

(If this protest meets with your approval, will you kindly sign with name and address, and get, if possible, your friends to sign it, and return to L. Pearsall Smith, 11, St. Leonard's Terrace, S.W.3.)

BURTON COURT.

January, 1919.

We, the undersigned, wish to call the attention of all those who treasure the beauty and amenity of London, to the grave danger which now threatens one of its most beautiful and historic sites. About two years ago the Ministry of Pensions was allowed to erect for the duration of the War and its settlement afterwards, some temporary buildings on Burton's Court in Chelsea - the open space which lies directly in front of the Royal Hospital, and forms part of its grounds, and which was in Sir Christopher Wren's plan, the essential and appropriate setting for this noble specimen of his architecture. Those buildings being, whatever their merits, quite out of keeping with their surroundings, destroy the beauty of this open space and almost completely conceal the northern view of the Hospital; but during the War this piece of perhaps necessary vandalism met of course with no objection. There is, however, now a grave danger that these erections may be allowed to remain and become a permanent blot on London, and against this we wish to make a protest. Our protest is not due to the depreciation of property in the neighbourhood which this disfigurement has caused; for private interests should give way to public needs; it is the loss to the public itself which we have at heart, and which we wish to bring to public notice. The appropriation of Burton Court has led the Commissioners of the Royal Hospital to compensate the Guards, its leaseholders, by allowing them for their use the grounds to the south of the Hospital-grounds which, thanks to the permission of the Commissioners, have long been the favourite playground of the neighbouring children, and from which they are now excluded. A serious deprivation has thus been inflicted on the residents of Chelsea and especially on those of its less fortunate classes. This deprivation, both to Chelsea and to London, may be, for a few years necessary; we have no wish to make more difficult the patriotic task of providing pensions for our soldiers; but that it should become a permanent loss, that for the convenience of a Government Department, for which a more appropriate and central office could be easily provided, Chelsea should be deprived of its largest open space, its children of their playground, and London, and the many visitors to London, of one of our most beautiful city landscapes; that Wren's noble plan should be defaced, and a great aesthetic treasure of the nation destroyed for ever, we feel to be neither necessary nor right, and we consider it our duty to protest against such an act of national vandalism before it is too late.

Burton Court

As can be imagined, it took a while after the upheaval of the war for things to return to normal. This letter shows the strenuous objections of essayist and literary critic, Logan Pearsall Smith, to the temporary buildings erected in front of the Royal Hospital. These housed the Ministry of Pensions but remained after the War has ended. He writes, "Those buildings being, whatever their merits, quite out of keeping with their surroundings, destroy the beauty of this open space...but during the War this piece of perhaps necessary vandalism met of course with no objections. There is, however, now a grave danger that these erections may be allowed to remain and become a permanent blot on London". However his protestations seem to have been unsuccessful as pension applications were still being dealt with at Burton Court as late as 1923.

Duke of York's Headquarters

The Duke of York's Headquarters was the home of the London Irish Rifles. During the First World War their recruitment campaigns were particularly innovative. *Actors Wanted* has been designed to appeal to a young theatre-going crowd and each detail of military service has been cleverly altered to fit the style of a play-bill.

The Royal Hospital

The Royal Hospital was bombed on 16th February 1916 and then again on 13th June 1917 by German R.VI bombers. The second raid severely damaged a house in the grounds, killing Captain Ernest Ludlow, his wife, Jessie, and two of their sons.



Ranelagh Gardens

The Chelsea Flower show ran in 1915 and 1916 but was used to raise money for the Royal Horticultural Society War Relief Fund. This aimed to supply the devastated gardens of France, Belgium, Romania and Serbia with seeds, plants and the necessary tools to repair the damage done by the war. The Great Tent was not erected in the final year due to a lack of strong, young men who could put it up.



Cheyne Walk

This mock-up of a real trench was constructed by the Holborn Battalion of the Volunteer Training Corps. The Cheyne Walk trench was one of several model trenches created in London to give the public some idea of what their family members and friends in the army were experiencing. They were probably nothing like the real thing in terms of conditions but it does show that the Government were trying to inform people, as well as promoting enlistment.





Barnett Barker's Grave

Six weeks after the 22nd Kensington Battalion was disbanded, its leader Randall Barnett Barker, was killed during the Second Battle of the Somme on 24th March 1918. The entry in the Brigade HQ diary reads simply, "Shells began to fall in and around Gueudecourt at 5.45pm. Brigadier General R. Barnett Barker, DSO and Captain E. I. Bell, MC (staff Captain) were killed by a shell." It would be another eight months before the end of the First World War. The 22nd Royal Fusiliers Old Comrades' Association were still visiting Barnett Barker's grave in France as late as 1930.



KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA'S GREAT WAR

Metropolitan Borough of Chelsea ROLL OF HONOUR.

The War Memorial Committee of the Chelsea Borough Council are desirous of compiling, in connection with the Local Official War Memorial, a complete list of all Chelsea residents (both men and women), who were killed, or have died from wounds, or other causes, whilst on active service, and would therefore, be glad if persons possessing information relating to such residents would kindly furnish me with the necessary particulars.

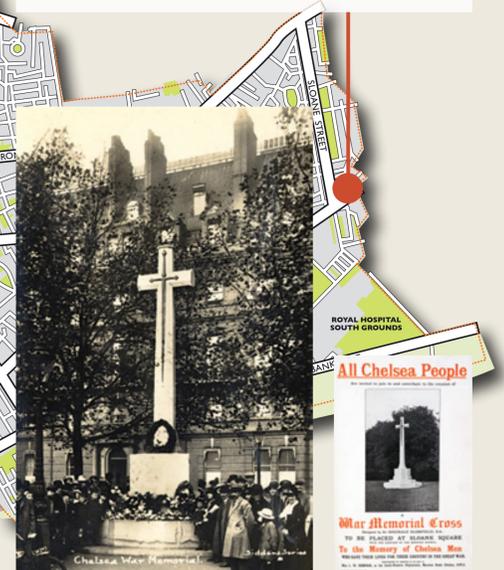
Forms containing details of the information required may be obtained at my office.

T. HOLLAND
Town Clerk.

Town Hall, King's Road, Chelsea, S.W. 3.

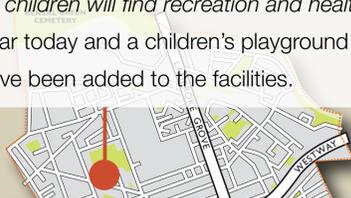
Chelsea War Memorial

This followed the model of the Cross of Sacrifice, which was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield for the British War Cemeteries overseas. It can be seen on the poster below which solicits subscriptions from 'All Chelsea People'. Despite the poster above requesting the names of the war dead for the Chelsea Roll of Honour, this information was not in the end included on the memorial itself.



Kensington Memorial Park

The Kensington War Memorial Committee decided a recreation ground would be a fitting tribute to those who died in WW1. Princess Louise opened the park in 1926. The Mayor R. Dudley Baxter said, "There could not have been a memorial more suitable than this Ground in which generations of happy children will find recreation and health". The park is still popular today and a children's playground and paddling pool have been added to the facilities.



Kensington War Memorial

The Kensington War Memorial Committee was set up in 1920 to decide how best to remember those who died during the First World War. The front of the memorial is decorated with a female figure, who carries a laurel wreath, as sculpted by F.W. Pomeroy. Her other hand reaches up to a banner which is inscribed with a quotation from Shakespeare's Henry V, "Awake remembrance of the valiant dead".



"MUFTI" IN CEYLON
Mrs. J. Westland, Dooroomadella, Gaunadua, Ceylon, whose son Norman, fell on July 16, 1916, while covering his comrades with his machine gun, forwards a subscription.

"I shall feel it an honour," she writes, "to belong to the Old Comrades' Association in memory of my brave boy whose loss I shall never get over."

Mufti Magazine

People across Britain, Europe and more distant parts of the world also found quieter, private ways in which to commemorate their dead. The mother of Norman Westland writes from Sri Lanka to take out a subscription to Mufti, the Old Comrades' Magazine of the 22nd Kensington Battalion, "I shall feel it an honour to belong to the Old Comrades' Association in memory of my brave boy whose loss I shall never get over".

IN MEMORIAM

The exhibition is assisted by funding from



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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA