



14-18 battlefield commemorations in Mons



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<https://www.visitmons.be/nos-excursions/excursion-sur-les-traces-de-la-bataille-de-mons-767149>

Mons and its region became the central stage to fierce fighting on August 22, 23 and 24, 1914, when British soldiers met German forces. Many ceremonies, every summer, pay tribute to the thousands of soldiers who fell during the Battle of Mons. Come and join us to keep the memory of World War I in Wallonia for present and future generations.

The Battle of Mons: a remembrance trail

A free Battlefield Guide is available at Mons' Tourist Office and can be downloaded from their website. It features the most strategic locations during the battle: the road and railway bridges, the Obourg railway station, Château Gendebien, Bois-là-Haut, the Bascule, the Irish Monument, the Mons cemetery and concludes with the cemetery of Saint-Symphorien where German and British soldiers now rest in peace.

Do ask Mons' Tourist Office about the many memorials and

commorative plates throughout the city. Guided tours for groups can be organised on request.

The Angels of Mons

The legend says angels armed with bows descended from the illuminated sky and forced German troops to retreat, thus protecting the British allied forces then at the brink of annihilation... Did it really happen? Was it a simple hallucination, at a crucial point in the battle? A tale to give both the soldiers and population more hope during WWI? No one quite knows. The story was published a few weeks after the battle, bringing a large wave of interest from the public. It was then repeated in different books with different interpretations.

Private Carter

One of the young British soldiers who was part of the Battle of Mons became the subject of a remarkable genealogical quest. Its picture found its way to the cover of a leaflet from the Commonwealth Grave Commission to illustrate 'The Mons Retreat'. Members of the Mons & Belgian and Tourist Board in London were intrigued, as was leading genealogist Marie Cappart: 'Who Was He?', 'What Became of Him?'. A fascinating search began.

It turned out that Private Carter was just 20 when the Mons picture was taken. He remained with the Middlesex Regiment throughout the 1914-18 war. Marie succeeded in tracking Arthur Carter's grandson in Italy. He explained that his grandfather's medals and photos were with his own son (Carter's great-grandson) in north London. The 'missing' years were gradually filled in. After WWI, in WW2 he was an anti-aircraft gunner in London; after the war he drove a petrol tanker for a living.

Both grandson and great-grandson have since accepted an invitation to take part in the Mons celebrations on 23 August in 2018 along with 11 other members of Private Carter's family, when the family's connection with the 'First and Last' town in Wallonia will come full circle.

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The information contained herein is provided as a guide only.

We recommend that you check with the local supplier before you leave.

Website editor

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