



# Association Cultuelle de L'Église Anglicane du Pas de Calais BOULOGNE CONGREGATION

November 2016 Newsletter

Fellowship, Hope and Love

No. 52

## Lest we forget

On entering Westminster Abbey visitors are immediately drawn to a black Belgian marble stone, set in the floor of the nave, most often surrounded with poppies or other flowers. This is the grave of the Unknown Warrior, an unidentified British soldier killed on one of the battlefields of the First World War, laid to rest with full military honours on 11th November 1920. His remains were chosen to represent all those who gave their lives in the Great War and to the same end, for all other fields of conflict, particularly those who have no known grave.

Enter the inner courtyard of Boulogne's castle and you may see two commemorative bronze plaques recalling an event by Canadian forces during the liberation of the town in September 1944, but you will have to look a lot harder to find another plaque; in fact few know of its existence. It is on the wall by the door that leads into the former library, now the venue for special exhibitions, looking rather forlorn and weather-beaten.

This stone plaque records Boulogne's part in the final journey of the soldier, whose name and rank we shall never know, to his resting place to be 'buried among the kings'.

The idea behind the 'Grave of the Unknown Warrior' is thought to have originated from the Rev. David Railton (1884-1955) who was a curate in Folkestone before becoming a chaplain on the Western Front. The concept finally met the support of King George V and the government of the day and was

wholeheartedly embraced by the British public.

Between four and six bodies were exhumed from various battle areas and brought to Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise. On 9th November 1920 one of these was selected at random then placed in a coffin and sent under escort to Boulogne. During the afternoon the ambulance carrying the coffin entered the courtyard of the castle, still a military residence. Inside the officers' library, which had become for the purpose a *chapelle ardente*, this coffin was placed into a second coffin made from an oak tree from Hampton Court. A company of French soldiers stood guard throughout the night and in the morning (10th November) the coffin was placed on a French military carriage drawn by six horses and taken to the quayside where H.M.S. Verdun was berthed, awaiting to sail to Dover to take the British warrior back to his homeland.

A stone plaque to mark this historic event was affixed to the wall of the castle's inner courtyard shortly afterwards but was destroyed by the Germans during WWII, to be replaced in 1977. Time has passed and unfortunately the 'new' one is now almost

unreadable. For that reason two of our church members, Pierre and Pauline Cecchin are vigorously campaigning to have the stone restored to its former state and become better known. Hopefully this will not be long.

Footnote and little known fact: At the commencement of the burial service in Westminster Abbey the band of the Grenadier Guards played Alexandre Guilmant's '*Marche funèbre et chant séraphique*'. Guilmant was born in Boulogne in 1837.

(Acknowledgements to Pauline Cecchin for help with this article)



The remains of the unknown soldier leaving Boulogne Castle and French soil for the last time – November 1920. (The commemorative plaque was later placed on the right-hand wall).



'On this spot 9-10 November 1920 the body of the British Unknown Warrior who gave his life for the cause of liberty rested his last hours on French soil.'

## Planned services at the chapel of the Monastère du Carmel, rue du Denacre, Saint-Martin-Boulogne



**Sunday 13th November 2016 10h30** **(NB: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in month)** / *Twenty Fifth Sunday after Trinity (or 2nd Sunday before Advent)*

**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY** – to honour the sacrifices that were made in past wars and other fields of conflict; led by Paul Glaister and Graham Hughes.

**Sunday 20th November 2016 10h30** / *Twenty Sixth Sunday after Trinity (or Sunday next before Advent)* – Eucharist service conducted by Rev Charles Hill; Readings: Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Ps: 46; Colossians: 1.11-20; Luke 23: 33-43

**Sunday 4th December 2016 10h30** / *Second Sunday after Advent* – Simple service of Morning Prayer with hymns and readings for Advent led by Jean Karssen

**Sunday 18th December 2016 10h30** / *Fourth Sunday after Advent* – Carol and Eucharist service conducted by Rev David Houghton; Readings: Isaiah 7: 10-16; Ps: 80 1-8; Romans: 1.1-7; Matthew 1: 18-end.

**Sunday 25th December 2016 10h30** *Christmas Day* – A service of lessons and carols followed by mince pies led by Linda Pillière

### **News and dates for your diary:**



There will be a **Christmas coffee morning on Friday 2nd December from 10h00 to 12h30** at the home of Pierre and Pauline Cecchin 13, Parvis Notre Dame (the house with blue shutters directly opposite the west front of the basilica) in Boulogne's old town. There will be the usual Christmas fare and that means mince pies of course, plus lots more. A definite date for your diary!

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**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 16h00:** Traditional service of lessons and carols at the village church of Estréelles, with members of the local community.

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**A successful meeting was held in Calais** on Wednesday, 26th October with members of the

Chaplaincy Conseil and the Bishop in Europe, The Right Reverend Dr Robert Innes (4th from right in photo); The Venerable Meurig Williams, Archdeacon of France (2nd from left) and Canon Caroline Pinchbeck, Director of the Diocese of Canterbury's Communities and Partnerships Framework (far left of picture). Also invited was Brother Johannes of the *Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland* (3rd from left), who has been working regularly in the migrant camps and is a member of the Calais congregation. At the meeting a formula was discussed whereby the appointment of a new resident priest could be made in partnership



with the Dioceses of Canterbury and Europe. Providing funding and employment concerns are resolved, the new chaplain would work with us and cover migrant and other social issues in the Pas de Calais. The meeting closed on a positive note and the feeling progress had been made; there will be news on this in the weeks ahead as matters develop.

***Our clocks are back now on winter time, but in this article George Murray turns his clock back a bit further to winter time 1955, to recall a trip to Berlin and the Kaiser Wilhelm Kirche***

I spent the latter part of my National Service, after becoming an officer, in Germany at Neumünster, some 60 kms north of Hamburg. Our closest military neighbours were the Danes, who were our usual partners in military exercises; as a result I slept in many a Danish barn. There was a Danish officers' club just over the border, with a smörgåsbord on Sundays, and we could sail up the coast from Kiel to Sønderborg. So it was not all square-bashing. In the other direction the delights of Hamburg – some of them dubious – beckoned.

My brother officers and I made several weekend excursions, to the Harz Mountains, Braunschweig and elsewhere, and on one of these trips we visited the former concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. This was in 1955, and I will never forget the sight of the ruined gas chambers, and the ground on which, ten years after the war, it seemed that nothing would ever grow. Just bare earth.

I acquired from my senior officer (a full-blown Lieutenant!) a vehicle. I paid him £50 for an Opel Kapitän, quite a large car. This had been a German army staff car during the war and it had some strange habits. At idling speed it clanked quite loudly. No one knew why. It had a three-speed gearbox with steering-column shift, and not much synchromesh. But on the open road it went well although it had no heater.

In the winter of 1955-56 I conceived, with another officer friend, the idea of driving to Berlin for the weekend. It was the coldest winter since the war. To reach Berlin, you had to drive across what was then East Germany, from the British checkpoint at Helmstedt, to Berlin, a distance of some 100 kms along a deserted, snow-covered and potholed *autobahn*. Near Berlin, we had to pass through an East German border post before reaching civilization in the form of the British sector of Berlin, and the officers' mess where we had booked accommodation. (For younger readers I should recall that Berlin was divided then into four sectors, under control respectively of the British, French, American and Russian armies). We were so cold when we arrived at the border post that we gulped down the piping hot tea offered by the guards!

The next day we set off exploring. At that time, with British military number-plates, one could circulate freely in all zones of the city. This was long before the construction of the Wall, of course, and several checkpoints were open. After a quick tour of the West, we gravitated to the Russian sector. This had been substantially rebuilt, in faceless Stalinist style, and studded with grandiose memorials to the Russian fallen. We returned there the same evening to a performance at the Deutsche Opera of Mozart's '*Così Fan Tutte*'. The Ostmark (the East German currency) traded at about 4.5 to the Deutschmark, itself at that time twelve to the pound. I cannot remember the price of our seats, but it was pure magic at rock-bottom cost.

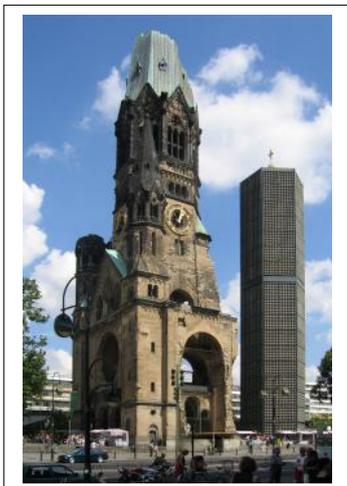
In contrast to the East, the western sector was still largely in ruins, and *Kurfürstendamm* was far from the fashionable thoroughfare it is today – and had been, pre-war. One building largely still standing was the Kaiser Wilhelm church. Although badly damaged in an Allied bombing raid in 1943 most of the spire and the entrance hall survived, along with the baptistery and the altar.

The church was built in the 1890s, as part of a Protestant church building programme by Kaiser Wilhelm II (though it is actually named after his father Wilhelm I). Amid all the rebuilding, which has taken place since, the church has been left standing, and is now known as the *Gedächtniskirche* (memorial church – although also known to Berliners as '*Der Hohle Zahn*' – the hollow tooth!).

A modern church has been built beside it, in the pattern of Coventry Cathedral. There the resemblance ends. In fact there are four buildings grouped round the ruins of the old church. The new church itself is octagonal in form (while, rather confusingly, the separate bell tower is hexagonal). Its walls form a concrete honeycomb with nearly 23,000 panels of glass inlay predominantly in shades of blue, with small areas of ruby red, emerald green, and yellow; this colour combination is said to have been inspired by the



Leaving the British Sector in the Opel Kapitän



stained glass in Chartres cathedral. As with Coventry, a large figure of Christ is suspended above the altar, though in this case three-dimensional, made of tombak (a copper-based alloy).  
Of the return journey to Neumünster I recall very little. Our next trip, in the spring of 1956, was to Florence, which was a little warmer. I sold the Opel before leaving Germany, for what I had paid for it. Zero depreciation - the way to motor!

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**Prayer Diary /Intercessions - A book is now available for the entry of names of those who anyone wishes to have included in the intercessory prayers during the service. Otherwise please pass a note to the person responsible for the intercessions on that day.**

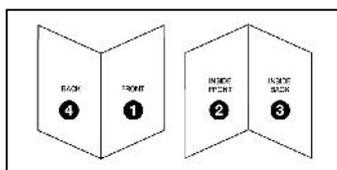
**Other services in the Chaplaincy** Calais's regular services: Services are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 10h30. The normal place of worship is now the Oratoire Notre Dame de la Misericorde, rue Gaillard, Calais – (near St Pierre's church). Church Warden: Pat Page ☎ 03 21 35 07 65 or e-mail: pat.page@wanadoo.fr

**Hesdin's regular services:** Services are held as follows: 1st Sunday monthly – Morning Prayer 10h30; 3rd Sunday monthly – 17h00 Eucharist. Services are held in Salle de l'Arsenal, Rue de l'Arsenal, Hesdin. - Church Warden: Hazel Crompton, ☎ 03 21 03 31 27 e-mail: james.crompton@free.fr

If anyone needs any form of help or assistance or if you are aware of someone who is ill, either in hospital or at home and would appreciate a visit; alternatively if you know of anyone who you feel may benefit from prayer, please contact the church warden: George Murray ☎ 03 21 36 53 87, e-mail: georgemurray@sfr.fr.

**This newsletter can be found, together with other information about the Chaplaincy, on our website at: <http://www.anglicanspdc.com>**

If you have any news, short articles, adverts or any form of announcement for inclusion, please send them to: Malcolm Gale: malcolm.gale@dbmail.com - ☎ 03 21 31 83 57 Port: 06 99 09 60 44 or by post to 76, rue de la Paix, 62200 Boulogne sur Mer.



**The next edition of this newsletter will be the December's issue – please send your contributions to the editor (contact details above) before November 24th.**

*Printing your newsletter:* This newsletter is designed to be printed at A5 size - select the 'livret' or 'booklet' printing format on the print management page of Adobe PDF Reader, this turns it into a handy A5 size four-page leaflet – of course remember to pass the paper through your printer twice (i.e. both sides).

## TOONS

by Dan

