



## A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.

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### A MODEL OF A MODERN MAJOR-GENERAL

In July 1923 approval was given by the Chapter for a memorial tablet:

In memory of

Lt.General Sir George Montague Harper KCB DSO  
Commander in Chief Southern Command  
1919 - 1922

who was accidentally killed on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1922

He commanded the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division and the 4<sup>th</sup>  
Army Corps in the Great War  
1914 - 1918

Erected by the officers, Southern Command, as a token of  
their admiration and affection.



George Harper lived from 1865 to 1922. He joined the Royal Engineers, was promoted to Captain in Bengal and fought in the Boer War where he gained a DSO and was made up to Major. Later he became a protégé of General Henry Wilson travelling around Europe with him to inspect the likely theatres of war, and in 1911 became Deputy Director of Military Operations and a colonel. He became a brigadier at the outbreak of war and was promoted to command of the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division which saw action during the battle of the Somme. It was unusual for a Royal Engineer to achieve this position. His men referred to him as *Uncle*.

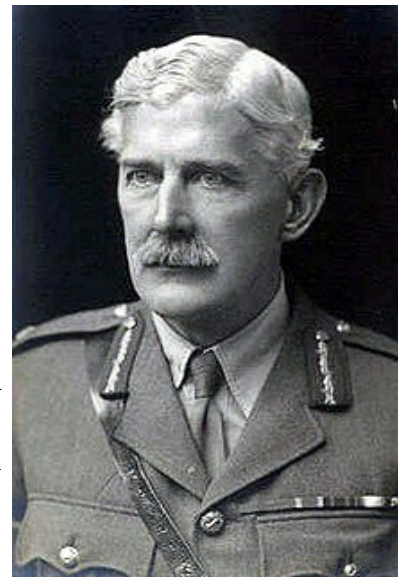
Below: Major-General George Montague Harper, the Commander of the 51st Division (middle), and Colonel Henry Holmes Sutherland DSO, the CO of the 1/7th Battalion, Black Watch (right), watching the sports meeting held by the Battalion at Bailleul-aux-Cornailles, 10 May 1917. Our George appears to have a special relationship with a sheep!



Wikipedia quotes Brigadier-General Hardsress-Lloyd (GOC 3 Tank Brigade) saying that Harper was *an old ass* and claimed that he had expressed scepticism about the new tactics of infantry advancing in *worms* (single file) and also remarked that they should advance in line

as if you were walking arm-in-arm with a girl. Hardress-Lloyd claimed to have retorted *if the late Oscar Wilde were walking with you, where do you think he would go?* at that Harper almost had to be carried from the room in an ambulance.

Southern Command HQ was in Salisbury and it was in travelling from Sherborne to Bradford Abbas, where he now owned the rectory, that the Austin tourer skidded, hit a bank and overturned, pinning the occupants underneath. When Harper was extricated he was found to have died from a fractured skull. His wife received a broken arm and minor injuries. The ambulance took her to Sherborne Castle where they had been staying whilst hunting with the Blackmore Vale. At the inquest the police stated that one tyre was badly worn so that even driving slowly there was no traction on the soil and manure covered road at Silver Lake Farm.



The Hon. Mrs Harper, the daughter of the first Lord Allerton, received this message from the King: *I have learned with deep regret of the tragic accident by which General Harper has met his death. General Harper had rendered invaluable service to his country, and I feel that my Army loses a distinguished officer. I assure you of my heartfelt sympathy in your great sorrow and trust that the injuries you have received are not serious.* He was buried with full military honours including a procession accompanied by four squadrons of cavalry, three battalions of infantry, a band and Highland pipers. The coffin was carried on a gun-carriage covered by the union jack and followed by the general's favourite charger with riding boots reversed.

### BERWICK ST. JOHN

**H**azel Gifford produced a detailed history of this Chalke Valley farming village in 1999 (published by Press 70, Salisbury). The church dates back to 1267 but it is likely to have originated much earlier, the King having granted the Chalke estate to the Abbey of Wilton in 955 as well as part of the parish to the Abbey of Shaftesbury.



Two interesting rectors held the church in the heyday\* of *Pluralism* (right): Edmund Audley from 1465 to 1480 and Edward Willoughby from 1485 to 1508. Edmund



was a prebendary of Hereford Cathedral before he was even ordained followed by becoming Archdeacon of the East Riding and Archdeacon of Essex so a curate must have looked after Berwick. In 1480 he was made Bishop of Rochester (at which point he gave up his other livings), translated to Hereford and finally promoted by Papal Bull to Salisbury in 1502 - after paying 4,500 *florenos auri* (left) for the privilege. The betrothal of Prince Henry (later Henry VIII) to Catherine of Aragon took place in Audley's London residence in St. Bride's, Fleet Street. Audley was made Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, a position that later, Seth Ward successfully argued belonged to the Bishopric rather than the



person. The Audley Psalter (above, *courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library*) was given by the Bishop of Salisbury to his niece, Anne Audley, a nun at Shaftesbury Abbey, who in turn gave it to the convent. It bears an *ex dono* inscription to Anne Awdeley.

Edward Willoughby's sister was Abbess of Wilton and his brother was Lord Steward of the King's Household and owner of Wardour Castle. Edward was made a prebendary of Salisbury Cathedral in 1488 and was also Rector of Semley in addition to Berwick. He also accumulated the titles of Canon of Windsor and Archdeacon of Stafford. Finally he became a Canon of Exeter Cathedral and then its Dean.



The arrival at Plymouth of the fifteen year old Catherine of Aragon and her retinue of 100 with the subsequent journey to London fell under the responsibility of Lord Willoughby who drafted in his four brothers to help. As the See of Exeter was vacant it fell to Edward to entertain Catherine. The party stayed at Sherborne, Shaftesbury and Amesbury abbeys en route at which point the Duchess of Norfolk took over.

Edward is credited with rebuilding the church of St. John in the perpendicular style and possibly the rectory as well, no doubt with help from his wealthy family. The church contains a painted wooden shield of Lord Willoughby de Broke which might originally have hung in Exeter Cathedral.

The alabaster Effigy (page 3) is of Lord Robert Willoughby in Callington Church, Cornwall, *courtesy of Wikipedia*. \* The archaic expression *Heyday* dates from the sixteenth century when it was an expression of elation or wonder.

‘WHAT YOU WEAR IS HOW YOU PRESENT YOURSELF TO THE WORLD’ - Prada

**T**he intricate needlework on Hubert Walter’s vestments (below) is a very good example of English Embroidery (not to be confused with *Broderie Anglaise* which was 19<sup>th</sup> century and white), known as *opus anglicanum*. (During the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century England would develop a reputation as the best place in the world to have both vestments and secular clothing



decorated; this reputation was just beginning to take off during the years following Hubert’s death - 1890).

The silk was probably imported from Spain or the Middle East. Some of it may even have been brought in by Hubert himself, for he had been to the Holy Land alongside Richard

the Lionheart and would certainly have had the opportunity to trade with cloth merchants of that region. Other men of similar status are known to have brought back lengths of the beautiful fabrics that could be obtained from the lands around Jerusalem: William Marshal was buried in funeral clothes made from fabric that he bought during the Third Crusade in the 1190s and kept safe for more than two decades.

Hubert’s tomb in Canterbury Cathedral’s Trinity Chapel was opened in 1890. His vestments included these ceremonial slippers. In fact he left to the canons an even more exquisite set of religious garments but typically they were seized by John and given to his loyal servant and henchman Peter des Roches on his enthronement as Bishop of Winchester.



A little more weirdly, John appeared on occasion wearing the coronation regalia of his grandmother, the empress Matilda. I am indebted to the highly recommended *Realm Divided* by Dan Jones (Head of Zeus 2015) for all the above snippets.

## I DIDN'T KNOW

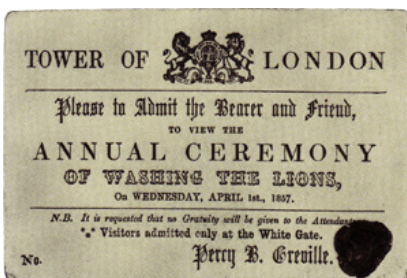
Steve Dunn writes: In 'Did You Know' you refer to Richard Farleigh and suggest that he probably built the tower and spire. Given that he only arrived in Salisbury in 1334/5 and the tower is thought to have been started years earlier (Tatton-Brown, Cocke and Kidson RCHME et al) this seems unlikely. Cocke & Kidson suggest that the spire was finished by 1331, a figure that has not been disputed since. Furthermore, Emma J Wells in her recent book *Heaven on Earth, The Lives and legacies of the Worlds Greatest Cathedrals* suggests this:

“For a short while Salisbury was one of the chief centres of culture in all England, and the city that grew around it saw relative peace for the next few decades. Under Simon of Ghent, appointed bishop in 1297, the cathedral embarked on further aggrandisement, in the form of a Decorated-style tower above the crossing, adorned with costly ball-flower mouldings. The almost uncannily perfect proportions of the tower and spire were the brainchild of the leading West Country mason Thomas of Witney or—possibly with—William de Schoverwille, who was working at Salisbury in 1311.”



The original comment about Farleigh building the tower and spire is possibly from John Harvey's 'English Medieval Architects' which he published in 1954, however, it's not clear on what basis Harvey may have come to this conclusion save that he ascribes the tower and spire to completion until 'well into the later half of the 14th Century', long after Farleigh had moved on to Exeter thus suiting his view that the spire must be later than is thought currently. Photo of new ball-flower moulding at Gloucester Cathedral (*Creative commons*).

## APRIL FOOL



No-one really knows the origin of this often hilarious day. The French call it *Poisson d'Avril* and the Scots a *Gowk* (Cuckoo). The most likely origin of the custom is the fact that the New Year used to begin on 25<sup>th</sup> March (see Thomas Lambert, J&T No.111) and celebrations finished on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The earliest reference in France is dated 1508 and in England it is 1698 when people were fooled into visiting the Tower of London

to 'see the lions washed'! This trick was reprised in 1857 (pic above). Many refer to mention of April Fool in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* but this is now felt to be the result of a miss-print.

The photo (right) is of the great Danish prank celebrating the construction of the Copenhagen Metro in 2001.

