildings present a coherent set of high-quality public works buildings of the early twentieth century when authorities took pride their public façade.

*(Everybody welcome - visitors £3.00)*

If you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter please email Richard Brown or notify Carol Stevens or a Committee member.

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,  
e-mail: [richard@ilexind.plus.com](mailto:richard@ilexind.plus.com) or Carol Stevens (0118) 9701578*

**[www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)**

**Future TADS talks: August - no meeting.**

**21<sup>st</sup> September - The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.**

**by Richard Anderson**

**TADS Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**From Belgium to Basingstoke - World War 1 Medical Services**

**by TADS Project Group**

Our very own home-grown TADS' Project Group inspired and produced this month's talk, strands of which were unique to Tadley and Basingstoke. Included were some WWI artefacts belonging to TADS member, Anne Bradley's late father-in-law. Members of the Project Group were Carol Stevens, Richard Brown (who had a photo of his grandmother as a WWI nurse and lone-licensee of the local Queen's College Arms pub. Her husband was teetotal and didn't really approve!); Peter McNulty also spoke and Neil Forde was the projectionist. Ian Burn was holed-up in Skye because of Covid complications....

The talk concerned WWI's Western Front only. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we are aware of air ambulances and rapid response to war injuries (& civilian injuries). Only a short time ago horses and primitive petrol ambulances were used, which were often slow and nearly shook the living daylight out of the patients – but overcrowded and with bunk beds 3 high. Later X-rays became do-able also, with mobile X-ray units improving soldiers' survival. Considerations were given to pre-WWI and 1914 medical services, the casualty evacuation chain; local wartime medical services; and conclusions.

The Battle of Waterloo, 1815, was really bayonets and bashing; 1854's Crimean War involved big guns, a Russian doctor developed plaster casts; Florence Nightingale with her lamp and highly trained and sober nurses and a mention of the nurse of colour, Mary Seacole.

In the American Civil War 1864-6 great medical strides were made as warfare became more mechanised with the advent of the Gatling gun.

The 1899 South African Boer War saw things much better organised with 22,000 troops treated. Mahatma Ghandi was a volunteer medical helper.

WWI's British Military Structure was different from that of Continental armies and doctors. General Sir Alfred Keogh, 1857-1936, reformed our military medical services and was very aware of good hygiene. The Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) seconded civilian doctors to the army and they and Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) Nurses worked in field hospitals alongside the professionals.

At first there was snobbish friction between the volunteer and paid nurses, who of course treated British soldier and Allies and Germans too. Ghastly though war is medics always rise to the occasion and make massive contributions.

WWI armaments were big and more sophisticated and soldiers suffered greatly, from problems including: trench foot (from continually wet feet and with long term repercussions); trench fever; and infestations of itchy lice. The artillery and machine gun wounds often involved heads and legs, sometimes requiring amputations of the latter. Field hospitals were moved nearer to The Front because patients were bleeding to death, drowning in rain, snow or mud-filled trenches or dying of shock. Or a combination of all of the above.....

Advanced Dressing Stations – for interim treatment had 6-horse/motor/converted farm wagon ambulances parked nearby and the new female ambulance drivers. Common-place now, but radical 100 years ago.

Our lecturers said that this war involved a massive amount of patients, which couldn't always be coped with (strikes me post-covid nothing's changed....)

The Times newspaper raised money for ambulances, which also had to be serviced and maintained. AND many men couldn't drive in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, so often chauffeurs came with the package. Surprisingly cloth caps were favoured at first by chauffeurs but they soon sensibly progressed to tin helmets. Two posh lady drivers were known as 'The Madonnas of Pervyse'. One later married an impressed aristocrat!

Michael Morpurgo's film, 'War Horse' gives a vivid description of the mud, blood and thunder of WWI. We were told that tented nurses' quarters and Casualty Clearing Stations were often grouped in twos and out of range of enemy artillery.

General Keogh also urged ambulance train numbers to increase and speed up so patients would then be transported more comfortably to Blighty.

At times transport moved at 10 m.p.h., was triple-decked, overloaded, with some men even lying on straw on the floor. Many trains would have a pharmacy and an operating theatre on board. Obviously, but sadly, the enemy would try to target ambulance trains – which may even have had a few of their own men on board....

Our own Anne Bradley's Father-in-law was in the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU) and served on Ambulance Train No. 17 which was funded by United Kingdom Flour Millers at a cost of £17,500: that's £2million in today's money. Base Hospitals were often requisitioned seaside hotels or casinos; also many stately homes became hospitals.

In France ambulance barges plied the canals. On the busiest day of the war, 6,174 men arrived at Southampton by ships.

The RAMC had specialist medics for gassed soldiers. Some were returned to the UK and treated in establishments near the South Coast: Netley Hospital near Southampton was once the largest hospital in the World. (It was once used for Channel Island patients.) Reading's Battle Hospital was No 1 of 6 Reading hospitals, Basildon House was a convalescent hospital. Park Prewett, Basingstoke (now Parklands) was quickly adapted from a partially-built psychiatric to be a general hospital operated by the Canadians. It was named 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hospital and had its own railway link to the main line. West Ham House Hospital, just west of Basingstoke town centre, was where Richard Brown's grandmother was a nurse (and ran the Queen's College Arms pub as stated earlier). Quite some lady! Englefield's Mrs. Benyon was made a Dame for running her House as an Auxillary Hospital. Endell Street Military Hospital in London was run as an all-woman establishment by Suffragists. They were highly thought of and did some 20 ops per day.

Our Project Group concluded that many medical advances were made because of WWI; and the attitude to Shell Shock (now Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) softened. 80% of broken leg soldiers had formerly died; blood transfusions became viable by 1917, X-rays were do-able also, with mobile X-ray units improving soldiers' chances of survival. Of the 2,272,998 wounded soldiers of WWI, 64% returned to duty, 8% were invalided out and 7% died of their wounds.

In 1918 the RAMC was greater in size than the British Expeditionary Force of 1914. It had 13,000 officers and 154,000 other ranks, who were recognised as British and Best!

Thank you Carol, Neil, Richard, Peter and Ian for all your incredible and hard work in researching all of this and for all the GOOD THINGS that emerged from the dreadful war. I learned lots from this talk.

Rosemary Bond.

## Notes

*Some of you said you were sorry to be missing this talk. We have agreed that I can make the script of the talk available to members as a PDF. Each photograph used is shown at a reduced size above its descriptive text. - Richard*

### ***Blighty - Why do they call it Blighty?***

*"Blighty" was first used in India in the 1800's, and meant an English or British visitor. It's thought to have derived from the Urdu word "vilāyatī" which meant foreign. The term then gained popularity during trench warfare in World War 1, where "Blighty" was used affectionately to refer to Britain. The term was also used for a wound which was sufficiently serious to merit a soldier being shipped home to Britain.*



## **The Reverend Mrs Pat Brown**

I am sorry to report that Pat passed away last month. Although she was never a member of TADS, she was the widow of our late President, Bob Brown. She was very well known in the Tadley area as a member of the Parish Clergy Team and was also the Chaplin to St. Michael's Hospice.

The funeral has been arranged for Tuesday 26 July at 11am at St Paul's Church, then at Tadley Cemetery.

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## **The Rev Richard Harlow**

After 9 years as Rector of Tadley with Pamber Heath and Silchester as well as Area Dean of Basingstoke, Richard and his wife Kayla are leaving Tadley at the beginning of August as Richard has been appointed as Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech in the Diocese of Ely.

We wish them well in their new life.

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The end of Reading Warehouses - photo taken 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022



## ***What's on? Events which may be of interest.***

**Milestones Museum** is open. The website to buy admission tickets online and pre-book a day and time to visit can be found at:

<https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

21 Aug. - Head to Milestones for the **Thornycroft Celebration Day** to see a fleet of vintage Thornycroft vehicles and learn more about this local vehicle manufacturer.

### **The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery**

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum-and-sainsbury-gallery>

23 Jul to 31 Aug. Look out for **workshops, trails and other activities** throughout the school holidays.

**Friends of the Willis Museum** (*7.30pm at the Museum - Non-members £3, and book through the Museum on 01256 465902*)

21 Jul. - **Basingstoke** – A Town well endowed with Almshouses. Derek Spruce will talk about how the local Almshouses were developed due to the generosity of benefactors such as Sir James Deane

**Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society** (*7.30 at Church Cottage, Basingstoke*)

8 Sept. - We will be launching the latest book in the Basingstoke Histories series, **Fun and Frolics**, and the author, Bob Clarke will be talking about the social history of entertainment and amusements in Basingstoke.

**Calleva (Silchester)** Please note that Reading University will not be carrying out any excavations on the Roman site this year.

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***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.  
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