

An 87 year old mystery.. solved?

This is a detective story without a definite ending.

For the ending I'll leave the reader to make up their own mind, given the evidence, which I shall lay before you.

I think your conclusion will have to be based on the balance of facts as up to now no firm evidence is forthcoming. In the future it may be... unless there is a cover-up.

The story begins with something little different to events in the Balkans only a few years ago.

In 1914 the map of Europe was different to that with which we are familiar today.

Over recorded history countries names have changed and some have come and gone. Where is Mesopotamia, Byzantium, Karelia, or Serbia? The answer is that the land is still there, but because of changes in the balance of power, their names have changed. Any country is very sensitive about its frontiers. In many cases the nationality of population around the frontier of a country is not always as clear cut as the actual line of demarcation with a neighbour. This invariably leads to unrest and a demand for its realignment. Occasionally whole sections of a population may be ejected by their adopted nation. If one of two neighbouring countries is weak it will attempt to forge an alliance with another country to whom it may give something in return, perhaps trading advantages.

So it was in 1914. Europe was a tangle of treaty-bound nations, roughly aligned in one major direction or another.

It is said that the driver of the car carrying Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria took a wrong turning and the driver hesitated just long enough for a fervent nationalist to take a pot shot with a pistol. The bullet found its mark and the archduke died.

The actual politics leading up to this point are shrouded somewhat but, whatever the exact reason for the assassination, it caused the two European power groups to take up arms against each other.

Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, which it was in their minds to do anyway. Russia who was allied with Serbia, declared war on Germany. Germany, belligerent at the drop of a hat, decided it would be a good idea to have another go at France, whom it had already beaten soundly in 1871. It therefore declared war on Russia who was allied to France, knowing full well France would reciprocate.

Because Germany had been planning to invade France for at least fifteen years, but hadn't to-date had a good excuse, an invasion plan was already in existence that defined the route that her army would follow.

This was the "Schlieffen Plan", drawn up by a chap of that name in Edwardian times and it dictated that the German Army would attack France through Belgium. Why was this? Because the French had built enormous fortifications between themselves and the German border just in case Germany felt the need to invade them.

True Belgium was not without its own fortifications but these were not nearly as strong as those of the French.

Germany knew precisely the state of the defences of both countries as, would you believe, they were on the tourist trail. The French forts of Verdun had been built not long after the 1870-71 war and by 1914 were getting on in years and were becoming an attraction for anyone visiting the area; like Herr Schlieffen.

Hence the attack was to be made via Belgium. Belgium had been a strong supporter of Britain in the fight against Napoleon (strangely enough so was Germany) and as a reward Britain had guaranteed little Belgium's existence ever since. It was actually France that had met British and German forces and been beaten at Waterloo (a town in Belgium) in 1815. Belgium had been allied to Britain ever since then and although not a popular alliance in all government circles, a treaty is a treaty after all and despite a lot of soul-searching in government circles, the hawks had it over the doves, and in 1914, Britain duly declared war on Germany.

The rest is history as they say.

The story of the beginning of the conflict, as I've described it, isn't complete. It was a "World War" so if it was just Europe originally involved how was it the rest of the world joined in?

In 1914 the world had almost completely been carved up by the European powers. Each European country, worth its salt, had an Empire. Britain owned a large part of Africa, a lot of Asia, Australasia and good chunks of Central and North and South America. German possessions were mainly in Africa with the odd Island or two in the middle of nowhere. France of course had a lot of interest in Africa with small bits of South America and it also had a few Islands dotted around here and there. Even Belgium had its own bit of Africa. Portugal, Spain, Italy and Holland also had their share.

So of course when the mother country took up arms so did the Colonies, and in Britain's case, the so-called Dominions as well. On behalf of Britain, troops from Australia, Canada, South Africa and India arrived at the "Western Front" as the battle line in France and Belgium was known. If you pause a moment and ask why should it be the "Western" front when it's in the east? Because it was the Western Front as far as Germany was concerned. This was to distinguish it from their other front, with Russia.

Not just the big countries but also New Zealand and Newfoundland and many others sent soldiers to Europe. The same went for our allies. Besides the Western Front we fought in the Dardanelles and Iraq and other places, and battles equally important but not as widely known about, took place there as well. Our allies also looked after our interests, and their own, outside Europe, in Africa for example. South Africa was near to a number of German colonies, West Africa, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The French had German Tunisia to sort out.

Who weren't involved? A few European nations, including Spain and Switzerland preserved their neutrality, but the biggest country on the sidelines by far, the USA, hadn't been drawn in. Why was this? No doubt one of the reasons was the mix of the population. There were large numbers of Germans settled in the USA and quite naturally they did not want to get involved fighting their own countrymen and it would seem incongruous if an English speaking nation fought the land of their mother tongue. So America, not being treaty-bound, declared the war to be "Europe's War" and they would stand aloof.

The American president, Woodrow Wilson, it was believed was friendly with Britain, and political overtures were made to him to join the Allies. This was not to materialize, at least not at the start. Why then did America finally join in? This is not clear cut. Something pretty big must have happened in order for the balance of opinion to shift. There are two contenders. One is the "Zimmerman Telegram" the gist of which I shall try to explain....

Over the initial period of WWI further countries, not closely tied by treaties threw in their hand with one or other of the two sides. Italy even swapped her allegiances and left the triple alliance to join the allies.

Japan sided with Germany. This was primarily due to a previous, not-quite settled, event. In 1904 war had broken out between Russia and Japan and, because of the disposition of troops, even though Japan was a lot smaller than Russia, it was able to occupy a goodly amount of Russian territory, some of which was essentially populated by Chinese people. So it was that Manchuria, China and Japan together with Russia divided between the European protagonists.

Japan joined in because it saw a weakness in her protagonist due to Russia being forced to fight Germany. Russia primarily had the German "Eastern" front to worry about, unless Moscow was to fall, and could not afford to dilute her efforts with all-out fighting with the Japanese. A few quick sorties and Japan would gain a lot of territory, capturing Manchuria and parts of Russia proper. Strange as it may seem, one of her other ambitions was to gain a toehold in America and so it was that Mexico became a potential target for Japanese colonisation, would you believe.

It is said that an understanding between Japan and Germany came about, culminating in a written communication between the two which found its way into the hands of the American president.

Some may say that it wasn't a coincidence that British Intelligence was able to produce the telegram from a hat at just the right moment to tip the balance and bring the USA into the war. Who actually wrote the telegram? Who knows? A copy was certainly supplied to the USA by British Intelligence. Was this truly the result of intercepting a secret message followed by a spot of cryptanalysis? Maybe, maybe not?

The evidence, provided by the Zimmerman Telegram, whether true or not, may have been the deciding factor that brought the USA into the war but an earlier incident, that certainly did not endear the American public to Germany; the sinking of the Lusitania on May 17th 1915, may have been the catalyst.

Although the USA hadn't officially provided troops before they declared war in 1917, they had passively allowed many of their nationals to join the Canadian Army and get into action in that way. In addition, countless tons of war materiel was being shipped across the Atlantic to Britain but, because of the strong German lobby in the USA, this had to be carried out surreptitiously. Everyone knew it was happening but officially it wasn't.

Germany knew for sure, through their network of spies in the USA, and was in a quandary. What could they do? Sink ostensibly peaceful liners carrying passengers of a neutral power? Not really because if this were done it wouldn't be long before that power was no longer neutral. The Geneva Convention did not allow for aggression against non-military targets; in fact even armed medical staff was supposed to be safe from attack. To attack a civilian liner was certainly verboten. So "on paper", and officially quoted in Government circles, there were NO arms shipments coming across the Atlantic. It was like Nelson peering through his telescope with his blind eye. Guns, bullets? Show me the manifest. Look it's nothing of the sort. Medical supplies, blankets and the like... show me where it says ammunition.

Probably every ship that could float, travelling West to East, was loaded to the gunwales with bullets, machine guns, revolvers and the fuel of war. To deal with the subterfuge every ship had two manifests. One listing its actual cargo, known to only a few individuals and deliberately kept away from politicians. The other was a mythical list of anything but war goods. This was the list that was freely available to anyone with an enquiring mind.

Politicians are good at this sort of thing. "I've studied the cargo manifest of the Lusitania and it carried only commercial items and the odd medical supply. It certainly didn't carry ammunition etc etc", would be the official government line.

When the U-boat captain saw the Lusitania steaming towards him, either for some reason he lost his presence of mind, or conceivably under orders, he loosed his torpedoes and sank it. Later, he was fully supported by his boss and lots of special medals were issued claiming the "cowardly sinking", as the allied press would have it, as a really brave and heroic deed.

The loss of American lives on the Lusitania was the reason that the American president was able to sway the opinions of many people up to then vetoing his wish for the USA to join the European War but it took the Zimmerman Telegram to finish the job. A vote was taken and the USA then joined the fray in April 1917.

How is any of this relevant to your Grandfather you may ask?

Well, when war broke out my Granddad was a clerk working for Cunard. Not just a shipping clerk but one assigned to munitions.

His job was to handle shipping manifests.

He knew what all the Cunard steamers were carrying across the Atlantic because his job was to process the manifests. Not the phoney lists, for the politicians to wave around in Parliament, but the proper ones. He had to know because, once the ships had docked, he had to make the necessary arrangements to get the cargoes to their destinations.

Woolworth's Sixpenny Stores would be not a little puzzled to receive several tons of artillery shells described as "tin trays". Shells would therefore have to go to a munitions depot.

My Grandad would have been one of the very few people to really know for sure what the Lusitania was carrying.

As far as the Dockers doing the unloading knew, the boxes and crates labelled "Farm Machinery" or "Novelty Goods" were what the labels said they were. Surely War Department lorries would not arrive in droves to whisk away the booty. The lorries would be liveried in suitably low key. Maybe in plain (hopefully non-khaki) paint or with the name of some obscure import-export dealer.

Before moving on I should like to digress and explain the business of joining the Army. When war broke out in 1914 it was not entirely unexpected. For example there were too many countries with colonial expansion in mind. The age of easy wealth was over. The turn of the century heralded a decline in making money. As early as the 1890s large cities such as Liverpool had started to decline in wealth. Trade, although still attractive was getting more difficult as competition increased. There just wasn't room for all these major powers with all their colonies in tow.

Because of the impending confrontation there had been a gradual alignment into the "Triple Alliance" comprising Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy and the "Triple Entente"; Britain, France and Russia. Confusingly, we seem to have coined the term "Allies" for our group and the general term "Hun" for the other. Whoever attacked any one of the countries so enjoined would invite the wrath of all those in the opposing group.

The key to success of any attack of one nation on another, in the centuries leading to WWI, was sea power. Britain had long used a rule of thumb in sizing its Navy. That was: it had to be larger than any two others added together. Germany was aware of this, and in the years before the war, was frantically building ships to set right the imbalance.

One of the problems in the simple size equation however was the type of ships in one's navy. Fading fast was the day of large capital ships slogging it out across miles of ocean. Now that the submarine had been developed, a ship of any size was pretty vulnerable to a torpedo suddenly appearing out of the blue. True, modern ships were fast and could easily outrun a submarine, but given enough submarines and good intelligence on the whereabouts of their prey, and routes, a submarine could lie in wait and strike a lethal blow. Germany, faced with developing a new strategy, therefore chose the latest innovation and built a lot of submarines. This led to problem, highlighted by the sinking of the Lusitania, of keeping Britain's war machine fully stocked, and the civilian population free from rationing. Our ships had to run the gauntlet of German submarines.

Turning to the fighting forces. What was the position in Britain in 1914 as regards the armed forces? The British Army was relatively small and spread all round the globe.

In reserve was the Territorial Army, manned by a mixture of keen amateur soldiers and veterans of the Boer War.

In the couple of years or so leading up to the conflict, war was predicted by many and it is more than likely that many a young man would join the Territorials as he saw that this was the quickest way to join the fray, without actually making the commitment of giving up his job and joining the regular army. If war was to break out, and there were plenty of signs that this might happen, he would be called to arms.

Maybe in order to not put all potential recruits off though, part of the agreement in becoming a Territorial was that activities would be confined to the defence of the British Mainland, and that did not extend to fighting overseas. That exclusion was however not to last long after the start of WWI, and because of the very large Regular Army losses, members of the Territorial Force were only too willing to sail for France when the opportunity presented itself and exact their revenge.

During the early months of the war in 1914, prior to the new year, the Regular Army, or the "British Expeditionary Force", or BEF as it was known, was engaged in a valiant attempt to prevent the Germans, generally following the Schlieffen Plan, attacking through Belgium and taking the Channel Ports before moving onto Paris.

Due to the determination of our men and our enemy's extended lines of supply, a stalemate position was soon to be the order of the day. This position, colloquially called "The Western Front" passed through Belgium and France, and was held for the best part of four years with the precise line changing virtually daily at the expense of a huge loss of men and the exchange of millions of shells.

This stabilising of the front line had only been accomplished, initially, by calling on the Territorial Army. From the end of 1914 the BEF had been reinforced by battalions and regiments of amateur soldiers, usually commanded by experienced officers that had fought in the reign of Victoria. Territorial troops were also drafted into Regular Army regiments to fill gaps left by "attrition". The term adopted for the senseless mass sacrifice of men on both sides by their leaders in an effort to gain ground in an impossible situation.

Soon the Territorial Army, was in turn decimated. However, through the foresight and efforts of Lord Kitchener, who had guessed, unlike many others, that the war would not be over by Christmas 1914, a new reserve army was immediately available. The new reserve was known to all as "Kitchener's Army". Kitchener had channelled the enthusiasm of a very large number of young men, keen to join what they had thought would be a quick clean fight. Such were the huge numbers of new recruits that descended on recruitment offices all over the country, that complete battalions were created from local volunteers. Some were called "Pals" Battalions and usually comprised volunteers from a single town or district, such as Accrington or Liverpool.

Sometimes, if the local reserve was full, a man would be asked which regiment he'd like to join. As the British Army has lots of exciting sounding Regiment names, steeped in history, this provided much additional enthusiasm. If a chap fancied a bit of a holiday he'd maybe ask to join a Scottish Highland Regiment, although when it came to wearing a kilt he might later have had second thoughts! Plenty of prospects

were available in this direction, without the need to travel over the border however, as many large cities had their “Scottish” battalions. If there enough recruits a few cities were able to muster even “Irish” or “Welsh” battalions.

Within the first couple of months from the outbreak of war, it was clear to those in charge, but not the general population, that the BEF was facing an impossible task. Not only did we desperately need to hold our position in Belgium to save the Channel Ports from being overrun, but we needed to support our ally, France. The French Army was bogged down just as we were and their losses were to prove vast.

Verdun was main city in the central area facing Germany. The whole area to the east of the city had been fortified for many years in the expectation of a frontal German attack. Following the sweep of their army through Belgium, Germany was now forming a second front, attacking diluted French forces head-on at Verdun with tremendous losses on both sides. For the French to save Paris from falling required some respite and this was only to be gained by diverting some of the German forces away from Verdun and at the same time strengthening their own lines in that area.

Reducing German forces at Verdun was to be gained by major British attacks in the north around the Belgian town of Ypres. This town was the British equivalent to Verdun, in that it focussed the concentration of the fighting in the north. Reinforcement of troops at Verdun was achieved by moving in fresh men as fast as possible from the west. So it was then that British troops were pushed into attacks, purely as a diversion to relieve the pressure on Verdun, and most of the taxi cabs in Paris being used to bring in reinforcements to save Verdun being over-run, and if that were to happen, so Paris would surely fall and France would have to sue for peace.

In the north there was no real reason for British forces to attack other than to support the French Generals’ strategy, and as timing was to be dictated by the French, it was impossible to come up with a sensible reason to hold back our offensive. Local commanders pleaded with the army staff back at base that, if forced to attack the German lines without a proper plan, they were facing a suicidal task but were told to follow orders and get on with it.

So it was then that Kitchener’s Army, which had so enthusiastically joined up in Britain, and after a period of training, was called to fight without regard as to whether or not they may succeed. Sadly, most of the men that signed up had done so with the thought that if they weren’t quick enough it would all be over and they would have missed an opportunity of a lifetime for a good scrap. Any delusions they had were soon expelled once they arrived. It was a tremendous shock to these keen lads to discover they were treated by staff officers, no better than the fodder supplied to their own horses. They faced an immovable mass of dug-in German troops, armed with high explosives and machine guns. Many of the men that fell did not even get the chance to see a German before a piece of shrapnel or an unheard bullet snuffed them out.

After the “big push”, as these exercises were usually referred to, the stalemate remained and Kitchener’s recruits had in turn been nearly wiped out.

At this point I'm going to state something obvious but nevertheless I've never heard it from anyone else in respect of the conduct of WWI.

Basically the only way to win a war like WWI is to kill so many of the enemy that they are forced to give in when they have too few left to stand a chance of winning.

It would be a waste of time trying to avoid the enemy as this would just prolong the campaign. The best way is to make a full frontal attack on his army. In doing this one must make any advantage one can muster to make sure more of his men are killed than yours. This is the philosophy generally adopted at the Western Front by our Generals. Unfortunately we didn't do as well as we could have done because, initially at least we had too few shells, not enough of the heavy, wire cutting types, and too many duds. The principles in the strategies would have been reasonable in retrospect if the shelling had done its work in the way the leaders imagined it would.

Later, when tanks were introduced, our advantage from these should have been overwhelming. Because tanks were in their infancy, and pressed into service before being adequately trialled, reliability was poor and because we had no prior experience with tanks, strategies were ill thought out.

Then again, if the tank had been properly tried out before being let loose, who's to say news of it wouldn't have leaked out? Imagine if Germany had got wind of our tanks, and in the 12 months of trials, had developed their own. German tanks at Ypres or the Somme in large numbers would have sealed our fate. Better to take the chance and deploy them with some advantage. That way development would proceed in parallel with their deployment, new models would be introduced and we would always have the upper hand.

I digress, back to the story. Once we continued to lose men the Government, which had been reluctant to institute conscription, faced with mounting losses, were now given no option.

As is common nowadays politics came into play. Somehow the coercion had to be disguised. Also because we are a democracy it was necessary for at least a semblance of agreement to be reached across the Government.

Why not ask the remaining young men if they would be willing, if the worst came to the worst, to fight for King and Country? Of course this would be only a slim chance.. hardly likely really at all! Put your name down on a piece of paper and only in the last, hardly conceivable resort will you be called upon.

The response wasn't too bad but most balked at the idea. What were these newspaper reports all about? And the growing lists of casualties in every edition of the paper? No radio yet and certainly no TV to disseminate news. People used to gather round the local Post Office window for news of what was going on across the Channel. Those in the south east and even in London were aware at times of a continuous rumbling. What was it? Surely not guns all that way off! But what else could it be?

What to do? General conscription was political dynamite. Why don't we only call to arms those that were willing? That's a fair system surely? Not entirely; bearing in

mind that they don't really know what they're letting themselves in for. Why should the shirkers get away with having to fight?

Why not use an inverted logic? We've already got a list of everyone that is willing to fight and they've signed an agreement to that effect. We told them that only as a last resort would they be called to fight. But that's unfair because those that are not willing to fight won't have to bother.

We told everyone that there's only a slim chance that they'd be needed but we haven't enough. Right.. lets turn to our advantage the fact that there are all these shirkers. Lads that are UNWILLING to fight for King and Country. Most people now know someone that didn't come back from France so let's use this to the Government's advantage. First we'll call up the able bodied amongst those who HADN'T agreed to put forward their names. That way it'll look like we'd be calling up the shirkers. The white feather brigade! Then we'll tell everyone that in the event of a few more lads being required we'll take those who had actually agreed to fight. The public will see the justice in that! We can't lose!

The public are bound to support us, especially if we start a campaign of handing out white feathers to anyone not ready to fight for King and Country.

Once we've conscripted all the shirkers we'll take the rest. The first lot have only got themselves to blame for not volunteering. And the rest, after all they will have signed a piece of paper stating that they are willing to fight.

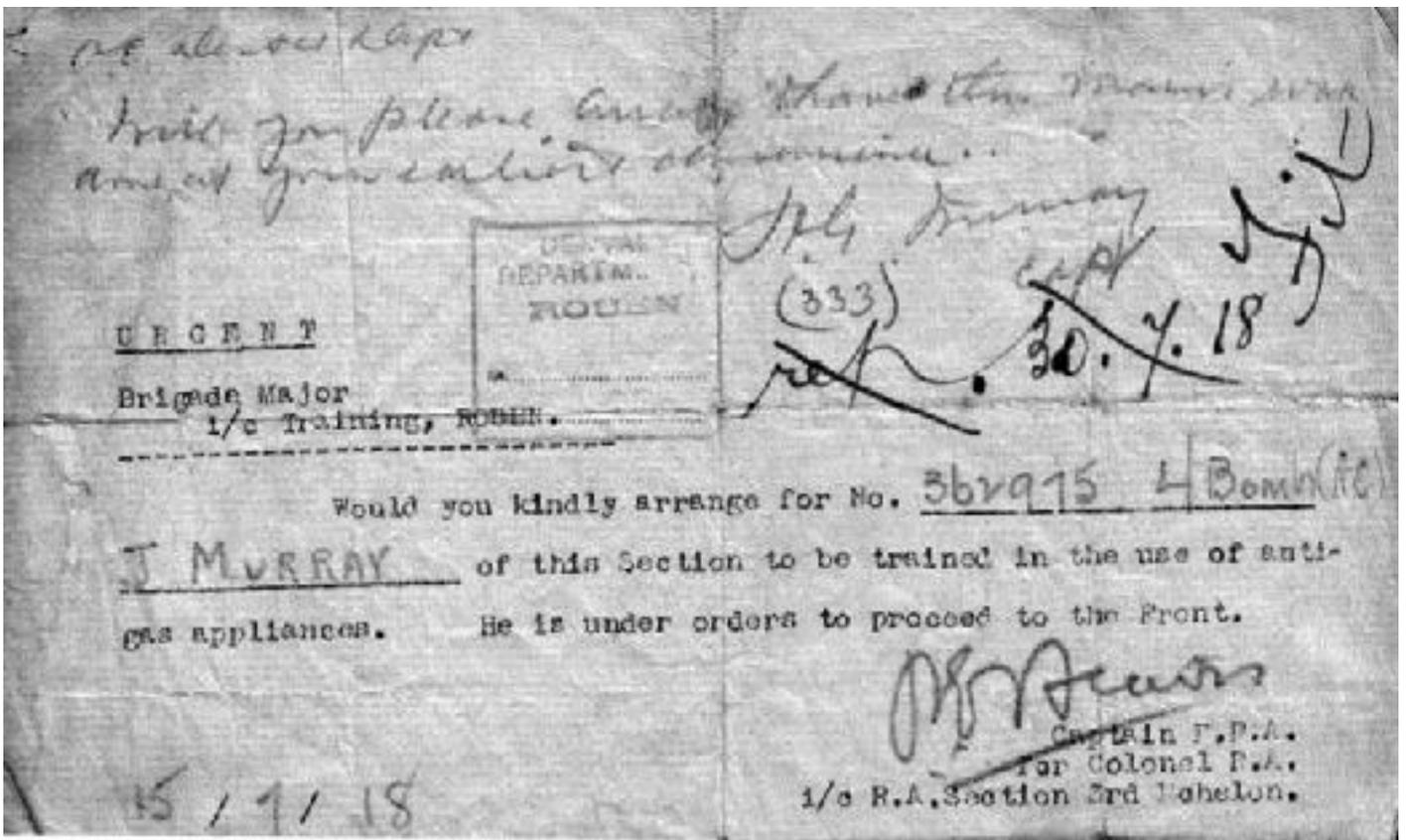
So it was. Initially only single men were called. When these were used up it was the turn of married men. Young men, then old men, until virtually all able-bodied men were either in the forces or lined up ready to go.

My paternal Grandfather, Charles Henry, was a Territorial. He was one of the men that had seen war coming and who had joined the Territorials in order to get into the war at the outset. He was killed at Festubert in May 1915 leaving a widow and a two year old toddler, my father.

My maternal grandfather, John Murray, fared better. He was married with three children and was called up in October 1915 at the age of 30. He came through the war virtually unscathed. Admittedly he had shell shock till the day he died in old age. The type of shell shock that caused him to have to use a saucer to hold his teacup. He couldn't drink from the cup. His hands shook so much he was obliged to sip his tea from the saucer.

What about Cunard's cargoes of munitions? Did passenger liners suddenly stop carrying munitions when the Lusitania was sunk? No they didn't and I have proof, slight and circumstantial it may be but nevertheless it is proof.

When John Murray was called up in October 1915, it must have been a little sudden for his employers, after all a married man of thirty surely would be spared? He must have volunteered to go. A Kitchener's man, who served in heavy artillery. If you could hear the big guns in London... what must it have been like to stand next to a really big one firing continuously until its barrel was worn out?



Here's a welcome break

What of the tightly protected operations being run in order to maintain supplies of munitions to the front line. Because of the secret nature of the Cunard cargoes, knowledge of the procedures, which must have been a little complicated, would be known to only a minimum of staff.

To take on a new shipping clerk to look after the special manifests was not straightforward. If today's security measures are anything to go by he would need the equivalent of what is now called "Positive Vetting". This is the procedure carried out by the Security Services to confirm that a person is trustworthy and cannot be put in a position where he can be compromised and give away secrets.

I doubt that the problem existed in 1915, but during the period from the 1950s to the 80s, a further complication was met. The PV process must include proof, beyond any doubt, that the person is actually who he says he is. This may sound odd but it is a fact that a foreign agent can readily assume the identity of someone else, for example an infant that died at birth, and live for years and years, dormant as it were, waiting to be called into action. To check that this is not so, part of the vetting procedure involved talking to people that have known the subject during the whole of his lifetime. I recall a friend saying that he'd been asked for the name of his headmaster at school so MI something could go and interview him. Fat chance he said... he'd be about 120 if he was still alive!

What I'm saying is that to employ a new shipping clerk engaged in these covert activities would take time. Not just to train him in managing the secret manifests and organising the false versions but to arrange for MI5 or MI6, or whoever it was in 1915, to carry out the necessary vetting.



The Cunard Steam Ship Company Limited.

Engine Works.

Derby Road.

Liverpool, October 30th

19 15

SUPERINTENDENT
ENGINEER'S OFFICE.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE
ADDRESSED TO THE
SUPERINTENDENT ENGINEER.

The Officer Commanding,
Royal Field Artillery,
Edge Lane Barracks,
LIVERPOOL.

Dear Sir,

The Bearer, John Murray, who has recently enlisted
in your Corps, was employed by us as clerk on important accounts
in connection with War Office Munitions Work.

We find that owing to the peculiar nature of these
Accounts that we are unable to get a substitute to undertake
same, without first being initiated by the Bearer, and would
therefore ask you to kindly release J. Murray from duties, for say
a Month, to enable us to get this business attended to.

Thanking you in anticipation of this request being
granted.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

Altham

Superintendent Engineer.

Armed with the attached letter John must have turned up at the HQ of the local Regiment of Royal Artillery.

What then? I've no idea because there is no-one around now that I can ask. Presumably, if the request for a stay was genuine, then the CO would have no option but to accede to the request and John's departure for training would be delayed for a month.

There is no evidence of any higher authority being involved. Certainly it is current practice for a person to be released from say Jury Duty to attend to business having "Security of Nation" status to be so released on the presentation of a letter written by

his employer stating this fact. It is not therefore an unlikely event that the stay would have been granted on the presentation of this letter. Why else, if it had not been a sufficient reason, would the letter have been kept in his possession when all other documents of that period were destroyed?

The key parts are:- “Important Accounts..... War Office Munitions Work”.
Note the use of capital letters when lower case is mostly appropriate.

“peculiar nature of these Accounts”... “peculiar”, rather than any other word

“without first being initiated by the bearer”.... In a Company handling cargoes for over 40 years... surely not if the cargoes were being handled in an everyday manner. If they had been, then surely any shipping clerk would do, of which Cunard must have had hundreds.

So that is my proposition. Cunard were carrying munitions cargoes on their passenger liners and were concealing the fact from the general public and anyone not needing to know. The Lusitania was one of the largest liners and would certainly not be excluded from the Atlantic munitions runs. American passengers could not be excluded from any particular ship without giving some plausible excuse; and I can think of none.

To this day the myth is still propounded by some that the ship was carrying NO munitions. I, for one, do not support the myth..



SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

BY
MARSHAL FOCH,
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ALLIED ARMIES,

G.Q.G.A. le 12 Novembre, 1918.

OFFICIERS, SOUS OFFICIERS, SOLDATS DES ARMEES ALLIEES.

Après avoir résolument arrêté l'ennemi, vous l'avez, pendant des mois, avec une foi et une énergie inlassables, attaqué sans répit.

Vous avez gagné la plus grande bataille de l'Histoire et sauvé la cause la plus sacrée : la Liberté du Monde.

Soyez fiers !

D'une gloire immortelle vous avez paré vos drapeaux.

La Postérité vous garde sa reconnaissance.

Le Maréchal de France,
Commandant en Chef les Armées Alliées.

(Translation.)

OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, AND SOLDIERS OF THE ALLIED
ARMIES.

After bringing the enemy's attack to a stand by your stubborn defence, you attacked him without respite for several months, with inexhaustible energy and unwavering faith.

You have won the greatest battle in history and have saved the most sacred of all causes, the Liberty of the World.

Well may you be proud !

You have covered your standards with immortal glory, and the gratitude of posterity will ever be yours.

(Signed) **F. FOCH,**
Marshal of France,
Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies.

Br J Murray

Fourth Army, No. G.S. 125.

TO ALL RANKS OF THE FOURTH ARMY.

The Fourth Army has been ordered to form part of the Army of Occupation on the RHINE in accordance with the terms of the Armistice. The march to the RHINE will shortly commence, and, although carried out with the usual military precautions, will be undertaken generally as a peace march.

The British Army through over four years of almost continuous and bitter fighting has proved that it has lost none of that fighting spirit and dogged determination which has characterized British Armies in the past, and has won a place in history of which every soldier of the British Empire has just reason to be proud. It has maintained the highest standard of discipline both in advance and retreat. It has proved that British discipline, based on mutual confidence between officers and men, can stand the hard test of war far better than Prussian discipline based on fear of punishment.

This is not all. The British Army has, during the last four years on foreign soil, by its behaviour in billets, by its courtesy to women, by its ever ready help to the old and weak, and by its kindness to children, earned a reputation in France that no army serving in a foreign land torn by the horrors of war, has ever gained before.

Till you reach the frontier of Germany you will be marching through a country that has suffered grievously from the depredations and exactions of a brutal enemy. Do all that lies in your power by courtesy and consideration to mitigate the hardships of these poor people who will welcome you as deliverers and as friends. I would further ask you when you cross the German frontier to show the world that British soldiers, unlike those of Germany, do not wage war against women and children and against the old and weak.

The Allied Governments have guaranteed that private property will be respected by the Army of Occupation, and I rely on you to see that this engagement is carried out in the spirit as well as in the letter.

In conclusion I ask you one and all, men from all parts of the British Empire, to ensure that the fair name of the British Army, enhanced by your exertions in long years of trial and hardship, shall be fully maintained during the less exacting months that lie before you.

I ask you to show the world that, as in war, so in peace, British discipline is the highest form of discipline, based on loyalty to our King, respect for authority, care for the well-being of subordinates, courtesy and consideration for non-combatants, and a true soldierly bearing in carrying out whatever duty we may be called upon to perform.

J Rawlinson
Genl.

H.Q., FOURTH ARMY,
11th November, 1918.

Commanding Fourth Army.

Not quite

HEADQUARTERS
HEADQUARTERS

Army Form W. 3742.

H.M. FORCES OVERSEAS (IN UNIFORM),

Combined Leave and Railway Ticket.

Available for an authorised journey on the Railways in Great Britain and Ireland (including the Underground Railways) and on the Steamers running to and from the Ports.

No.

No.
Date

H 802859

Third Class.

FOR ONE PERSON ONLY.

FORWARD JOURNEY.

From **FRANCE.**

To *Leekfoot Arsenal Station.*

(Insert Destination Station. Any alteration will render the Ticket useless, unless made and signed by a Railway Transport Officer.)

Leave granted from *1/1/19* to *15/1/19*

Through Tickets in cases where the journey is not continuous do not include the cost of transfer between Railway Terminal in Towns or between Railway Stations and Steamboats.

This Ticket is issued subject to the Regulations of the respective Companies over whose Lines it is available, and to the Conditions stated in their Time Tables. It must be shown and given up when required.

But there was a spot of leave...

SOLDIER'S DEMOBILIZATION ACCOUNT.

Regtl. No. 362975 Rank Boh Name J. Murray
 Corps or Regiment Reya

SOLDIER'S EARNINGS.	£	s.	d.	Date.	STOPPAGES AND PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Balance due to soldier on the date of arrival at Dispersal Station	=	13	10		Balance due from soldier up to the date of arrival at Dispersal Station			
28 days' furlough at <u>2/-</u> (net rate)	4	4	=		Clothing, equipment, &c., deficient on dispersal			
28 days' ration allowance at <u>2/-</u>	2	18	4		Advance at Dispersal Station	2	0	0
Allowance for plain clothes	2	12	6		Deposited in Post Office Savings Bank	19	0	0
Family allowance, including ration allowance					Paid by demobilization postal draft			
* Pay Warrant gratuity, or gratuity under Army Order 283 of 1914					Date <u>25/10</u>	5	0	0
Balance of bounty under Army Order 209 of 1916, or Army Order 222 of 1918					Date <u>12/10</u>	2	0	0
* War gratuity	10	=	0		Date <u>8/10</u>	2	8	8
Total		29	8		Total		29	8

* Less £1 payable on return of the military great-coat. (see Army Book 472).

To the Soldier.—You will receive in a few days a communication from the Controller, Savings Bank, informing you at what office your Savings Bank Book is ready for issue to you. If you should change your address before receipt of the notification you should immediately inform the Controller, Post Office Savings Bank, London, W.14, of your new address, and take any necessary action to secure that the notification if already despatched reaches you.

Section Officer's Stamp.



Leaving the Army with money in his pocket
 Includes his 28 days "holiday" pay of 3/- per day
 And expenses for meals at 2/- per day
 And money for a new suit, shirt, shoes and socks etc of £2/12/6d

Some men would never have had clothes to fit them, being whisked away at 18 and coming back a grown man up to 5 years later.

Army Form Z. 21.

CERTIFICATE of* Discharge
Transfer to Reserve
Disembodiment
Demobilization on Demobilization.

24999

Regtl. No. 362975 Rank Bombardier

Name in full Murray John
(Surname first)

Unit and Regiment or Corps 6 Coy. Headquarters
from which Royal Garrison Artillery

* Discharged Transferred to Reserve

Enlisted on the 27 October 1915

For Lanes R. F. A.
(Here state Regiment or Corps to which first appointed)

Also served in.....

Only Regiments or Corps in which the Soldier served since August 4th, 1914 are to be stated. If inapplicable, this space is to be ruled through in ink and initialed.

† Medals and Decorations awarded during present engagement } nil.

‡ Has served Overseas on Active Service. } nil.

Place of Rejoining in case of emergency } Beechcroft Medical Category A

Specialist Military qualifications } nil. Year of birth 1885

He is* Discharged
Transferred to Army Reserve
Disembodied
Demobilized on 16 February 1919
in consequence of Demobilization.

G. Hipper Signature and Rank. Lieut

Officer i/c. R. E. A. Records. Dover (Place).

* Strike out whichever is inapplicable. † The word "Nil" to be inserted when necessary.

(2026). Wt. W 8211—P.P. 2329. 2,000m. 1/18. D & S. (E 1256.)

WARNING.—If this Certificate is lost a duplicate cannot be issued. You should therefore on no account part with it or forward it by post when applying for a situation.

N.B.—Any person finding this Certificate is requested to forward it in an unstamped envelope to the Secretary, War Office, London, S.W. 1.

At last! Dover 16th Feb 1919.
 The day he'd been looking forward to since 27th October 1915!
 Three years, three months and 16 days and I could never get him to say a single thing about any of it.
 Shortly after my Grandad arrived home in Liverpool his wife died in the flue epidemic.
 He rejoined Cunard and stayed with them until he retired in 1950.

Post script: Gregg Bemis, an American businessman is funding dives on the wreck of the Lusitania and is said to have already found a million rounds of .303 ammunition and sundry other supplies dubiously marked "cheese, butter and oysters" in an unrefrigerated hold. Further dives are planned in 2013.