

World War One News



Lest We Forget.

Monthly News from Home & Abroad



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November December 1914

22nd November: Trenches are established along the entire Western Front.

23rd November: The British enter Basra, securing oil supplies in the Middle East needed to supply most of the Royal Navy.

8th December:

The Battle of the Falkland Islands. A Royal navy task force sinks three German cruisers that were victorious at the Battle of Coronel in November. Only the SMS Dresden escapes.

16th December:

The German First High Sea fleet bombards Hartlepool, Whitby and Scarborough, killing 137 civilians and proving that the British mainland is susceptible to attack.

24th December:

The unofficial Christmas truce is declared. Though World War I had been raging for only four months, it was already proving to be one of the bloodiest wars in history. Soldiers on both sides were trapped in trenches, exposed to the cold and wet winter weather, covered in mud, and extremely careful of sniper shots. Machine guns had proven their worth in war, bringing new meaning to the word "slaughter." In a place where bloodshed was nearly commonplace and mud and the enemy were fought with equal vigour, something surprising occurred on the front for Christmas in 1914. The men who lay shivering in the trenches embraced the Christmas spirit. In one of the truest acts of goodwill toward men, soldiers from both sides in the southern portion of the Ypres Salient set aside their weapons and hatred, if only temporarily, and met in No Man's Land.

A. C. de Boinville, the local agent for men wanting to enlist.

Alexander Chastel de Boinville lived at 4 Picton Terrace - now called Tony Mor which is on the beach side of High Street. He was a 'retired commercial agent', 63 years old, born in France but 'naturalised' in Britain in 1875. His wife Melinda Maud de B. was born in Cheltenham. Opening the front door to men wanting to enlist would have been their 32 year old maid servant Emma Jane Thompson, born in West Bromwich. None of them could speak Welsh. (1910 Census)

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