

# Pathways to the Past

The newsletter of Connelly Contours Limited

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## On your Marks...

With Christmas approaching this edition of my newsletter has a distinctly festive flavour.

Inside you can read about the atmospheric landscape in which the Christmas truce of 1914 took place, as well as the wonders of a West End Christmas.

My first Christmas Carol London walk took place last week, and my Upstairs, Downstairs London walk will have a seasonal feel throughout December and January. See the next page for dates, and a full list of walks. Book on the website, or email me.

If you're struggling for present inspiration, why not gift a voucher for one of my London walks? You can choose a specific walk and date, or a voucher for any scheduled walk. And once you've finished the Quality Street, an exclusive walk for your family group might be a seasonal highlight!

The article on memorials within cemeteries on the Western Front shows that whatever the season there is always something new to be discovered in these haunting places.

Thank you for all the positive feedback on my first newsletter. I hope to see you on a walk or battlefield visit soon.

*Mark*



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## Western Front



## Degrees of commemoration: memorials within cemeteries



The Imperial War Graves Commission was guided by its principles, rather than chained to them, which meant that pragmatism and what was perceived as the greater good informed its decisions. In turn, this means that a wander around the cemeteries can reveal fascinating anomalies and unexpected features. Among the most interesting are the memorials of individual military units. These memorials had their roots in the wartime cemeteries, and came under the jurisdiction of the Army's Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries section. As individual cemeteries often contained a number of discrete plots of men from the same unit, their comrades had the opportunity when they were buried to place memorials over their graves, instead of the standard wartime wooden cross. Materials used varied, as did quality of craftsmanship and very nearly permanent in terms of foundations and footings.

[Click here to read the full article on my website about these fascinating features.](#)

## Forthcoming London walks

### Friday 6 December

2.30pm 'Bah! Humbug' A Christmas Carol

### Saturday 7 December

10.30am Upstairs, Downstairs: The squares, shops and spooks of London's West End

2.30pm 'Bah! Humbug' A Christmas Carol

### Friday 20 December

2.30pm 'Bah! Humbug' A Christmas Carol

### Monday 30 December

2pm 'Bah! Humbug' A Christmas Carol

### Saturday 4 January

2pm 'Bah! Humbug' A Christmas Carol

### Saturday 11 January

10am Introduction to London's war memorials

2pm London's First World War memorials

### Friday 24 January

2pm Upstairs, Downstairs: The squares, shops and spooks of London's West End

### Saturday 25 January

10.30am Railway stations and passengers: King's Cross to St. Pancras

2.15pm Upstairs, Downstairs: The squares, shops and spooks of London's West End

See the website for later dates, including a new walk Spires and towers: the churches of the City of London.

**All walks are 2-2.5 hours and cost £25 per person**

[Click here to find out more and book](#)

## London



## A West End Christmas



The great department stores of London look their finest at Christmas as they shimmer in festive lights and decorations. If you stroll along Oxford Street, Regent Street, Piccadilly or any of the other major shopping streets of the West End at Christmas you'll see the wonder of their architectural forms.

Selfridge's is the epitome of late nineteenth/early twentieth-century department store design; a classical palace of consumption... And luring everyone into this vast store is the clock above the main entrance depicting The Queen of Time standing on the prow of her ship, a classical trading vessel full of wonders to be admired and purchased. Designed by Gilbert Bayes (check out his war memorials in Todmorden and Hythe, and his sculptural work in the Jerusalem war cemetery), the clock reminds all tardy shoppers to get their act into gear... and later begins the countdown to the January sales!

[Click here to read the full article on my website about the rich iconography of London's famous department stores.](#)

## Christmas Day 1914



The informal ceasefire that occurred on the Western Front at Christmas 1914 has gained legendary status and is an event that haunts the imagination. Perhaps like many, my understanding of what occurred on that day is intimately intertwined with a piece of television: the documentary, *Peace in No Man's Land*, made by Malcolm Brown and first broadcast on BBC1 on Christmas Eve 1981.

[Click here to read the full article on my website about the atmosphere and landscape of the Christmas truce.](#)



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