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- 11 North Cambridgeshire Hospital
- 12 Wisbech Library - 0345 045 5225 - www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- 13 Wisbech and Fenland Museum - 01945 583817 - www.wisbechmuseum.org.uk



Sites of interest - see left



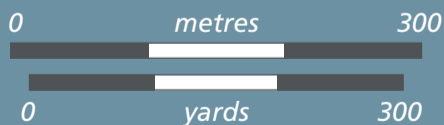
Major buildings



Walking route



Pedestrianised roads



**100\***  
**GREAT**  
**WAR**  
**14·18**

For more information on cycling in Cambridgeshire  
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The 'Great War: Between the Lines' project is funded by the  
INTERREG IVA 2 Seas programme. Its funds are distributed  
through the European Regional Development Fund and  
(Channel-North Sea)

Wisbech played a significant part in World War  
One by not only providing soldiers for the British  
Army, but also buildings for Regiments of the  
Army and also for a hospital. The map highlights  
a variety of locations that would have been  
of importance during the war and places of  
remembrance for those who made the ultimate  
sacrifice  
The 'Great War: Between the Lines' project is  
a co-operation between 16 partners in the UK,  
Northern France and Belgium. The project aims  
to facilitate cross-border activities which will  
encourage the commemoration of the Great  
War centenary between 2014 and 2018, ensuring  
that the sacrifices made during the Great War  
and the legacy of the war on contemporary  
society continues to be understood and  
remembered.  
This project will be running events,  
exhibitions and creating tourist routes to help  
commemorate the centenary of the outbreak  
of the First World War in 2014. For more details  
please visit our website www.great-war.can.  
co.uk where you can also view our growing  
digital archive and upload your own material.  
www.greatwar1418.eu

**Great War: Between the Lines**



**WISBECH**  
**GREAT WAR WALK**

**100\***  
**GREAT**  
**WAR**  
**14·18**



www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk





### 1 War Memorial

The War memorial is made of Aberdeen granite in the shape of a Celtic cross. It cost £1,036 to build and was unveiled by General Lord Horne on the 24 July 1921. It names 277 men from the town who died in World War One - although there are several casualties who are not listed. At the same time a fund was established for the benefit of the children of those

who had died.

This photograph was probably taken shortly after the unveiling ceremony. It shows the many wreaths laid by dignitaries and relatives including one in the centre representing the badge of the Cambridgeshire Regiment.

Image courtesy of the Fenland Collection.

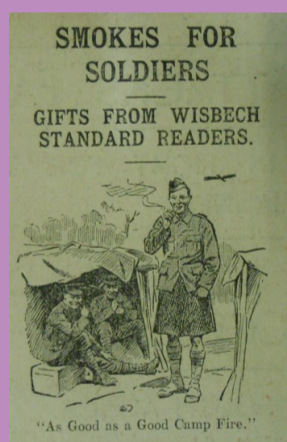


### 2 'Trevordale' – 21/21a Alexandra Road

This was the family home of F J Gardiner, owner and editor of the Wisbech Advertiser (now the Fenland Citizen). He wrote the noteworthy 'History of Wisbech and Neighbourhood During the Last Fifty Years 1848-1898'. At the start of the war, the eldest son, Grahame, was working for the family publishing and printing business. The younger son, Eric (Ernest Frederick) was aged 22 and working as an accountant. Eric joined up when war was declared and from the moment of his arrival in France up to his death in 1915 he kept a detailed diary. This is now kept in the Wisbech & Fenland Museum. His father's newspaper also regularly published letters and reports from him as part of its war coverage.



Image of Eric Gardiner's diary courtesy of the Wisbech & Fenland Museum.



### 7 Wisbech Working Men's Club and Institute – Hill Street

The Institute was founded by Jonathan Peckover in 1864. Many clubs and societies used the premises which also included an extensive library and rooms dedicated to reading, smoking, young men's conversation, a room for ladies and a telegram office. By 1898 membership numbered 1,200 and it had become a focal point in the town. During World War One telegrams containing the latest news from the Front were received here and pinned up just inside the door. Telephones were still rare and the newspapers were only published weekly, so this was the most effective way to share news quickly.

Image courtesy of the Cambridgeshire Collection © Wisbech Standard.

### 8 Wisbech Borough Cemetery – Mount Pleasant

More than twenty of the soldiers named on the Wisbech War Memorial are buried here together with others from the Walsoken area. The cemetery covers an area of about 11 acres and was opened on 31 October 1881. Throughout World War One a number of Wisbech soldiers, wounded in battle, returned to hospitals in England for treatment and to convalesce. Sadly many of these died from their wounds and their bodies were returned to the town for burial.



This is a photograph of the funeral of Trooper Bernard Charles Cockett who died of meningitis in March 1915.

© Lilian Ream



### 3 Selwyn Hall, Alexandra Road

In World War One Selwyn Hall became a military convalescent home. It was in July

1916 that, following the start of the Somme offensive, casualty numbers increased and more Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) hospitals were needed. To relieve pressure on the First Eastern General Hospital in Cambridge, the hall was hastily transformed into a hospital sufficient to accommodate eighty patients. It was demolished in the 1930s and replaced with offices. Selwyn Hall was built in March for Captain Selwyn MP. After his death it was brought to Alexandra Road, Wisbech (then Great Church Street) in 1895 by Mr J Baker. For many years the hall was a popular venue for meetings and concerts, seating 800. It was also known as Alexandra Theatre.

Image courtesy of the Fenland Collection.

### 4 15 South Brink

Now offices of Bowser, Ollard & Bentley solicitors, during World War One this building was the home of Wisbech Grammar School.

On a memorial now housed in the main school corridor of the current Grammar School on the North Brink, 19 names of past pupils who died in the Great War are remembered. During the war over 150 of the school's 'old boys' joined up, and of these 11 were decorated and nine were mentioned in dispatches. Among those mentioned was Arthur Vernon Poyser, son of Arthur William Poyser who was headmaster of the school from 1890 – 1920.



Image courtesy of the Cambridgeshire Collection.

### 9 Bowthorpe Hall

The hall was originally built in 1869 by George Dawbarn. From May 1915 it was used as the Officers' Mess and Headquarters for the Royal Engineers who were billeted in the town. They moved here from 8 The Crescent, which had been lent to them by Dr Gunson when the newly formed Cambridgeshire Engineers arrived in Wisbech in April 1915.



150 men were billeted in Wisbech for part of their training. They paraded every morning in the Market Place and did drill in the Park or the Corn Exchange.

© Lilian Ream

### 10 Wisbech Park

In 1919 the Treasury agreed to give 264 "war battered" tanks to various towns and cities in gratitude for their financial efforts.

Wisbech's tank was delivered from France on 5 August 1919 and officially presented on 13 August. The tank was named 'Kaloma' after a famous pin-up. Following a demonstration of its capabilities on a specially constructed obstacle course around the park, it was placed on a concrete plinth and fenced in. In September 1940 the tank was cut up to assist the

World War Two effort and Mr Horace Friend bought the scrap metal for £50.

Image courtesy of the Cambridgeshire Collection



© Lilian Ream

### 5 Corn Exchange, North Brink

During World War One the Corn Exchange became

the focus of troop recruitment and departures. At 5 am on 5 August 1914 the Wisbech Company of the Cambridgeshire Regiment Territorial Force was assembled and on parade at the Corn Exchange. Here the soldiers and their kit were inspected and preparations made for departure. As the time for their leaving neared the streets filled with people, all eager to give their fellow townsmen a hearty send-off. The Company was in the charge of Lieutenant Muirhead Collins Clayton who was the son of the Wisbech Mayor. In pouring rain, to the sound of a bugle, the men left the Corn Exchange and marched behind the Town Band to Wisbech East Station.

Image courtesy of the Cambridgeshire Collection © Wisbech Standard



### 6 Peckover House – Priscilla Peckover

Priscilla Peckover (1833-1931) was a committed Quaker and pioneer of the Peace Movement in Britain. In 1879 she formed the Women's Local Peace Association and in 1881 the Wisbech Local Peace Association. Amongst other things Priscilla edited a quarterly journal called Peace and Goodwill, translated peace tracts into as many as 15 different languages and provided financial help for many peace campaigners.

World War One did nothing to shake her pacifism. During the war she emphasized the views of the conscientious objector. At the meeting of the Wisbech Local Peace Association which she attended in December



1915, a resolution urging the total abolition of compulsory military service was passed. She was short listed for the Nobel Peace Prize, but did not win.

Image courtesy of the National Trust. © Sue James.



### 11 North Cambridgeshire Hospital

The hospital, adjacent to Wisbech Park, was built, furnished and fitted with beds for 16 patients by Miss Margaret Trafford-Southwell who was a descendant of an old Wisbech family. It opened on 2 October 1873 with the first patients being admitted in November. It was a cottage hospital for the Wisbech Union and all areas within nine miles of the town. The building has been extended over the years. In 1914 a new wing was added at the expense of Frank Mills, High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire, and by 1915 casualties from the war, including Belgian as well as British soldiers, were being treated here.

### 12 Wisbech Library

Visit the library to look at resources in the Fenland Collection. Here you can get access to local newspapers and books on the Cambridgeshire Regiment and the war in general. You can also start researching your wartime ancestors with FREE access to Ancestry.com

### 13 Wisbech & Fenland Museum

The Museum has numerous displays relating to the Great War as well as archives which include the diary of Eric Gardiner and photographs. In April 2014 you will also find the Great War – Between the Lines touring exhibition on display here.

