

WALKING WITH GHOSTS



Folkestone Harbour Arm Station

11 & 12 November 2023

A multimedia artwork, interweaving past and present to explore the impact of war on Folkestone over the last 100 years.

Created in partnership with Imperial War Museums
14-18 NOW Legacy Fund.



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

University of
Kent



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Welcome

On Armistice Day 1928, the Vice Chairman of the Imperial War Graves Commission, the body responsible for commemorating the war dead of the British Empire, asked BBC radio audiences to imagine the dead of the Great War 'moving in one long continuous column, four abreast'. He then continued:

"As the head of that column reaches the Cenotaph the last four men would be at Durham. In Canada that column would stretch across the land from Quebec to Ottawa; in Australia from Melbourne to Canberra; in South Africa from Bloemfontein to Pretoria; in New Zealand from Christchurch to Wellington; in Newfoundland from coast to coast of the island, and in India from Lahore to Delhi. It would take these million men eighty-four hours or three and-a-half days, to march past the Cenotaph in London."

It was this powerful image, of an army of ghostly soldiers marching ever onwards, that inspired us to create 'Walking with Ghosts'. We knew immediately that the only place for an artwork exploring the legacy of war could be Folkestone: the site from which countless thousands crossed to and from the battlefields, and which has long been the home to soldiers, refugees and witnesses to war.



On a cold November afternoon in 2021, as we stood listening to the relentless pounding of the waves, the myriad ghosts of the past felt almost palpable. We saw long-dead soldiers marching past us and we heard their final farewells to loved ones. Intermingling with the jingle of bridlery, the whistle of steam trains, and the crunch of hobnail boots, we also heard the echoes of refugees arriving from Belgium in 1914. Looking out to sea on this penetratingly cold afternoon, the appalling continuity with our own time was unavoidable. That November it was Syrians; within a few months it would be Ukrainians.

'Walking with Ghosts' provides a glimpse of the stories, lives and experiences of the ghosts we encountered in November and many more. As you walk with the ghosts of the past, the artwork invites you to reflect on the legacy of war over the last hundred years and to consider those who live with war's lingering touch today.

Professor Helen Brooks and Professor Mark Connelly

Gateways Partnership, University of Kent
November 2022

Image: Antony Gormley 'Another Time XVIII' 2013, commissioned by the Creative Foundation for Folkestone Triennial 2017.



Programme

'Walking with Ghosts' is a multimedia artwork, interweaving past and present to explore the impact of war on Folkestone over the last 100 years. It was first shown at Folkestone Harbour Arm station in November 2022.

The immersive artwork lasts exactly 30 minutes and then repeats. You are welcome to join at any point, to sit and experience the whole piece, or to move through the installation in your own time.

Working with our partners at Palm Deaf we have embedded British Sign Language interpretation and subtitles, to make the experience Deaf Friendly.

Stream the 'Walking with Ghosts' soundtrack and download the script, for free, at www.gatewaypartnership.org.uk/walking-with-ghosts or by scanning the QR code.



Visitors experiencing the ghosts emerging, 14 November 2022.

Walking with Ghosts 2022: Folkestone Remembers



Walking with Ghosts 2022 begins with a service of remembrance marking 104 years since the end of the Great War.

'Walking with Ghosts' premiered in 2022 and was shown between 11am on Friday 11 November and 11pm on Monday 14 November.

This marked the length of time it would have taken the British and Imperial war dead to march past the Cenotaph. Over those four days, many people shared their memories and stories. Ninety-six year-old local, Stanley Robinson, shared one of the poems he had been inspired to write after visiting the renovated Harbour Arm station.

For Stanley, writing poetry for the first time in his nineties is a way to "capture the essence of a time when Folkestone played a pivotal role in the history of our nation, to pay tribute to those who gave so much and to keep their memory alive for future generations."

We would love to feature local stories, creative writing and art as part of future showings of 'Walking with Ghosts'. To find out more, email us at gatewayspartnership@kent.ac.uk

The Lesson

Stanley Robinson

Who can tell where hasty words may lead?
 Angry words may turn to reckless deeds
 So, let me take you back a hundred years and more
 Once again the nations are at war
 In the corridors of power, decisions had been made
 Little could they know of the price that would be paid
 The battlefield is claiming many lives
 We are standing on the platform as another train arrives
 Cheering crowds had lined the streets to see them marching by
 How many of them knew the reason why?
 What brought them to this cold and muddy field?
 They are locked in mortal combat and none of them would yield
 Grim and heartless came the dawn
 And now a tragedy was born
 The heartache of their last farewell
 The message of the tolling bell
 Stunted trees in tribute stand across the baron wasted land
 In that place no bird would sing
 The prince of darkness had become the king
 As the final battle ended it was time to count the cost
 Whoever may have won the day,
 humanity had lost
 Can there ever be a winner in that dark and deadly game?



The Harbour Arm station becomes a site of remembrance, November 2022.

Empty chairs around the tables, would nobody admit the blame?
 The hopes and dreams of bright and eager youth denied
 A sacrifice to vanity and pride
 Some had talked of distant places and the wonders they would see
 But the future held a promise that was never meant to be
 They were proud to serve their country, and many fought and died
 But now they remain there once more, side by side
 On random fate the future would depend
 The 'enemy' had now become a friend
 Fields of conflict now returned to fields of grain
 And there is peace throughout the land again
 Little now remains from all that went before
 And the morning bird may now be heard once more.

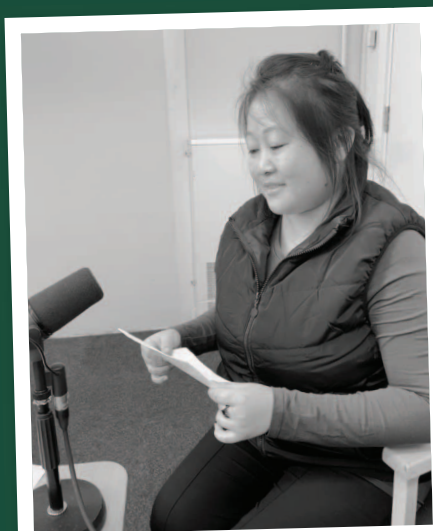
Cast

Greg Miller Burns
Elliott Francis
Emma Gregory
Pradip Gurung
Ashrin Gurung
Jessica Hynes
Michael Knighton
Capt (Retd) Gyan Limbu
Kuiehang Limbu
Jess Nesling
Alex Phelps
Sarita Rana
Sarah Thurstan
Alina Vinnichuk

British Sign Language interpretation
by Jason Tennant



Rory Dempsey



Sarita Rana

Creative Team

Creative Production and Dramaturgy
by Helen Brooks

Historical Production by Mark Connelly

Walkshops curated and led by Elspeth
Penfold in partnership with Sarah
Carpenter and Fourth Wall Folkestone

Visuals and Projection Mapping by
Howard Griffin

Documentary Filming and Photography
by Ross Barnwell

Artwork Filming and editing by Joey
Quan Hui Lin and Alex Newe

Oral History workshops by Jayne
Thompson

Accessibility by Palm Deaf BSL Training

Music composed by Thom Robson

Music mixed by Olly Shelton

Music mastered by Cicely Balston

Violin & Viola by Natalia Tsupryk

Cello by Fraser Bowles

Double Bass by Rory Dempsey

Sound Design by Thom Robson

Soundscape mixed by Ian Marriot-Smith

Costume supplied by Andy Robertshaw

Security provided by Gurkha Security
Services

Promotional material by Kent Design
and Print Centre.

Excerpt from "I Was in a Hurry," by
Dunya Mikhail, translated by Elizabeth
Winslow, from THE WAR WORKS HARD,
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Excerpt from 'Our Lady of the Harbour'
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Quarrington.

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Walking with Ghosts: Exploring History through Art



Walking with Ghosts 2022

'Walking with Ghosts' premiered in Folkestone in November 2022. It is the result of collaboration between numerous artists, community members, and schools. It is part of the IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund, a national programme of 22 artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict and the 2023 programme is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Everything you see and hear in the artwork is taken directly from original IWM film and photographs, newspaper accounts, postcards, interviews, poetry, memorials, letters and diaries. The original score, which plays throughout and accompanies the images and voices, was inspired by these historic sources and by the sounds and sights of Folkestone Harbour and its historic station. We are grateful to Folkestone Harbour Arm, who enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to support and stage this immersive experience.

The Artwork

Over thirty minutes the six movements of the artwork take you on a journey through time, whilst the great army of ghosts marches ceaselessly out to war along platform one. As you turn to platform two, photographs give brief snapshots of the men, women, and children whose lives have been shaped by war over the last hundred years: the selection reflecting the theme of each movement. Meanwhile the number of Great War dead steadily rises.

Our first movement, which takes the same title as the artwork – ‘Walking with Ghosts’ – is a collage of Siegfried Sassoon’s poetry. It opens with ‘Picture Show’ read by Folkestone resident and internationally-renowned actress, director and writer, Jessica Hynes. The only poem featured in its entirety in the artwork, ‘Picture Show’ prompts you to contemplate the inherent ghostliness of film, with those captured on screen suspended permanently between life and death. They do not grow old, while we do.

From here we invite you to go back in time to the First World War. In Movement, 2 ‘Departures’, extracts from letters, diaries, and postcards, written by those who found themselves at Folkestone Harbour Arm station during the conflict, are interrupted by the official sailing schedule from March 1915. Throughout the music, the atmosphere of wartime Folkestone and the anticipation of departure is driven by the rhythm of

the station’s work. Movement 2 ends with an extract from May Wedderburn Cannan’s First World War poem ‘Quiet Night-Time over Rouen’, reminding us that the experience of those at Folkestone echoed across the channel.

The parallels between the experiences of war in different times and places are picked up in Movement 3, ‘Displaced’. Here, the experience of three different refugee communities, from 1914 to the present, speak to each other across time. The dangers of escape and the perils of journeys across the waves are infused throughout Robson’s soundtrack. Two accounts are those of observers, reflecting the difficulty experienced by many refugees in recounting their experiences. The third is a first-person account from one of Kent’s first Ukrainian arrivals. It is read by Alina Vinnichuk, a Ukrainian actress who fled the country in March 2022.



Vinnichuk also reads the extract from Dunya Mikhail's poem 'I Was In A Hurry' which ends Movement 3. Mikhail is the first contemporary Iraqi woman poet to be translated into English and her work addresses themes of war, exile and loss.

The theme of loss leads us into Movement 4, which takes the word as its title. 'Loss' was inspired by, and features extracts from, conversations with Gurkha veterans and their families at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre. The experiences shared spanned multiple conflicts, from the Brunei revolt and Indonesian Confrontation in 1962-3, to the Falklands War in 1982 and most recently, the War in Afghanistan from 2001. Here the artwork encourages you to confront the reality of war and its legacy for those who experience it first-hand as combatants.



Gurkha veterans sharing their experiences



Alina Vinnichuk

Conversations with Folkestone Nepalese Community group members also played a key part in shaping Movement 5, 'Folkestone'. As a site-specific artwork, we were always going to have a track which focussed on Folkestone as a place. It was, however, only through historical research and conversations with community members and residents, that it took form. Movement 5 takes you on a journey from pre-war 'peacetime' Folkestone, to the home front of Folkestone during the Great War. It ends with a reflection on the importance of Folkestone as home to the Nepalese community. At the heart of this movement is a powerful statement of Folkestone's welcome to those cast out of their homelands in 1914.

The artwork ends with our sixth movement, 'Remembrance'. The twenty-six names chosen for Movement 6 include a number of those killed in the Tontine Street bombing of 25 May 1917, as well as representatives of each of the nationalities buried in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery.



Shorncliffe Military Cemetery

These include Jules Emiel Oosterlinck (Belgian) who died at the start of the First World War, George Melbourne (Australian) who died aged 20 in 1917, and three men who died in 1918: Carlos Acurcio (Portuguese), Busack Mvinjelwa of the South African Native Labour Corps who died aged 52, and Yang Chi Chu of the Chinese Labour Corps. From the Second World War, we remember



Tontine Street memorial plaque

Herbert Bliss MacDonald (Canadian) who died in July 1944 and Freyderyk Marszal (Polish) who died after the conflict's conclusion in 1946. Those commemorated from the Tontine Street bombing include the youngest victim, Annie Beer, aged 2, who was killed along with her two brothers, aged 11 and 9, and her mother, aged 28. Also named are Lily Bowbrick who died in 1925 after eight years paralysed in hospital; and Agnes McDonald, a Canadian stenographer waiting to go to France for ambulance work. The final name is of the oldest victim, Isabelle Wilson, who was eighty when the bomb hit in 1917.

Experiencing the Artwork

'Walking with Ghosts' is designed so that you can experience it from start to finish, or join at any point and dip in and out of the different movements. The artwork repeats each half hour. To guide your experience, the timings of each movement within each hour are as follows:

Movement 1, 'Walking with Ghosts'
00:00-05:30 and 00:30-35:35

Movement 2, 'Departures'
05:30-11:30 and 35:35-41:30

Movement 3, 'Displaced'
11:30-15:10 and 41:30-45:10

Movement 4, 'Loss'
15:10-20:00 and 45:10-50:00

Movement 5, 'Folkestone'
20:00-25:15 and 50:00-55:15

Movement 6, 'Remembrance'
25:15-30:00 and 55:15-00:00

I Was In A Hurry

Dunya Mikhail

Yesterday I lost a country.
 I was in a hurry,
 and didn't notice when it fell from me
 like a broken branch from a forgetful tree.
 Please, if anyone passes by
 and stumbles across it,
 perhaps in a suitcase
 open to the sky,
 or engraved on a rock
 like a gaping wound,
 or wrapped
 in the blankets of emigrants,
 or canceled
 like a losing lottery ticket,
 or helplessly forgotten
 in Purgatory,
 or rushing forward without a goal
 like the questions of children,
 or rising with the smoke of war,
 or rolling in a helmet on the sand,
 or stolen in Ali Baba's jar,
 or disguised in the uniform of a policeman
 who stirred up the prisoners
 and fled,
 or squatting in the mind of a woman
 who tries to smile,
 or scattered
 like the dreams
 of new immigrants in America.
 If anyone stumbles across it,
 return it to me please.
 Please return it, sir.
 Please return it, madam.
 It is my country...
 I was in a hurry
 when I lost it yesterday

Our Lady of the Harbour

Tony Quarrington

No fey fairy tale figure this Folkestone
 maid
 But mature, full-bodied, strong and wise
 Rooted firmly on the East Cliff rocks
 Staring intently out on Channel skies.
 Some try to clothe her in pity, some in
 fun
 Hats, bikinis, scarves, have all adorned
 her form
 But she is perfect as she is – broad,
 naked, deep
 Impervious to pounding waves and
 winter storm.

Her hair forever drenched from tidal
 spray
 Slicked back and sweeping down along
 her spine
 Her lusty feet replace the mermaid's tail
 Resist and spurn the bitter lapping brine.
 To the dogs released from summer
 servitude
 On Sunny Sands she's just another stone
 Their ball might bounce upon from
 owner's throw
 Or where they can relieve themselves
 alone.

A bare six summers has she settled there
 Yet it seems to have been so many more
 As if she'd witnessed history's changing
 tides
 Declining fish trade and the road to war.
 When packet steam trains trundled
 down the hill
 Into the harbour station and France
 bound ships

When English tommy first tasted foreign
food
Snails, mussels, garlic, frites instead of
chips.

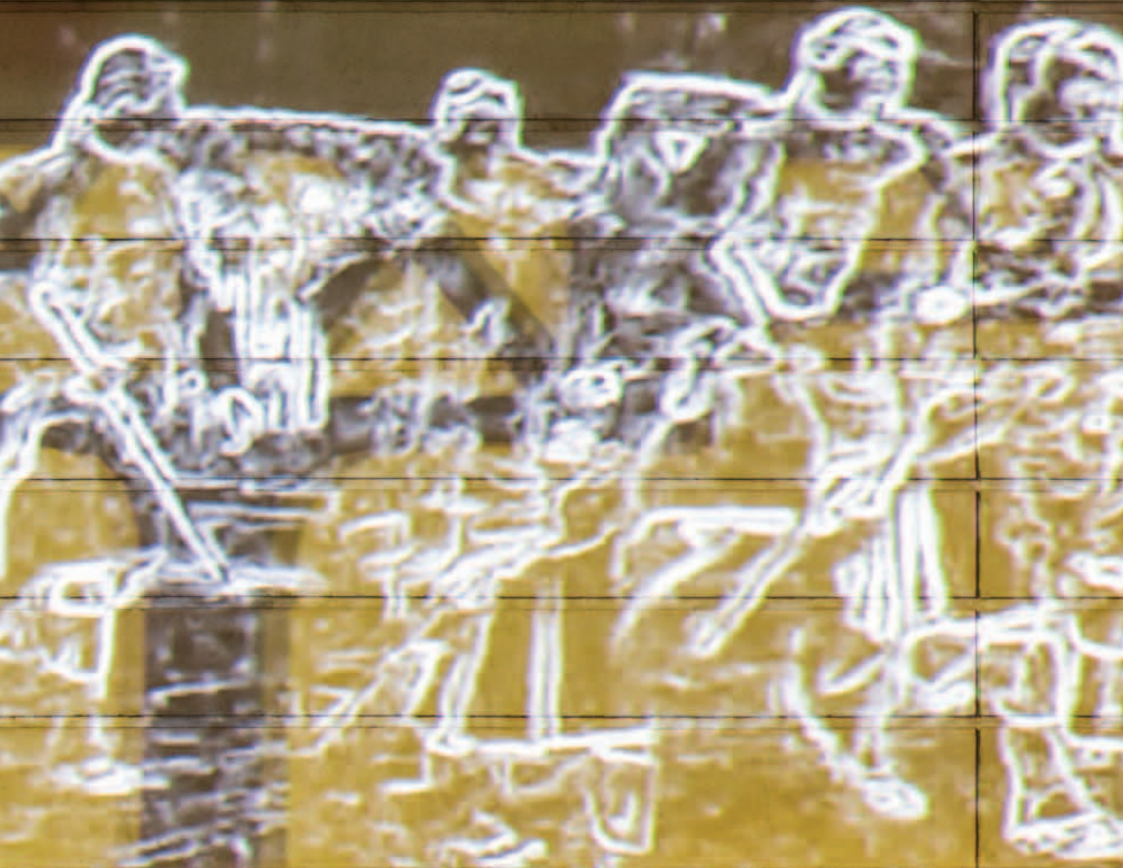
I trudge across still slippery lower rocks
To reach the stone she's made her
coastal home
And sit at her feet to see what she might
see
While thwarting tourists with their
camera phones.
Could she be looking to France or
Belgium's shore?
But rather her gaze looks upwards to
the sky
As if in thanks this piece of Heaven
should be
Where Cornelia Parker chose that she
should lie.



Oblivious to the sights and sounds
around
The squawk of seagulls or wave smashed
shores
Mindless of games that gleeful children
play
Upon the drying beach when tide
withdraws.

Unheeding of the dirt and noise of
building sites
Coronation Parade and Harbour Arm
are now
She sits serene, majestic 'midst the rush
A friend and confidant to all that vow.
Margate may have its Turner, Blackpool
its Tower
Brighton its i360, St Ive's its Tate
But none sing of the sea like our
Folkestone girl
Stately and brave at England's coastal
gate.

I rise from the rocks with wave washed,
creaking knees
While hers are as fresh and smooth as
first she came
Two hours have passed since I joined her
on that rock
A better use of time I could never dare
to claim.
Two ferries cross each other in Dover's
strait
As the sun slides down over a silvery sea
Over her shoulder through darkening
clouds
The coast of France gleams and bids
bonne nuit.



4 4A

Community Partners

'Walking with Ghosts' is the result of creative collaboration with a number of partners. More information on each can be found on our website: www.gatewaypartnership.org.uk/walking-with-ghosts

Folkestone Nepalese Community UK
Fourth Wall Folkestone
Herne Bay Day Resource – East Kent Mencap
Folkestone Academy
Folkestone School for Girls
Turner Schools
Palm Deaf BSL Training



Folkestone Nepalese Community UK, Senior Citizens Group



Gurkha veterans



About

The Gateways Partnership began life as Gateways to the First World War, a centre for public engagement with the centenary of the First World War, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and based at the University of Kent. The Gateways Partnership was launched in 2021 to continue and develop this work, with a particular focus on creative engagement with history and heritage.



The Gateways Partnership is based in the School of Arts and School of History at the University of Kent. Its creative directors are Helen Brooks, Professor of Cultural and Creative History and Mark Connelly, Professor of Modern British History.

IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund

Walking with Ghosts is part of the IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund, a national programme of 22 artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict and created in partnership with Imperial War Museums and 14-18 NOW, the official UK arts programme for the First World War centenary. Further information can be found on the website:

www.iwm.org.uk/partnerships/subject-specialist-network/14-18-now-legacy-fund

Folkestone Harbour Arm

Folkestone Harbour Arm was originally the railway terminal for the Folkestone-Boulogne Ferry and the departure point for soldiers on their way to the Western Front. Folkestone Harbour was sold in the 1980s, together with the ferry company Sealink, as part of the Government's privatisation programme. Since 2014 Folkestone Harbour Arm has been re-imagined and repurposed as a place where people come to promenade, enjoying magnificent views, a wide choice of good food and drink, live music, arts events and other entertainment.

alking with Ghosts



(Gurkha) Army service record and medals

Acknowledgements

Numerous friends, colleagues and collaborators have contributed to 'Walking with Ghosts'. Not all can be named here but our thanks go to each and every one, including:

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To all the team at Imperial War Museums.

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Sources

Movement 1, Walking with Ghosts

Siegfried Sassoon, 'Picture Show', 'Words for the Wordless', 'Human Histories', 'All-Souls' Day', 'Presences Perfected', and 'To One Who Was with Me in the War'.

Movement 2, Departures

'Cross-Channel Services', Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 6 March 1915; Ella Bickersteth, 'The Bickersteth Diaries' (Pen & Sword, 1996); Folkestone Pier postcard from 'Charlie Boy' to Mr & Mrs T.F. Baxter,

Southampton, dated 3 December 1918 (www.Kentww1.com); Radnor Park postcard from Malcolm to Mrs J Hartley, Bolton, dated 9 August 1918 (www.Kentww1.com); Harry Lauder, 'A Minstrel in France' (Andrew Melrose, 1918); Guy Chapman 'A Passionate Prodigality' (Nicholson and Watson, 1933); Herbert Howard Cooper, IWM 9424. Reel 2; Aubrey Smith, 'Four Years on the Western Front, by a Rifleman' (Odhams, 1922); May Wedderburn Cannan, 'Quiet Night-Time Over Rouen' ('In War Time', 1917).



Filming with Jason Tennant, Joey Quan Hui Lin and Alex Newe

Movement 3, Displaced

'Wednesday', Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 5 September 1914; Ciaran Duggan, 'Kent Refugee Action Network project co-ordinator says asylum-seeking children deserve 'more empathy'', Kent Online, 20 July 2020; Chris Hunter, 'Medway's first Ukrainian refugees recount 1,700-mile journey from war-torn home', KM Online, 6 April 2022; Dunya Mikhail translated by Elizabeth Winslow 'I Was In A Hurry' from 'The War Works Hard', (2005).

Movement 4, Loss

Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, 14 November 1914; oral history conversations with members of Folkestone Nepalese Community Group, June-July 2022; Sir Herbert Read, 'To A Conscript of 1940'.

Movement 5, Folkestone

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Kuiehang Limbu recording for Movement 5

Cheriton Herald, 5 September 1914; Tony Quarrington, 'Our Lady of the Harbour' (<https://writebythesea.uk>).

Movement 6, Remembrance

Janice Brooker, 'The Great Folkestone Air Raid, Friday 25th May 1917' (<https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~folkestonefamilies/genealogy/Tontinestreet.htm>); Shorncliffe Military Cemetery register, Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org/find-records).

Visual sources

A full list of images and film footage featured in each movement can be found on the Gateways website. Images and film footage with kind permission of Imperial War Museums; Step Short, Folkestone; and the Gateways Partnership Collection. Photo of Siegfried Sassoon by George Charles Beresford (1915).



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