In my last address in 2019 I spoke about research I had done on GD372, the Waring of Lennel collection in NRS. I pointed out how the correspondence received by Lady Clementine Waring was a wonderful source for information on contemporary events, particularly the Boer War, in which her then lover took part. I now want to take the story forward into the First World War. My title is from the wartime diary of Sally Macnaughtan, novelist and friend of Clementine, about whom I will say more shortly.

I hoped to do more research in the collection beforehand, but although I did manage two good visits, the second just days before lockdown, there is still much to do. I have had to rely on my notes and online resources, particularly the British Library newspaper archive. A recent online review called this “the nearest thing there is to a time machine”. Perhaps the same could be said of archives.

Before I get on to today’s story, a brief resume of how we got here. Lady Clementine Hay, eldest child of the Marquess of Tweeddale, developed a romantic attachment with Ian Maitland during a shooting party on her parents’ estate at Yester, in November 1899. Maitland was eminently eligible, from a good family, an officer in the Scots Guards, but with one critical flaw: as the second born of twins he had no money of his own. He failed to persuade his wealthy Dundee relatives, or “dour Scotch folk” as he unwisely called them, to help out. Her parents declared marriage impossible and forbade further contact between the couple. Undeterred, Clementine continued a clandestine correspondence with Ian after his battalion was posted to South Africa. His frequent letters to her document the arduous conditions and his increasing disenchantment with the campaign and senior officers. Back at home, Clementine was having second thoughts, weighing up the prospect of a limited lifestyle with Ian against the allure of a wealthier husband. She consulted her chum Dudley Carleton, who summed it up by pointing out that “Bread and Cheese and Kisses is not Enough”. Though clearly torn, she took his advice and on 4th November 1901 married another Guards officer, Walter Waring.

The Warings’ wedding announcement in Tatler
His father, who died in 1887, had been a Liberal MP but also a wealthy railway contractor. Not surprisingly the wedding was a lavish affair and afterwards the Warings departed for Paris and the Elysée Palace Hotel, where fellow guests included the Sultan of Johore and Princess Toussoun.

The Elysée Palace Hotel, 1909

The hotel was already a favourite with Clementine, as she used its letterhead to draft one of her letters. However, this was only a brief stay, and the couple moved on to Marseille, en route to India. This was the fashionable way to travel to the East, avoiding the often rough seas in the Bay of Biscay, and in 1886 French railways had introduced a luxury overnight train the Méditerrannée Express. At Marseille the Warings joined the Orient Line steamer Oroya, which left on 13th November bound for India and the Far East.
By December the Warings had reached south India where the Madras Weekly Mail reported that:

“They leave Trevandrum for Courtallum by the beautiful route through the forests which was taken by the Viceroy last year, and if they are not held up by elephants in Travancore or dacoits in Tinnevelly they hope to regain the South Indian Railway before Christmastide.”

At the end of December they were in the Governor’s party that left Madras by special train for Calcutta. They stayed in India through the winter (much the most pleasant season to do so), and on 8th March 1902 they left Bombay on the SS Persia. A little over two weeks later they were again at the Elysee Palace, where they met up with Clementine’s brother and parents. Walter had to be back for service with his regiment by 1st April. Later that month they were reported to be back in town at “their pretty house in Grosvenor Square” as well as taking Bishop’s Farm near Windsor for the coronation season - convenient for Walter whose regiment, the 2nd Life Guards, was stationed nearby.

In March 1904 the Warings bought the Lennel estate at Coldstream in the Scottish Borders. It had been on the market for over a year at an asking price of £100,000.
Lennel House, Coldstream, around 1890

The main house was built around 1820 by John Paterson, and the estate included 5 farms and 2 miles of fishing rights on the river Tweed. Originally part of the Tyningehame estate of the Earls of Haddington, it had been owned by a branch of the family, the Baillie Hamiltons, for the previous 30 years.

As a fascinating aside, in the late summer of 1894 the family of Beatrix Potter leased the house for their customary 3 month holiday in Scotland. Beatrix who was then aged 28 and already a published artist, kept a secret diary in code. She wrote:

“Came to Lennel, Coldstream on Tuesday July 17th 94. Left King’s Cross ten in morning, got in about seven, after much slow shunting at Tweedmouth…………..

The house large, rambling, roundabout and not over-clean according to the servants, but sanitation good, and standing high.

A perfectly awful garden, full of broken bottles, rats and piebald rabbits. My father groaned intolerably about the untidiness for several days. If I can form an independent opinion I am disposed to like the place and it is delicious fresh air”

Beatrix’ father Rupert, a London barrister, was a keen amateur photographer and took a family portrait during their stay which is now in the V&A. Much later in life Beatrix revealed that Mr McGregor in the Peter Rabbit stories was at least partly based on the gardener at Lennel, whom she had described in 1894 as “that idle person, Mr Hopkirk”. The V&A also hold a pencil sketch she made of part of the interior of Lennel.

In September 1904 it was reported that Mr Waring from London, who had recently acquired the estate, proposed to spend about £7000 on additions and alterations; by the following year this had risen to £10,000. Plans were drawn up by Edinburgh architects Peddie & Washington
Brown to remodel the house and build new stables. The Warings leased the manse at Coldstream for the summer while the work was going on. A Berwickshire News reporter visited Lennel in April 1905 and was shown round by the clerk of works, who explained there would be a grand new entrance hall and oak staircase, several new bedrooms, a new wing for servants and electric lighting throughout. The gardens were also to be terraced down to the Tweed. The work continued into 1906 with at least 2 serious accidents: David Brown, a young slater from Edinburgh, fell from the roof of the stables and a painter, Robert Rankine, was injured when scaffolding collapsed.

But by New Year 1907 the Warings had moved into their new house. Walter had resigned his commission and in February was elected as Liberal MP for Banffshire. Clementine was a keen supporter of the Scottish Children’s League of Pity and other charities. There was also a busy social round reflected in the press reports. Their life settled into a pattern, staying in London for the season while Parliament was sitting, and spending time at Lennel during recesses.

This highly privileged and comfortable life was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of war in August 1914. Waring was already enrolled in the territorial force with his former rank of Major in the Lothian and Borders Horse. When war was declared, many of the force, including Waring, volunteered for duty overseas, while Clementine threw herself into patriotic activities in support of the war effort. The abrupt changes in their lives are clear in the correspondence in GD372. Waring’s letters home to Clementine give accounts of his overseas service and occasional comments on what she is doing.

We can get more idea of her work from her other correspondents, friends from the pre-war era, and soldiers she met. Converting Lennel House and the nearby Coldstream Mains farmhouse into an auxiliary convalescent hospital, and running them in a highly individual way brought her into direct contact with a large number of officers, some of whom wrote to her after their return to active service.

To illustrate this I have chosen 3 of her correspondents, a sailor, a soldier and a civilian. The sailor is Lieutenant Commander Bernard Buxton, who was serving on the battleship HMS King George V on the eve of war. Born in 1882, so a little younger than her, he was a society friend.

The first interesting exchange occurs just after war is declared.

In an undated letter which must be from September 1914, he writes:

“Great haste. … young Von Tirpitz, a charming gentleman & friend of mine, is a prisoner in Edinburgh, if you happen to be in & could say a civil word & best respects from me for fighting a very gallant fight against great odds, I would be so much obliged. Tell him to use my credit (name) to buy anything.

Oberleutenant zür See Wolfgang von Tirpitz was the son of Grand Admiral Tirpitz, Secretary of State for the German navy.
Sinking of the Mainz 27 August 1914

Photograph published in The Sphere, 26 September 1914

He was in the forward observation tower of the battlecruiser Mainz when it was sunk at the battle of Heligoland Bight on 27th August 1914. This was celebrated as a great victory in Britain, and led to the Kaiser ordering his ships not to venture to sea without his permission, much to Grand Admiral Tirpitz’ fury.

Young Tirpitz spent half an hour in the water before he was pulled aboard the British cruiser Liverpool. His capture caused quite a stir. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, who knew the young man personally, telegraphed his father to tell him his son was safe. Educated at Oxford and with an Anglophile mother and sisters, Tirpitz told a Daily Mail reporter: "I know Mr and Mrs Churchill quite well. I played tennis with Mrs Churchill at the Queen’s Club last summer and lunched with them both."

It is not clear if Clementine did visit Tirpitz in Edinburgh, but he was quickly moved to a POW camp for German officers at Dyffryn Aled, a stately home in Wales. I found interesting images online of Red Cross postcards, clearly intended for German prisoners at the camp to send home.
From there on 7th September Tirpitz wrote to Buxton with thanks for his good wishes and help and recalling the comradeship they had experienced at Kiel only a few months before. In June 1914 British warships had made an official visit to Kiel. Buxton forwarded this letter to Clementine. It was later to figure in an exhibition of war souvenirs which she organised at Lennel in June 1916 in aid of the comfort fund for the Lothian and Borders Horse.

**Young Tirpitz portrait**

Photograph of Wolfgang von Tirpitz from Illustrated London News, 5th September 1914
The British press initially regarded von Tirpitz as a decent young man. The Sheffield Evening Telegraph described him as: “a handsome, English-looking officer of twenty-seven” As attitudes to Germany hardened, rumours began to circulate that he was being treated too leniently. In June 1915 questions were asked in parliament about his release on parole, which was denied. Despite this, stories of preferential treatment continued and it was alleged he had gone for a “really good blow-out” at Christmas 1916. A further Parliamentary question in June 1918 asked how many times he had been allowed out of Donnington camp. The reply was that he had never been in that camp and that he had never been allowed out.

Attitudes worsened when the German navy began submarine attacks on British merchant shipping. This policy, developed by Grand Admiral Tirpitz was denounced as piracy in the British press, and the ‘handsome English-looking officer’ became “the arch-pirate’s son”. He was eventually repatriated to Germany in a prisoner exchange in January 1918.

Meanwhile Buxton was at Scapa Flow, with only occasional patrols, and by early 1915 his frustration turned to disillusionment. He writes:

“the middle of the north sea is not enlivening or amusing, merely dull, the only change being sporadic mine & submarine excitements – …. Anyone of us would give anything to be a trooper or a private at the front & would change tomorrow if we got the chance ……. And I, who always thought the only ship to be in was the newest & biggest, suddenly find that all the old ships are employed far more than our ships & most have been in action – from gunboats to 20 year old battleships – and we are kept wrapped up in cotton wool for ‘the day’ & nobody knows if it will ever come” (Lt Bernard Buxton, HMS King George V, 21st March 1915, GD372/83/2).

Later, he writes that he is bored:

“I don’t think any of us realized what a dreary entertainment a big war was – many looked on it as a glorified big game hunt – now we realize that it is composed of sorrow, weariness and danger – none of which really are pleasant.”

In August 1915 he called in at Lennel on his way south on leave, writing later to Clementine to thank her. By October he was back with the fleet at Scapa Flow and complaining it was “dull as ditchwater here except for continual gales of wind & rain & rain & hail”.

However, change was on the way. On 31st December he was promoted to Commander and posted overseas. In January he writes from the P&O steamer Medina, the letter posted at Aden, that he is on his way to Bombay where he will change to a smaller ship for Basra. This begins a series of letters from the little known campaign against Turkish forces in Mesopotamia. Buxton was to command HMS Mantis, a river gunboat.
HMS Mantis — launching at Sunderland

Photograph from Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens on flickr

Designed by Yarrows on the Clyde but built at Sunderland, Mantis was one of 12 Insect class gunboats originally intended for the fantastical mission of attacking the Austro-Hungarian fleet on the Danube, which would have required them to be dismantled, transported over land, and reassembled. Sense prevailed and Mantis was instead deployed to the Persian Gulf and sailed up the Tigris to engage with the Turkish forces. The ship’s logs, preserved in TNA, have been transcribed by naval enthusiasts and the texts are available online. Though terse and formal, they provide invaluable cross reference with Buxton’s letters which, wary of the censor, avoid giving any operational information.

Despite losing all his luggage, which he had sent on ahead on the SS Persia which was torpedoed, Buxton is hugely enthusiastic when he arrives in the Gulf. He tells Clementine how he had “a merry time in the P&O”, followed by 3 days being entertained by Indian army officers in Bombay. After a voyage in an old tramp steamer with a “very funny mixed group of passengers” he arrived at naval HQ in Basra. It was, he wrote: “a most interesting place, with mud houses and some sun-baked brick houses, all built on canals which one travels along in long dangerous looking boats like canoes.” He is charmed by the company of his naval colleagues, and delighted to find there is plentiful snipe to shoot and pigs to stick. So much so, he tells Clementine, that he is wiring India for additional pig sticking spears. He concludes: “everything is novel, everything is interesting & I love it”.

It is a far cry from Scapa Flow. There are disadvantages, including the food, the flies and the uncomfortable living, but, he writes: “This life is the most extraordinary change from the North Sea, here one is somebody & have to think for oneself & not for somebody else.” He confesses he is nervous about sniper fire from the riverbanks but less worried about the occasional shell. The weather varies enormously, from very hot to “fur coat cold”, and when it rains the ground turns into sticky, clayey mud.

In April Buxton writes how much he loves getting Clementine’s letters. He regrets he has not been able to write back “but you must know what we are trying to do & I cannot detach my mind from the work in hand. We are all doing our best here, that is rather a trite remark but I
hope you will realize it whatever happens.” This is a prescient comment, because that very
day the naval force were getting ready to try to break the Turkish river blockade and relieve
the besieged city of Kut. Some of Mantis’ crew including Lt Firman, had volunteered for a
daring mission.

**Tigris river steamer SS Julnar**

Photograph from Imperial War Museum © IWM Q57696

The idea was to use a fast paddle steamer, SS Julnar, to force a way to the city with supplies.
Firman was to be in command, with a reserve naval officer who had experience of the Tigris,
Lt Commander Cowley, assisting him. The Mantis log records that her crew were engaged on
damping down the Julnar that afternoon. The following day the log records how Julnar is
reported to be aground short of the city. In fact Turkish bombardment overwhelmed the
steamer some miles south of Kut and many of the volunteer crew were killed. Shortly
afterwards the garrison at Kut surrendered.
It was, Jan Morris later wrote: “the most abject capitulation in British military history.” A couple of weeks later, once it was public knowledge, Buxton writes how the fall of Kut was a heavy blow. It also falls to Buxton to inform Lt. Firman’s family about his fate, which was then still unknown. He tells Clementine that he has written to the Turkish commander (General Khalil Pasha) for news and he has promised to investigate. Both Firman and Cowley had in fact died in the action and both were later awarded the Victoria Cross.

In May Buxton reports that the Turks had allowed them to evacuate some of the wounded who were captured at the fall of Kut:

“and you can’t imagine how dreadfully thin & apathetic they were, no flesh on their bones & no strength left at all. It was all a sad business & there was rather dirty work at the surrender…many of our officers were looted of all valuables at the point of the bayonet…. However, taken all round the Turks are clean fighters….

Later Buxton reports how the long lines of communication, difficult climate and lack of water and supplies are taking their toll on their own troops: “I am afraid most of them long to get dysentery or a wound and so be sent away. The trouble is that we have so few troops that except the very ill ones, they can’t be spared.”

That is as far as my detailed look at his letters has reached, but Buxton continued in command of the gunboat until 1918. According to his service record at TNA, images of which can be downloaded for free, he was awarded the DSO for his prompt action under heavy fire which avoided Mantis running aground in March 1917.

The soldier I have chosen is Major Frederick Tubb, who served in the 7th Australian Infantry Battalion.
Major Harold Tubb

Although he and Clementine did correspond after his convalescence at Lennel, I have not yet identified letters from him in the collection. The reason I have chosen him is that he left a detailed diary, including the ten weeks he spent at Lennel in the autumn of 1915. So far, this is the only first hand account I have found of what life was like for convalescing officers. He also figures in photographs taken at Lennel, some of which I will show you.

Born in 1881, Tubb left school to work on his parents’ sheep farm. He volunteered on the day war was declared, and after training in camp in Egypt was deployed to Gallipoli. In August 1915 he was involved in the Battle at Lone Pine trenches, which was among the fiercest and most deadly of the Gallipoli campaign.
ANZAC troops attacked Turkish positions to divert attention from another offensive. They captured the enemy trenches on 6th August and then resisted counter attacks over the following three days. Though wounded in the arm and head, Tubb led his men in repulsing several attacks, rebuilding defensive barriers that had been destroyed by shelling. For this he was to be awarded the Victoria Cross. Seven VCs were won at Lone Pine and the cemetery is the site of the annual ANZAC commemoration.

Tubb was evacuated immediately after the battle on 10th August, initially to Malta and on 7th September he joined the hospital ship Garth Castle, arriving in Portsmouth on 13th September, where he was transferred by train to London and Barts Hospital, where most Australian wounded were sent. On Friday 1st October he and a fellow Australian, Lt Col Adams, got their travel warrants. “We are going to Coldstream to Lady Clementine Waring” On the way he records “Old England is a magnificent place and well worth fighting for.” Later the same day, 4th September he writes: “6.45 Arrived at Lady Clementine Waring’s about a mile from Coldstream stn (by car). Received by Lady Clementine, shown to our room & are now ready for dinner which is at 8.”

Tubb’s diary goes on to give details of living at Lennel. Days were spent playing golf, walking by the river, strolling in the gardens, or shooting pheasant and snipe.
Tubb with stag carcase, probably outside Lennel

Hunting parties were frequently arranged for Lennel’s residents both at Lennel and at Yester, Clementine’s family home. Tubb records several in his diary, usually for game. This photograph from the Australian War Memorial collection shows him posing beside a stag carcase. I am not sure about this: his weapon looks like a shotgun, not what one would use for shooting stags; nor does his diary record any stalking.

There were also visits further afield, arranged by their hostess. On 11th October Clementine takes him and his chum Lt McDonald to Edinburgh by car. After lunch at the North British Hotel (her father had been chairman of the NB Railway), they visit Holyrood Palace. On 13th October Clementine used her contacts to arrange for them to visit HMAS Australia, a battlecruiser lying in the Forth. They visit the National Gallery which, records Tubb: “is a topping place the first I’ve been in, the paintings are incomparable.” They stay over at the NB Hotel and on 14th October see the Scott Monument from the top of which he writes:

“Edinburgh is a grand city. The inhabitants are Scotch. ‘Aye, I’ll no say’. There is something unmistakable about the Scotch & one has no difficulty in picking out where folks (are) from amongst them. Col Adams and MacDonald are busy studying a guide book while I am writing this. Truly we are ‘Cook’s Tourists’.

Tubb and Adams walk across the Forth Bridge from North Queensferry the following day, 15th October, again almost certainly through Clementine’s contacts. Around this time his VC is announced in the press. He enjoys the congratulations of his army colleagues, but hates the publicity. Returning to Lennel from Berwick:

“I got an awful surprise. At the bridge was the whole blooming Coldstream folk with decorations, bouquets flags etc etc waiting for us. The mayor made a speech, someone
Madame Bulche……on behalf of Belgium presented me with a big bunch of flowers etc. I did feel a fool. With Lady Clementine’s help I escaped in her fine new car.”

**Group on steps of Lennel**

Australian, Belgian and British convalescing officers on the front steps at Lennel with their hostess seated in the centre, October 1915

On 19th October he notes that he was photographed again. This may be when this group shot was taken, held by the Australian National War Memorial. I also found it printed in the Daily Record for 26th October, under the headline Australian VC Hero at the Lennel, Coldstream.

Convalescence was largely a matter of rest and relaxation. Tubb says nothing of the injuries he had suffered, though a cartoon drawn by a colleague in his diary shows him with a bandaged head. In one entry he spends the day in bed writing letters and notes “the butler has just rubbed my back with embrocation. I am still in bed but feel much improved.” Later he goes back to Edinburgh for a medical board, hoping to be passed fit to return to the front, but is assigned to light duties instead. Just before leaving he complains of stomach problems which the local doctor diagnosed as indigestion, but later proved to be appendicitis. He also records that Clementine was in London but had been refused permission to go to France to visit the Front. On 12th November he left Lennel and caught the sleeper from Berwick to London. On 4th December he received the Victoria Cross from the King, an episode he describes in typically diffident terms.

Tubb grew up in a rural environment and seems to have lived a simple life before war catapulted him into the turmoil of Gallipoli, serious injury and evacuation to Britain, the first
time he had been there. Lennel and its upper class house party atmosphere must have been quite alien to him, but the fact that he takes it in his stride is perhaps a tribute to the care and hospitality shown by Lady Clementine, together with the camaraderie of her other military guests.

Tubb returned to Australia on leave in 1916. He later returned to duty and was posted to the Western Front. The last entry in his diary is dated 12th September 1917:

**Last page of Tubb’s diary, 12th September 1917:**

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“Am giving this to Frank tonight I must not take it into the line with me. I hope to enter up my future doings on this when we come out.”
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Eight days later he was killed in action at Passchendaele.
The third of Clementine’s correspondents, Sally Macnaughtan, was both a personal friend of Lady Clementine and a well-known novelist.

**Sarah Broom (Sally) Macnaughtan, novelist and humanitarian worker**

Born Dowanhill Gardens, Glasgow, 26th October 1864

Like Tubb she left diaries, now published, which we can use to cross check against correspondence. Interestingly, two of her letters to Clementine are reproduced verbatim as diary entries, perhaps indicating she drafted them before making the copy to send. A solitary and driven person, her diary was perhaps Macnaughtan’s only real confidante. Parts were intended for publication but others clearly were not, which makes them, along with her letters, a fascinating source.
Her diaries were featured in a 2014 drama documentary made for the Franco-German TV channel Arte, which was later shown by the BBC as 14 Diaries of the Great War with Celia Bannerman as Sally Macnaughtan.

Born in Partick in 1864, her father Peter was English, a merchant and shipowner with strong connections to the Clyde, while her mother was the daughter of a Canadian pastor. The Macnaughtans initially lived in Greenock, where Peter’s growing prosperity and social standing can be traced in the post office directories and local press. By the 1860s they were in Glasgow, first at Dowanhill Gardens and later at Belhaven Terrace on Great Western Road. Sally’s birth entry describes her father as Secretary of the British India Steam Navigation Company – which later became part of P&O. By the time of the 1871 census, there were 8 children and 6 servants in the household, including a nurse and under nurse.
Her novel *The Andersons*, published in 1910, concerns a shipbuilding family who live between Clydebank, a villa in the Clyde estuary and a London home, which also points to Sally’s comfortable upbringing.

She trained as a nurse and travelled widely, using her skills in conflicts in Brazil, Bulgaria and South Africa. With this background, it is not surprising that on the outbreak of war in 1914 she again volunteered her services, even though she was by then 50. She went to Belgium in September 1914 with Mabel St. Clair Stobart's Group, initially to Antwerp. When the city fell, Mrs Stobart took her group back to England and Sally joined Dr. Hector Monro's Flying Ambulance Unit. In her diary she described them as: “young pretty English girls in khaki and thick boots, coming in from the trenches, where they have been picking up wounded men within a hundred yards of the enemy’s lines”. They fell back to Furnes near the border with France and on 21st October established themselves in an empty Ecclesiastical College.

It was here that another British nurse, Matilda Emily Clark, described how “a little elderly lady … quietly offered her services, and……quietly busied herself setting things in order. Soon two big oil-lamps relieved the darkness and some large scissors that we had longed for lay to hand. The unassuming little helper had been out to buy them. …. It was Miss McNaughton, the writer …..”

Sally’s own account of her experiences, *A Woman’s Diary of the War*, was first published in 1915. A further edition was published after her death as *My War Experiences in Two Continents*, edited by her niece. In it we can trace some of her exchanges with Lady Clementine. She quickly recognised that the wounded soldiers from the front passing through the station at Furnes needed her help.

On 8th November she writes to Clementine: “My Dearest Clemmie, I have a big job for you. Will you do it? I know you are the person for it and you will be prompt and interested.” She goes on to explain that the wounded are suffering from hunger as much as from their wounds. “In most places, such as dressing-stations and railway-stations, nothing is provided for them at all, and many men are left for two or three days without food.” Sally’s idea is to get travelling kitchens. She has spoken to a Mr Burbidge of Harrods Stores, who can obtain old
horse vans which can be adapted. The Duchess of Sutherland already has one, which cost £15, but Sally thinks the design could be improved – or rather that Clementine could improve it.

Clementine appears to have replied quickly with points about design because 10 days later Sally writes again saying “the objection to the pattern is that those vans would overturn going round corners when hitched on behind ambulances.” Some wealthy people have provided motorised kitchens which travel round dressing stations. However, these are expensive - the lowest price is £300 and she thinks it would be difficult to raise this much. Instead she was now focusing on the problem of “those interminable waits at the railway stations.” Clementine obviously took note of this and worked fast because within 3 weeks she had supplied Sally with a portable soup cart.

**Furnes La Gare**


On 21\(^{st}\) November Sally set up her soup kitchen at Furnes station, on the line to France and the ports of Dunkirk and Calais.

From her kitchen, which was squeezed into a corridor 8 feet by 8 feet with 2 small stoves and various large marmites or pots, she worked with Belgian nuns, to provide coffee and soup for the men passing through.

On 1\(^{st}\) December she writes to Clementine to thank her for the little soup cart which is just what she needed and is now serving between 500 and 600 men per day. A week later she writes in her diary how the “little ‘charette’ for my soup… is painted red, and gives a lot of amusement to the wounded. The trains are very long, and my small carriage is useful for the cups and basins, bread, soup, coffee, etc. Clemmie Waring designed and sent it to me.”
By the start of 1915 Furnes station was becoming dangerous due to shelling and she moved to Adinkerke, nearer the French border. She confided to Clementine that it was “a loathsome little place like the back streets of a mining village in Scotland! Far too full of human beings & mud.”

**Adinkerke La Gare**


She goes on: “We have been given a nice little waiting-room and a stove”. A few days later she has a short holiday, and on her return finds that Furnes is being evacuated. She has to live 16 kms away in Dunkirk, and make her way to Adinkerke each day: “I just have to trust to lifts. I fill my pockets with cigarettes and go to the ‘sortie de la ville’ and just wait for something to pass…”

Threats to her work were not only from the enemy. On 9th February 1915 she records how “a Belgian officer came into Adinkerke station, claimed our kitchen as a bureau, and turned us out on to the platform. I am trying to get General Millis to interfere; but indeed, the rudeness of this man’s act makes one furious.” Later she complains to Clementine in a letter that a new army rule means men cannot be fed on the trains, so she has had to send the two soup carts to first aid posts.

Shortly afterwards, Sally fell ill and spent a few weeks in bed at Dunkirk, returning to Adinkerke at the end of February. She managed to find a place to stay only 2 miles from her station at La Panne, “a cold seaside place amongst the dunes”.

21
Canal at Adinkerke

She tells her family in a letter that their only real excitement is a barge on the canal at Adinkerke: “It is the property of Maxine Elliott, Lady Drogheda, and Miss Close, and to go to tea with them is everyone’s ambition.” These were three English society ladies. She tells Clementine they have a butler on the barge.

https://www.geneanet.org/cartes-postales/view/5946521#0

On 26th May she is at Adinkerke when casualties, including “les anglais” arrive from the front with gas asphyxiation. She describes how they twitch and shudder even when asleep.
She thinks they need “a long draught …. of some clean, simple stimulant” and finds red wine or whisky and distilled water “in some way acted as an antidote to the poison. Also it pulled them together, and they got some quieter sleep afterwards.”

In early June 1915 Sally Macnaughtan returned to Britain to do a lecture tour. In August the Daily Record reported that she was to speak in Glasgow, Clydebank and Greenock.

**Hotel Astoria Petrograd**

Opened December 1912. Famous guests have included Vladimir Lenin, George W Bush, Margaret Thatcher and Rasputin. Image accessed: https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/europe/st-petersburg-s-hotel-astoria-if-these-grand-old-walls-could-talk-8429903.html

In October she was travelling again, this time to Russia to help the war wounded. In November she writes to Clementine from the Hotel Astoria in Petrograd asking for help as the condition of the refugees is quite awful. She needs supplies, and clothes which should be sent via Archangel. She then went south to Armenia to help with the refugee crisis in the aftermath of the genocide.
On 22nd March 1916 she is at the British Legation in Tehran and tells Clementine she is unwell and is coming home. Persia, she writes, “is not a country to fall ill in”. Nor is it in the tropics; there has been thick snow till she got to Tehran. She was first in a Russian hospital, not an experience she wishes to repeat. The Legation doctor is treating her so that she can travel, but with no railways this means a long journey by car on atrocious roads. Dr Neligan and his wife looked after her in their house at the Legation compound until the end of April, when she left Tehran on what was to be her last journey: 300 miles by car to the Caspian Sea, then by steamer and train to Petrograd and on to Helsingfors, now Helsinki, where she took a boat back to Britain. She did reach London, but died at her home in Norfolk Street a few weeks later, on 24th July 1916.

Three of Clementine’s correspondents, all of whose lives were profoundly affected by the First World War. Three different people, three different stories. In each case the archive provides a vivid insight into how individuals react to world changing events. The correspondence provides us with a new and highly personal perspective. We learn how the individuals think and how they feel. We hear their voices and share their feelings. This, I believe, shows us a human dimension to the war and gives us a new understanding of the past.

Buxton, a career naval officer, had achieved his ambition serving on the navy’s biggest and newest battleship, but we see his gradual realisation that this is not what he really wants and he is much happier with his own command of a much smaller ship in difficult conditions.
Tubb, an uncomplicated Empire patriot, suffers serious injury in intense fighting in Gallipolli, before arriving in the country house atmosphere of Lennel. Despite his experiences, his belief in the war is unwavering declaring that ‘Old England is well worth fighting for’. He makes a passionate appeal to the young men of Mindrum to join up during a concert. Macnaughtan, older and with previous experience of war, is driven principally by humanitarian instinct, but is equally committed to the cause, as demonstrated in her lecture tour.

All three share a scepticism for authority: Buxton delighted realising he will be 200 miles upriver from HQ; Tubb denouncing the decision to abandon the Dardanelles campaign as a betrayal, believing if Australia was in charge they could reach Constantinople; Macnaughtan critical of military bureaucracy, both Belgian and British, and giving a feminist critique of their poor decisions, contrasting these with the good organisation and results whenever women are in charge. Going back to my title, Macnaughtan’s words seem to sum up the ambivalence she and others feel about the war: “one wants you at home to think it’s all heroic and splendid”. We hear her subtext clearly: the reality is neither heroic nor splendid.

That is as far as I have reached in my part 2 researches. There is still a great deal more in this collection, not least the long series of letters Lady Clementine received from her husband, first from France, then from Greece and, latterly from Gibraltar, where he worked for naval intelligence. To do this however, I need to get back to the Historical Search Room. If that goes well, I can see part three looming ……

George MacKenzie,
Presidential Address,
Scottish Record Society, September 2021