



Battlefield Tour Dates

In collaboration with Tickets Anywhere and Leger Holidays we are planning a Battlefield Trip to Belgium and France, from 29 October 2015 to 2 November 2015.



The Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate

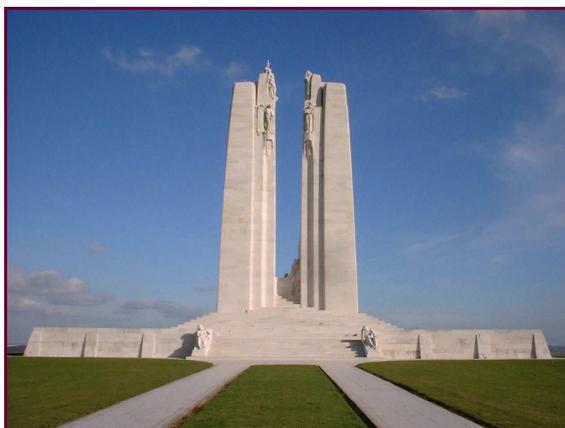
We shall leave Thame on Thursday morning for a lunch time ferry from Dover, arriving at our hotel in the Lille/Arras area for dinner, having delivered crosses on the way at Dunkirk and Boulogne.

Friday we visit Ypres, scene of many battles in WW1. We will be touring the battlefields and memorials. Delivering crosses and wreaths where we are able and visiting Tyne Cot memorial and cemetery, before lunch in Passchendaele. The afternoon will be free to visit Ypres and its museums. You will not want to miss the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate that evening for our wreath laying.

Saturday is planned for a visit to Arras and the acclaimed Canadian Memorial and trenches at Vimy Ridge. (We have three Canadian forces on our list) There will be time to explore Arras or make your own special visit to a local CWGC cemetery.

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The impressive Vimy Ridge memorial



Centenary Cake



We have a lovely celebration fruit cake made for us by local ladies. The cake weighs in at 7.7kg and measures 28cm square.

The cake is being raffled to publicise our project and raise funds. Have you got your tickets yet.? They are only £1 each and available from the Town Hall.

Remembrance Day

As well as laying a wreath at the annual remembrance day service we will have a stall where people can find out about the project and buy raffle tickets & brooches. We also plan to set out, in the grass of the Memorial Gardens, 190 of our small crosses in the shape of a Thame Remembers Cross. Each cross will bear the name of one of our 190 remembered.



Sunday we go to the Somme and see where eighteen of our casualties met their end. Among the memorable places we visit will be the Lochnagar crater and Thiepval Memorial. You will be able to enjoy lunch in the friendly town of Albert.

Our return trip is on Monday, again for a lunch time ferry, but there will be time for the obligatory shopping

All this for just £270 per person. Hotel accommodation is on a B & B basis and the price is based on two people sharing a room. A £99 single supplement applies with limited availability.

Cross Recently Delivered

10 September 2014

CSM Cecil Amos Witney -
1917

Mr Colin Evans on behalf of
nieces Mrs Janice Tapping
and Mrs Judith Sainsbury

Research News

William Chowns

The name Chowns is fairly common around Thame; there is even a Chowns Close. So it is no surprise that there are two Chowns among our WW1 casualties. Frank who died in 1915 and George in 1919, they are not related but both were straight forward research studies, or so we thought, until we were contacted by Frank's great grandson Richard Neil, who had had seen our report on BBC TV, with information about Frank. He mentioned that Frank's younger brother William had also died in WW1 and challenged us to find him.

Frank Chowns is recorded on the War Memorial and on the two church memorial boards. But why is Frank there and not William? Where was William?

First to check the Census information. There they are in 1891; Frank, age 9 and William, age 2, sons of William and Emma Chowns of Moreton, a small hamlet which is part of Thame parish. There are two other sons, Thomas, 11 and Richard, 7 with a daughter Emma age 5. In 1901; they are still in Moreton but with two more sons, Frederick, 10 and George, 6. The 1911 census only has Frank, age 26, now married to Rose and living at 50 High Street, Thame. There is no sign of any of the other members of the Chowns family in Thame or England.

Most likely they have moved away or emigrated and sure enough there they are in the 1911 census for Ontario, Canada. William shows up living with his brother Thomas and his wife Emily; mother Emma and younger brother Frederick are there as well and all living at Davidson Crescent in Humber Bay. Further digging on Ancestry.co.uk shows William arriving in Toronto, Canada on 17 August 1907 on the ship Corsican.

The Canadian military records are available on-line and William's draft record shows that he was recruited on 20th February 1918 now aged 29 yrs. He was still living in Humber Bay, Ontario and listed as born in Thame, Oxon on 24 January 1889.

3107824, Private William Chowns was a member of the 19th Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment), when he was killed on 10 November 1918 (one day before the November 11th armistice. According to the Canadian Expeditionary Force burial register he was "instantly killed by a machine gun bullet through the head". He is buried in the Mons (Bergen) Communal Cemetery, Hainaut, Belgium.

The name William Chowns does not appear on any war memorial in Thame. **Maybe it should?**



Humber Bay Memorial

Lapel Brooches

The small cross brooches are extremely popular; over eighty were sold at the recent Thame Food Festival. They are going fast so you will need to get yours soon. They are available now at the Museum and Town Hall at only £2 each.



Finances

When we took a stall at Thame Market recently we were amazed by the amount of money placed in the collecting pots without any prompting. Our finances are sound, especially as our Lottery bid has been confirmed and we have received over £9K from the HLF. The generous support of Oxfordshire County Council and Thame Town Council means that we are well on track to achieve our target of £23K.

Company Sgt Maj Witney



There was only one cross delivery this month, but we have had many enquiries. A cross is on its way to Nijmegen, two crosses are on their way to Tanzania and soon two to Malta.

We are delighted to announce our first delivery overseas; to Vandencourt Cemetery near Maiseemy in Northern France.

CSM Witney's nieces could not go in person but arranged for a friend to deliver the cross on his way to a motor cycle rally.

Thame Remembers is a project of Thame, Oxfordshire to commemorate the centenary of World War One by researching those from Thame who fell in all conflicts worldwide, and remembering them by placing a Thame Cross on their grave or memorial wherever in the world that may be. If you feel that you can help please contact Dave on 01844 21 5178.