

# Notre Dame Battlefields Trips 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025 Parents' Information Evening

Please...

- make sure you have signed in at the front (Mr Whiteman and Miss Plant)
- students to sit with their parent (s)
- return any forms to Mrs Shields/ Rev Otieno/ Mr Squire/ Mr Whiteman/ Mr Squire/ Mr Plant
- have mobile phones off/on silent
- collect hotel details from front



# THE BATTLES OF YPRES

## The First World War

YPRES

This ancient city has throughout history been a target for invading armies, never more so than during the first World War when it was reduced to rubble by German artillery. In 1915 there were so many civilian casualties that those remaining were compulsorily evacuated. After the war Ypres was entirely rebuilt and received the British Military Cross and the French Croix de Guerre.

### THE BATTLES 1914-17

The Germans advancing through Belgium in 1914 were halted at Ypres in Flanders and pushed back to the low ridge surrounding the city to the east and south-east, the territory within the constantly shifting Allied defence lines becoming known as THE SALIENT. Here the British and their Allies resisted repeated attempts by the Germans to break through to the Channel ports. There were three main battles. **FIRST YPRES:** 19 October-22 November 1914. The German advance from the ridge was repulsed although they nearly broke through at Gheluvelt on the Menin Road. Both sides suffered heavy losses. **SECOND YPRES:** 22 April-25 May 1915. In their renewed attack the Germans used poison gas for the first time and almost achieved a breakthrough, but Canadian and British reinforcements saved the situation. Again there were heavy losses. The front line of the Salient was now reduced, making the city more vulnerable to artillery fire. **THIRD YPRES:** 31 July-10 November 1917. The major British offensive aimed at dislodging the Germans from high ground succeeded brilliantly in the Messines area but a bloody assault on Passchendaele Ridge left both sides exhausted. Nearly a million lives were lost in the Ypres battles.

**FRONT LINE OF SALIENT 7 June 1917**

**IN FLANDERS FIELDS**  
In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below

**FINAL LINE OF SALIENT - extent of Allied gains at end of THIRD YPRES November 1917**

44,000 soldiers are buried in this sombre cemetery. Many were students killed in the opening assault of **First Ypres**

**Third Ypres** ended in November 1917 with the capture of Passchendaele Ridge and ruined village, after Haig's decision to press on with the offensive in appalling conditions resulted in one of the bloodiest battles in history. Of those who died 12,000 are buried and 35,000 commemorated as missing in Tynne Cot, the largest British war cemetery in the world

**PASSCHENDEALE**  
The crater, now a pond, was formed by a mine sprung by the British in 1915

**HILL 62**  
In 1916 the Flanders front was relatively quiet but in June the Canadians fought a fierce, ultimately successful, battle in the Sanctuary Wood area for possession of Hill 62

**HILL 60**  
The two adversaries of the Second World War, Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler, served in this area during the Great War

**MESSINES RIDGE**  
Gained by the Germans in November 1914 strategically important Messines Ridge was retaken as a prelude to Third Ypres after the explosion of huge mines, the shock of which was felt in London

**POLOESTEERT**  
The Memorial bears the names of 11,447 British soldiers missing from many desperate battles fought in the woods throughout the war



**1916 BATTLE OF THE SOMME**

**BRITISH FRONT LINE July**  
The assault by British and Newfoundland troops on 1 July was unsuccessful. It took 4 months to capture the village

**GERMAN FRONT LINE 1 July**  
Communities in the north of England mourned the heavy losses in the Pals Battalions on 1 July

**SERRE**  
The attempt to capture the wood with a cavalry charge failed but it was cleared of Germans after bitter hand-to-hand fighting

**THIEPVAL**  
Commemorating the 1916 Anglo-French offensive, the memorial records the names of 73,367 British and Commonwealth troops who died with no known grave

**POZIERES**  
The ridge, a first-day objective, was not taken until 4 August - by British and Australian troops

**LA BOISSELLE**  
An important supply and control centre for the 1916 offensive by the end of the battle the town was a pile of rubble

**ALBERT**  
The front lines of the British 4th and French 6th armies merge just north of the River Somme

**FROISSY**  
Part of the railway and locomotives which served the battlefield are preserved

**INTO BATTLE**  
The thundering line of battle stands, And in the air Death moans and sings

**1916 BATTLE OF THE SOMME**

**THE FIRST DAY**  
On 1 JULY Haig ordered his troops 'over the top' at 7.30 am, expecting the way forward to be relatively clear. The reality was tragically different: moving forward in waves they were cut down by German machine-gunners emerging from deep trenches and dugouts. A diversionary attack by the Third British Army at Gommecourt failed in its objective. By the day's end 19,240 soldiers had been killed, many in 'Pals Battalions' recruited locally. These were the British army's worst ever losses in one day

**FLERS**  
Tanks made their first appearance on 15 September in a British attack on the German line, with limited success

**DELVILLE WOOD**  
The major German stronghold was captured after hard fighting by South African and British troops

**PERONNE**  
The Museum of the Great War presents the historical, sociological and human aspects of the First World War



# Important Information for Parents

Paper copies available from the front

**Peace Village Messines**

Nieuwkerkestraat 9a

B-8957 Meseu

T +32 57 226 040

F +32 57 226 045

[info@peacevillage.be](mailto:info@peacevillage.be)

## **Staffing**

### **Trip 1:**

Mr Scriven(Trip leader)

[Sscriven@notredame-high.co.uk](mailto:Sscriven@notredame-high.co.uk)

Miss Plant

Rev Otieno

### **Trip 2:**

Mrs Shields

[eshields@notredame-high.co.uk](mailto:eshields@notredame-high.co.uk)

Mr Squire

Mr Whiteman

# What to bring:

- Passport – handed in to HOY office on **WEDNESDAY**
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)
- Money:
  - €50 - €60
  - Sterling – for Motorway Services/Ferry
  - Optional – bank card (tell bank)
- Packed lunch for Friday without dairy meat etc **(No Nuts)**
- Wellies – plastic bag, labelled to store under coach
- One suitcase!!!
- Towel
- Waterproof Coat
- Sun cream – we live in hope
- Mosquito repellent (cream/spray)
- A sharpie/felt tip pen
- Phone data abroad – check with provider

If you need to order a card it should arrive in time but a screenshot of the order confirmation on student phone would be helpful if it doesn't

↓  
**GHIC**

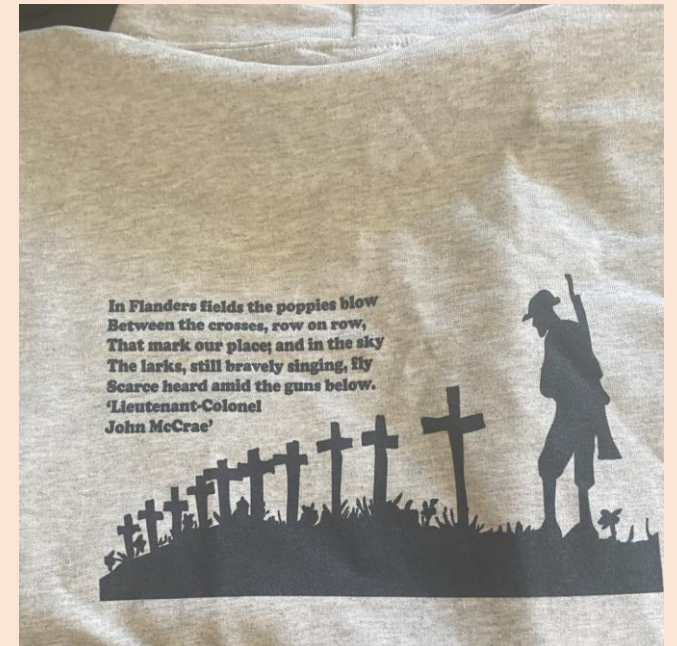
**EHIC**



If your child has an EHIC that is still within valid dates then this can be taken

# Departure Checklist/Arrival Issues

- Coach leaves promptly at 23:00 – please be here by 22:30 (*Thursday*) to allow for registering and loading. Ferry is pre-booked for 06:15am – can't be late
- Space for coach at front of school
- Staff will load the coach
- Seat is a fixed position - monitored
- Dover-Calais Ferry Crossing
- No takeaway food or hot drinks, no meat or dairy products, no speakers
- Hoodies



# Code of Conduct

- We don't anticipate any issues!
- Respectful to all
- Safety – Services, Ferries, Town Visits, Site Visits
- Dress Code
- Zero tolerance – alcohol, vaping, drugs, knives
- Issues will be followed up – Could be consequences on the visit itself or upon return to the UK

# Personal Information

- Please make sure this has been returned
- Dietary requirements
- Medication
- Medical Issues\*
- Anything you feel we should know about in order to safeguard your young person whilst abroad with them

\*Any medication to be handed to with relevant consent forms/ prescription details:

Trip 1 – Miss Plant

Trip 2 – Mr Whiteman

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- Breakfast  
(Continental)
- Evening Meal
- Packed Lunch  
Provided
- Games room for  
evening
- 10 minute drive from  
Ypres Centre
- Messines the home  
of a major battle in  
WW1

# Accommodation



# Room Prizes

We have an excellent reputation at the Peace Village that we are keen to maintain.

Before departure each morning there will be a room check from two staff members and tidiness scores will be given

We have high standards!

## Prizes

- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize - 50 Euros**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - 30 Euros**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Prize - 20 Euros**

However we are also very bribeable!

(You are staying in the capital city of chocolate!)



Mr Scriven,  
Mrs Shields,  
Miss Plant



Mr Squire  
Mr Whiteman



Mrs Shields  
Rev Otieno



# Itinerary – Friday (Vimy/Flanders)

- Vimy Ridge – Canadian Trenches and Memorial
- Lissenthoeck Military Cemetery and Museum (**Nellie Spindler**)
- Poperinghe Town Centre (Shot at Dawn Memorial and Museum)
- Poperinghe New Military Cemetery (Time permitting!)
- Peace Village (Accommodation)



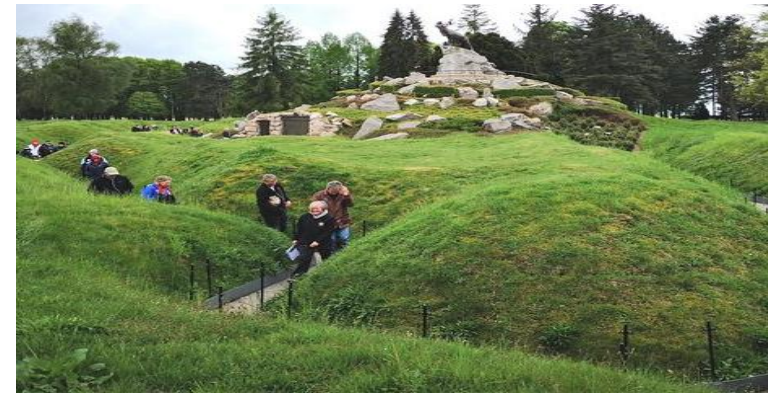
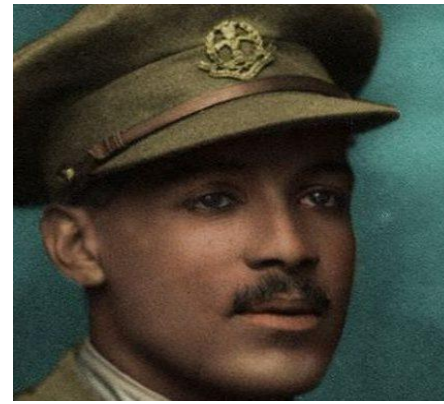
# Itinerary – Saturday (The Three Battles of Ypres)

- Sanctuary Wood (trenches, tunnels, museum)
- Klein Vierstraat **(Adam Doig)**
- Ypres Centre (Lunch/Remote Supervision)
- Essex Farm (Clearing Station, **John McCrae, Valentine Strudwick)**
- Langemark (German Cemetery)
- Tyne Cot (British Cemetery)
- Evening Meal
- Menin Gate (Last Post Ceremony) – Wreath laying
- Peace Village



# Itinerary – Sunday (The Somme)

- Coach to France (90 mins)
- Arras **(Walter Tull)**
- Delville Wood – (The ‘last tree’, South African Memorial and Museum)
- Thiepval (Monument and Museum)
- Beaumont-Hamel (Newfoundland Memorial, Trenches and Museum)
- Serre (The Sheffield Memorial Park and Trenches)
- Coach back to Peace Village
- Evening Meal



# Itinerary – Sunday (The Somme)

- On the Sunday we will fit in at some point a reflection/service of remembrance
- We will pick a cemetery we have not been to before.
- We will give each student a wooden cross of remembrance and ask them to choose a headstone to place it on
- It is possible your son/daughter will be the first visitor from the UK to pause and pay respects towards this soldier and we ask students to represent that man's family in that moment
- Students can use their pen to write their name on the cross if they wish to
- We encourage students on their return to the UK to use CWGC to research their soldier

## The Lady Haig Cross of Remembrance



# Itinerary – Monday

- Return to Sheffield. Calais-Dover Ferry
- Will get students to ring at last services to confirm arrival time
- Approx 17.00-18.00

Please leave space in front of main gates for our coach to pull into



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