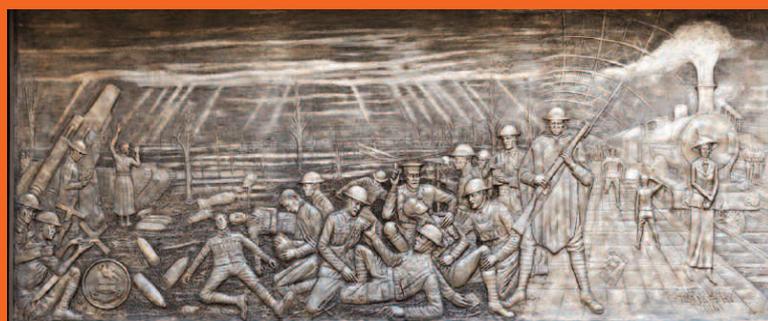


HISTORY SOCIETY

SUMMER 2014

Royal unveiling for First World War memorial to the Liverpool Pals



One hundred years to the day that the first volunteers signed up at St George's Hall, the Earl of Wessex unveiled two 15ft bronze plaques at Lime Street Station telling the story of the historic first Pals' enlistment at St George's Hall on 31st August 1914 and their service on the 'killing fields' of Belgium and France.

By 10.00am on that first day 1,000 men (a battalion), some of them little more than boys, had signed up. Lord Derby who made the decision to raise a battalion of Liverpool men said to them, "This should be a battalion of pals, a battalion in which friends from the same office will fight shoulder to shoulder for the honour of Britain and the credit of Liverpool." Within a week another two battalions of Pals had been formed. By the end of October no less than four battalions of Liverpool Pals had been assembled.

Lord Kitchener was most impressed by Lord Derby's pioneering achievement and immediately promoted the idea throughout the whole country. Within two months more than fifty towns had formed Pals battalions.

Of the four original Pals battalions that sailed to France in November 1915, 20% were dead by the end of the war. With the wounded, the total casualty figure was about 75%.

The friezes, which cost £85,000 – mostly raised by public subscription – are the work of Liverpool's 'sculptor of choice', Tom Murphy, who was also responsible for the fine tableau of Captain Noel Chavasse double VC and comrades in Abercromby Square and the 'Blitz Memorial' in St Nicholas churchyard. Already on Lime Street Station concourse are two other sculptures by him – local personalities Ken Dodd and Bessie Braddock MP.

Personally, I felt that a better location could have been found: the friezes are ignominiously sited high above the entrance to a betting shop on one side and a photo booth on the other and an entrance to Merseyrail in the middle. They also need to be better lit and there should be an information panel explaining exactly what the plaques represent including the identification of the three main figures on the left hand frieze: in fact they are Lord Derby shaking hands with Liverpool's Lord Mayor with Lord Kitchener looking on in the background.

Finally, a reminder that an informative article: *The Liverpool Pals in the Great War*, written by Tony Wainwright, can be found in the Society's current *Liverpool History Journal* No. 13.

(Ron Jones, Editor)

Programme Secretary and Committee Members – An Appeal from the Chairman

Tony Melling, our Programme Secretary for the past few years, has felt the need to resign for personal reasons and your Chairman, John Tiernan, now appeals for a volunteer amongst our membership to step forward as soon as possible. Tony has agreed to look after the arrangements for our talks for the remainder of this year and has put together the Society's Talks Programme for the whole of 2015 so much of the work for the next twelve months or so has already been done.

However we do need somebody from the beginning of next year who is prepared to liaise with speakers for the eight talks and one visit which have already been scheduled and to help put together a talks programme for 2016. This is an important role

as our monthly meetings at Hope Everton are the only occasions when our members are able to get together. In the first instance, any member who is willing to help out should contact John Tiernan
Email: tiernan_john@hotmail.com or Tel: 0151 486 6379

Over the past year there have been numerous comings and goings amongst the membership of the LHS committee. For example, there have been changes relating to the positions of Webmaster, Journal Editor, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Hon Librarian!

We now find ourselves in the position of needing to appoint additional members to the committee. The committee meets eight times a year for about an hour and a half, usually on the Wednesday morning of the week prior to the talk later that week. Your Chairman therefore appeals for volunteers among our 300+ members who can help ensure the smooth running of the Society and its various activities. Again, please contact John Tiernan.

13 April 2014 – Bill Sergeant

NOEL CHAVASSE V.C. and BAR. M.C., and other Liverpool heroes

Meeting report:
Netta Dixon



©Photo: Ron Jones

Bill Sergeant, a retired Liverpool Police Officer who is a WW1 history enthusiast and is a member of the Liverpool Pals Memorial Fund Committee, spoke to us about the exceptional achievements of Noel Chavasse (1884-1917), a medical officer in the 10th Liverpool Scottish Regiment and the King's Liverpool Regiment. Bill told us of his own efforts to provide a memorial to Noel Chavasse, entitled 'Liverpool Heroes' showing him with a stretcher-bearer and a wounded soldier. That statue, pictured left, is to be found in Abercromby Square

Noel Chavasse and his twin brother Christopher were born in 1884 in Oxford where his father was a C of E minister. In 1900 his father became the second Bishop of Liverpool and went to live in the Bishop's Palace at 19 Abercromby Square with his four sons and three daughters. The sons went to the fee-paying Liverpool College in Lodge Lane where the pupils were encouraged to take part in community life; Noel helped at the Industrial School in Grafton Street. He also showed athletic prowess in rugby, tennis and athletics and the twins represented Britain at the 1908 Olympic Games in the 400 metres race.

After Noel had been to Oxford University, he qualified as a doctor in Liverpool and worked at Liverpool's Southern Hospital as an orthopaedic surgeon. Once he saw a little cripple boy crawl across the road and decided to help him. He operated on the boy and soon he was walking again and later served in the Merchant Navy.

When war was declared on the 4th August 1914, Noel, a member of the Volunteer Force (the TA) – he was already military-minded and went camping with his college's Cadet Force when he was 16 – joined the 10th Battalion of the King's Regiment as a medical officer. This regiment was connected with the Liverpool Scottish, a regiment that Noel was very keen to join. In November 1914, the TA and the Liverpool Scottish were sent to train in France and, in June 1915, took part in their first

pitched battle at Hooge near Ypres. The Liverpool Scottish started with 23 officers and 519 men and at the end of the day only two officers and 141 men were left who were capable of fighting. As medical officer, Noel Chavasse risked his life all through the battle to tend the wounded and was recommended for the VC. Instead he was awarded the MC for gallantry and on his return to England was presented with his medal by King George V.

When he returned briefly to Liverpool he was moved by the number of women who approached him, desperate for news about their menfolk whom they hadn't heard from for weeks. When he returned to France, he got the stretcher-bearers to retrieve the identity discs from the fallen so that he could write comforting letters to their relatives. Invariably, instead of the truth, he would tell them what they wanted to hear, that their relative was the most popular man in the battalion and that he died instantly and suffered no pain.

In September 1916, at the Battle of Guillemont, Noel and his stretcher bearers risked their lives to treat the wounded in the open during the 'Golden Hour', recognising that treatment during the first hour after injury offered the best chance of survival. He saved the lives of twenty wounded men and for this he was awarded the VC. Inevitably, there was a big fuss in Liverpool over the award, but the modest Noel believed he was, "...simply doing my duty".

During a battle at Wieltje near Ypres in 1917, Noel suffered two head wounds but refused treatment. When an artillery shell exploded in his bunker, Noel was badly wounded in the stomach but managed to crawl out, again refusing treatment. Eventually, he was taken to a dressing station but died two days later in Grandeville hospital. He had already lost one brother, Aiden, that year.

Noel had been engaged to his cousin Gladys, but did not live long enough to marry her. His dying words were, "Tell Gladys that duty called and called me to obey." He was buried next to the hospital where he had died and Bill told us that his was probably the most visited grave on the Western Front.

Noel was awarded his second VC posthumously; this was a bar on a ribbon. He was the most highly decorated British officer in the war and one of only three people ever to be awarded a double VC. Noel's medals were sold for £1.25m two years ago to the Tory Peer and businessman Lord Ashcroft. His collection of more than 180 VCs is on display in the Imperial War Museum, London.

When Bill and his friends realised that there was no public memorial to Noel Chavasse, they commissioned sculptor Tom Murphy (who has created memorials to Bill Shankley, Johnny Walker and William Gladstone to name but three of many) and managed to raise £120,000 for the statue which now stands in Abercromby Square. Unveiled in 2008, it was placed so that Noel is facing the front door of his former home, 19 Abercromby Square. Bill wrote four books in a series called *Liverpool Heroes* to raise money for the statue which immortalises Noel Chavasse and fifteen other Liverpool-born VC holders.

8 June 2014 – David Hearn

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JESSE HARTLEY (1780-1860)

Meeting report:
Ron Jones

David Hearn, our very own Hon. Treasurer and a mature history student at Liverpool University, delivered an illustrated talk about Jesse Hartley, one of Liverpool's most famous, albeit adopted, sons. Hartley was born in Pontefract and left a legacy that is still highly visible today. He has contributed significantly to the renaissance of Liverpool, especially through the revival of the South Docks where much of his work is to be found, most famously in his crowning achievement, Albert Dock.

Hartley's father Hugh was a mason, bridgebuilder and architect – David explained that people in those days often did a number of jobs – and Jesse followed in his footsteps. He trained as a stone mason and a built bridge that took the Great North Road over the River Aire at Castleford and one over the River Colligan in County Wexford. He also completed the Grosvenor Bridge at Chester, the longest single span bridge in the world at that time, when its architect, Thomas Harrison, had to withdraw due to ill health.

Despite having no experience whatsoever of constructing docks, he was appointed to the job of deputy to the corrupt Dock Surveyor John Foster. Within a matter of weeks, Foster, together with his clerk and measurer, had resigned. Foster had apparently purchased enough stone for Princes Dock, at an inflated price, to fill the actual dock as well as the retaining walls! As an outsider, Hartley was seen to be untainted by local corruption. He was duly appointed Acting Surveyor and eight months later, Surveyor at an annual salary of £1,000 (around £42,000 in 2005 according to National Archives estimates).

Hartley leased two quarries in Scotland and even had a ship built, the *Oak*, so that stone could be shipped direct from the quarry to Liverpool with no middle man involved.

Foster's 'back-office team' had been small but Hartley increased his own direct labour force dramatically so that it averaged 1,650 weekly wage-earners rising at peak times to over 2,000. He needed all these men for he was a prodigious worker with grand ideas. When he joined the dock estate consisted of 123 acres; by the time he retired 37 years later it was 866 acres. He had built, rebuilt, deepened or altered the entire Liverpool Dock system. With one exception all of Hartley's dock were built from land reclaimed from the Mersey. The exception was Stanley Dock, now undergoing its own renaissance.

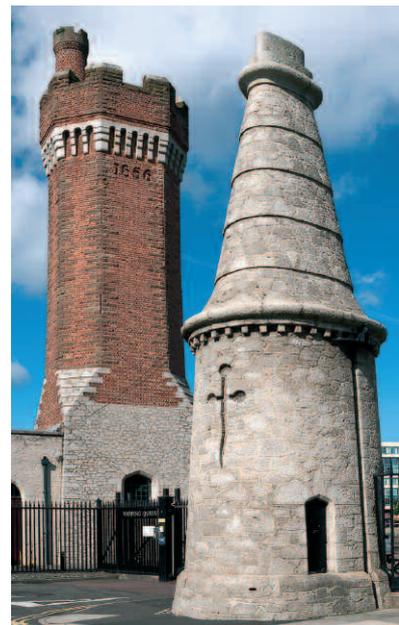
In today's parlance Hartley could be described as a 'workaholic' and a 'control freak'; David told us that Hartley inspected every one of his sites every day. He was very much 'hands-on' and was a stickler for detail. As a result, casualties among the workforce fell. David said that he also set up a benefit society for his men, a subject that needed further research. Hartley hated appearances in public or before committees; for instance, he sent his son, J. Bernard Hartley, whose salary he paid out of his own pocket, to London to deal with Parliamentary matters on his behalf. He was ineloquent, never wrote any articles or presented papers and left behind very few images of himself.

Among Hartley's works referred to by David were the cyclopean Dock Wall itself, a railway system that ran the length of the docks, the Victoria Tower, the Canada Dock Accumulator Tower (demolished), graving docks and, of course, Albert Dock. David also mentioned that Hartley had worked with Telford on the construction of St Katherine's Dock, London, and that his responsibilities as Liverpool Dock Surveyor included all the lighthouses from Anglesey to Liverpool.

Hartley's Albert Dock was a revolutionary design for its time that was secure from pilfering and was fireproof – no timber was used in its construction. Later it became the first dock in the world to have a hydraulic cargo-handling system; Hartley even designed a hydraulic crane. The first ships entered the dock in 1845 and it was formally opened by Prince Albert the following year. His two-day visit was the first occasion that royalty had deigned to grace Liverpool with its presence. One wonders how the tongue-tied Hartley responded when the Prince presented him with a special gold medal!

Jesse Hartley died in 1860 whilst still working, having outlived his wife by 24 years, and was buried in St Mary's churchyard on Derby Road, Bootle where he had lived. At his death he was earning £3,500 p.a. (over £200,000 p.a. by today's values) and was the highest paid engineer in the country.

Right: Hartley's fantastic, in the true sense of that word, policeman's lodge and accumulator tower at the entrance to Wapping Dock. ©Photo: Ron Jones.



Calling all Wordsmiths!

Work has already started on compiling the 2015 LHS Journal *Liverpool History* and we would be really interested to hear from anybody who would like to submit an article. A 'big' article would normally comprise about 3,000 words plus images but small articles of under 1,000 words are more than welcome too. In the first instance please contact Ron Jones (ron@rja-mpl.com)

In the event of inclement weather...

As we go to press in the midst of an Indian Summer it seems strange giving out a bad weather warning notice! However, to be on the safe side, as we approach winter, Fred Forrest has kindly agreed that, in the event of extreme weather conditions on the days of meetings, you can phone him (0151 474 6561) to check if the meeting has been cancelled.

BIG History Show is back!

The ever-popular Big History Show is returning to St George's Hall on the weekend of **4th and 5th October 2014**. Apart from a wide selection of exhibitors (including the Liverpool History Society!) representing local history, heritage and family history groups across the region, there will also be guest speakers giving talks on a wide selection of local history themes.

The speakers on Saturday 4th October are Stephen Guy, Steve Binns and Ken Pye. There'll also be a 'Question-time Panel Show' hosted by Radio Merseyside's Roger Phillips. The following day's speakers include John Harrison, George Skelly, Ken Rogers, Frankie Connor and James O'Keefe.

Admission is £2.50 each day and Guest Speaker tickets are £1.50 each. Opening times are 10am to 5pm both days.

LIVERPOOL HISTORY SOCIETY: OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2014

*26 October 11am to 4pm	Special Joint Study Day with Historic Soc of Lancs & Cheshire Mercantile Liverpool: Prosperity and Private Philanthropy	Five expert speakers. See separate flyer for details
16 November	The growth of freemasonry in 19th century Liverpool	Dr David Harrison
14 December	The Deane Road Jewish Community	Saul Marks

*Nominal charge applies. All meetings take place at Hope University campus, Shaw Street, Everton, Liverpool L6 1HP

Bookshelf

Liverpool a history of 'The Great Port' Adrian Jarvis, 2014. Liverpool History Press 280 pages, 170 colour and b&w photograph, maps and illustrations. Paperback.

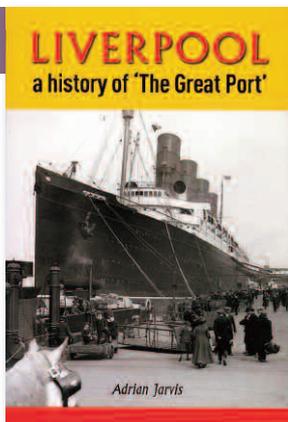
ISBN 978-0-9573833-1-9. £14.99 (**£9.99 to LHS members**). Contact Ron Jones: ron@rja-mpl.com or Tel: 0151 637 1122)

'Covering the most crucial periods in the history of the Port of Liverpool, this book tells the fascinating story of Liverpool's rise from insignificant village to Britain's 'second city of Empire', with a port infrastructure unmatched anywhere in the world. Illustrated with more than 170 images, some of which are published here for the first time, Adrian Jarvis' highly readable – and, at times, irreverent – 'warts and all' account takes the lid off how the Port of Liverpool was really run.' Thus the book advertises itself on the rear cover – and it does just that, and does so splendidly, with an excellent interweaving of Dr Jarvis' wide-ranging commentary with images that have been carefully selected by Ron Jones, over half of which come from his own Merseyside image archive.

Divided into 14 thematic chapters, and containing vastly more about Liverpool's evolution than simply its dockland development, the book covers the three century period from the 1670s and the town's lease of land from Lord Molyneux, to the late 1970s and the Port's 'near death experience'. Along the way, and based on immensely detailed research, Dr Jarvis systematically and with delightfully dry humour demolishes several legends that have grown up over the years, including the 'strange tale of Birkenhead' and some treacherous quicksand, and the deception carried out by the promoters of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway to avoid their true intentions being 'laughed out of Parliament as the chimerical fantasy of a collection of dangerous lunatics.'

Although the author expresses uncertainty as to whether the book will be of interest both 'to academics and to the serious general reader,' Dr Jarvis has in fact, with great skill, achieved precisely that. With several dozen copies having already been eagerly snapped up at the Society's June AGM, this book will be a 'must' for many more members and is surely destined to become the definitive account of 'The Great Port.'

Graham Jones

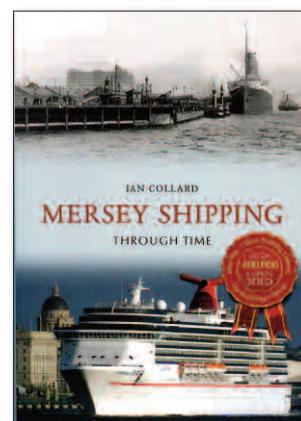


Mersey Shipping Through Time Ian Collard, 2014. Amberley Publishing. 96 pages, 191 colour and black & white photos. Paperback. £14.99.

ISBN 978-1-4456-3986-4.

Another publication by Amberley in its series of heavily illustrated local history books. It begins with a succinct two and a half page summary of Liverpool's nautical history from 1207 to the present day but the illustrations, mainly of ships but also a few of the vital railway connections, cover only the period from 1850. Amongst the illustrations are also copies of about a dozen adverts for the competing shipping and railway companies which illustrate well the intensity of work on the docks at the time and how Liverpool's trade touched all corners of the world. Definitely a book for the shipping enthusiast but it will probably also be enjoyed by those with a more general interest in local history.

Fred Forrest



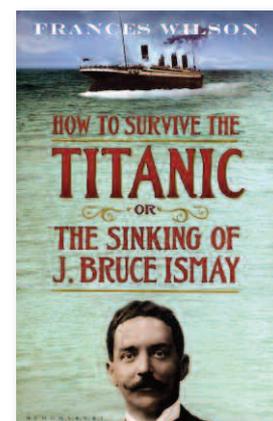
How to Survive the Titanic or The Sinking of J. Bruce Ismay

Frances Wilson, 2011. Bloomsbury Publishing. 328 pages, 64 black and white photos and illustrations. Hardback £18.99 / Paperback £8.99. But both versions are available on eBay at 99p plus £1.80 p&p or Amazon at 1p plus £2.80 p&p. ISBN 978-1-4088-0922-8 (hardback) and 978-1-4088-2815-1 (paperback).

The story of the Liverpool-registered and owned White Star liner *Titanic* never ceases to fascinate and that is particularly the case here as it concentrates on Ismay the Crosby-born Chairman and Managing Director of the White Star Line.

Was he the coward that the American press claimed him to be or was he innocent of that charge as judged by the British Board of Trade Enquiry chaired by Lord Mersey? Did he, as owner, pressure Captain Smith to go faster despite the iceberg warning or was he just an ordinary passenger with no influence over the captain? These and other crucial questions are answered in this intelligently written book. For a pound or a penny (plus postage) it's well worth a punt!

Ron Jones



Chairman: John Tiernan ● **Administration Secretary:** Fred Forrest (fred_forrest@hotmail.com) ● **Membership Secretary:** Miss J Hughes, 34 Eton Court, Liverpool, L18 3HQ (membershipsecretary@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk) ● **Programme Secretary:** Vacant – volunteer urgently needed! ● **Treasurer:** David Hearn (treasurer@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk) ● **Newsletter Editor:** Ron Jones (ron@rja-mpl.com) ● **Hon. Librarian:** Josie McCann (librarian@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk) ● **Postal Correspondence:** Fred Forrest. LHS Administration Secretary, 32 Rugby Drive, Aintree Village, Liverpool L10 8JU.
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