

SAVED BY A CAT: MARTEINE KEMES ARUNDEL LLOYD OF THE GRENADIER GUARDS, 1891-1916



Synopsis

Animals have always played an important role in war, from Hannibal's elephants to horses, dogs and pigeons in twentieth-century wars. That role has now been recognized with the unveiling of the Animals in War Memorial at Hyde Park in 2004. Cats, however, are not normally seen as useful for armies or navies, except perhaps for ridding ships and trenches of rats (as was the case with Simon, winner of the PDSA Dickin Medal for ratting while wounded on HMS Amethyst in 1949). In December 1914, however, following the fierce battle between the British and German armies around Ypres, one cat received considerable publicity, for he had apparently saved the life of a British officer. This paper examines that event in the context of the life of the officer he supposedly saved.

The Lloyds of Bronwydd

The small British army that entered the war in August 1914 had an officer corps with a distinctly privileged background. Although many officers, such as Douglas Haig, came from wealthy business and commercial backgrounds or from the professional classes, the army was still seen as a suitable career for scions of aristocratic and gentry families.¹ For some families, army service had long been traditional, with at least one, usually a younger, son entering the army every generation. This was the case with the Lloyd family of Bronwydd in Cardiganshire, Wales. Marteine Kemes Arundel Lloyd was following a family tradition of military service stretching back at least a hundred years when he was commissioned into the Grenadier Guards in 1909. His great-grandfather had served with the East Kent Regiment (the Buffs) and his grandfather with the 84th Foot in Canada. One paternal uncle was a cavalryman, serving in the 13th Hussars, while another was a Captain in the Warwickshire Regiment.² His father, although never serving in the regular army, nevertheless held a captaincy in the Pembroke Yeomanry for fourteen years. Lloyd's choice of a career was thus fairly straightforward, but unlike his forebears, he

¹ David French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People c.1870-2000* (Oxford 2005), pp. 31-2; Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly, *The Edwardian Army: Recruiting, Training, and Deploying the British Army, 1902-1914* (Oxford 2012), p. 9.

² Dillwyn Miles, *The Lords of Cemais* (Haverfordwest 1997), pp. 68-9.

was to face a war of unprecedented ferocity and bloodshed and, like so many of his generation, he was to find war initially traumatic and eventually fatal. In one respect, however, his career was to be unique, thanks, it was claimed, to the intervention of a cat.

Royal blood from both parents flowed in Lloyd's veins. His mother, *née* Dennistoun, could trace her line back to the Stuarts and to Robert II of Scotland. His father claimed direct descent from Edward I.³ Sir Marteine Owen Mowbray Lloyd had such a long pedigree that one newspaper mischievously claimed it to be long enough 'to hang him twice over'.⁴ Although Lloyd's father was only the second baronet, he spent much of his life pursuing his rights as the last Norman Marcher Lord, tracing his lineage back to the pre-Conquest lords of Kemes and Bronwydd in the ninth century. This, he asserted without success, gave him the right to sit in the House of Lords as well as to carry a silver harp at coronations, the courts denying the latter privilege to him at the coronation of George V in 1911.⁵ The pursuit of this family eccentricity through legal channels; the first baronet's considerable rebuilding of suitable residences in the mid-nineteenth century to strengthen these claims (including a Norman tower at Bronwydd); and the second baronet's paternalism and dutiful philanthropy to his estate workers and the larger community, led to severe financial difficulties by the time the prospective third baronet, Marteine Kemes, was born in February 1891. Land, out of a total of one hundred thousand acres in four counties, had to be sold to reduce a massive £92,000 debt, a common response amongst landed families suffering from the effects of depressed agricultural prices in the era before 1914. The Great War was the final nail in the family's coffin, snatching away the only male heir and triggering two lots of death duties within seventeen years. The baronetcy became extinct in 1933 and with the death of Lady Lloyd in 1937, the estate was sold and the family home, Bronwydd, fell into disrepair (see photo below).⁶

Lloyd's Pre-war Life

Belt tightening did not prevent Kemes Lloyd being given an excellent education, although there is some question as to whether he took much advantage of it. He attended Lyndhurst, a well-known preparatory school in the New Forest, and then, in January 1904, following in his father's footsteps, he was sent to Eton, where he entered Mr Impey's House. Most boys of his age started in the 4th form, but Kemes was placed in the third, which suggests that he was not strong academically. This is supported by the fact that at Easter 1906 he was "superannuated" (dismissed), a fate normally saved for boys who found schoolwork too hard.⁷ On the other hand, his father had not stayed long at Eton, but had finished his education with a private tutor. Kemes may have followed the same path, although there is no evidence that he displayed any intellectual prowess. He

³ *Dod's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage of Great Britain and Ireland* (1915), p. 355; *Western Mail*, 29 Oct. 1914; *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 24 Feb. 1911.

⁴ *Western Mail*, 17 Aug. 1894.

⁵ *Dundee Courier*, 28 Jan. 1911.

⁶ Paul Bennett Morgan, 'Bronwydd and Sir Thomas Lloyd', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 23 (1984), pp. 398-400. Sir Marteine had apparently passed over the estate to his son before the war. When Lloyd was killed, although probate established his estate only at £361, the government insisted that (concessional) death duties on the real estate had to be paid.

⁷ I am grateful to Mrs. P. Hatfield, Eton College archivist, for this information (email dated 12 May 2012).

appears, however, to have been an affable and popular young man, 'well liked by all who has the honour of his acquaintance', as one fawning newspaper described him.⁸ The festivities to celebrate his coming of age in 1911 were a major event in west Wales, reminiscent of the traditional feudal and rustic celebrations of an earlier era. Three days were set aside for Lloyd's birthday celebrations. A huge marquee transported from London was set up in the grounds of Bronwydd and a large house party was invited to a hunt ball and a day of field sports. Among the guests were several of Kemes' army friends, including Prince Alexander of Battenberg, grandson of Queen Victoria and, like Lloyd, a subaltern in the Grenadier Guards; Edward Scawen Wyndham, of the Life Guards; and Sackville Pelham of the 11th Hussars and future 5th Earl of Yarborough.⁹ All were to fight in and survive the Great War.

Lloyd's father did not forget his "feudal" responsibilities. Nearly 400 tenants were also invited to a large meal in the marquee and he promised, when the weather improved, to give 'a treat' to the local schoolchildren. Another celebratory meal was also organised by the Newport Corporation (Sir Marteine annually chose the mayor of the town in his capacity of Lord Marcher), but Lloyd avoided this by claiming pressing military duties.

Kemes Lloyd had inherited his father's love of field sports, especially hunting (Bronwydd had a pack of beagles). This, of course, made a career in the army particularly attractive, for opportunities for all forms of field sports were frequent, whether stationed at home (as the Guards' regiments always were in peacetime) or in India.¹⁰ In February 1909 he received a probationary commission in the Grenadier Guards, which was confirmed in August 1911. Just how seriously he took his army career is not known, but his probationary period seems excessively long.¹¹ Moreover, as 'an ardent huntsman' he was at the tender age of nineteen already joint Master of the Tetcot and Lammerton Hunts in Devon, a pursuit that may not have precluded his taking his military duties seriously, but does suggest that pursuing the fox dominated his life, especially as he frequently hunted in Wales too.¹²

Many young officers from privileged backgrounds who did not intend to make the army a career often spent only a few years in a regiment, so it is perhaps not surprising to find that in April 1913 Lloyd resigned his commission owing to 'urgent private affairs', retiring to the Special Reserve to enjoy a life of leisure. When war broke out fifteen months later, however, he was brought back into the 1st Grenadier Guards and sent to France as a Second Lieutenant. His unit, part of 20th Brigade, 7th Division, embarked for

⁸ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 24 Feb. 1911.

⁹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 4 March 1911.

¹⁰ For Douglas Haig's view that the love of horses motivated many to join the army, see Gary Sheffield, *The Chief: Douglas Haig and the British Army* (London 2012), p. 15.

¹¹ Lloyd was part of the Guard of Honour at the lying-in-state of Edward VII at Westminster Abbey. *Western Mail*, 29 Oct. 1914.

¹² For Lloyd and the Devon hunts, see *London Gazette*, 23 Nov. 1917. When Lloyd was promoted to Captain in November 1915, one newspaper reported this under the heading 'Promotions for Sportsmen' and mentioned that he was a popular member of the Household Brigade Racing Club. *Newcastle Journal*, 4 Dec. 1915.

the continent on 4 October.¹³ On the 27th his parents received a telegram informing them that he had been killed in action four days earlier.¹⁴ *The Times* reported his death on the 31st.¹⁵

With the 7th Division October 1914

Exactly what happened to Lloyd during the very short period he spent with the 7th Division in October remains unclear. Events moved too swiftly for the battalion's war diary to be written between 20 October and 4 November, but it is known that at some point he was attached to the 7th Cyclist Company.¹⁶ This must have happened early in October, as Ponsonby's history of the Grenadier Guards does not list him either among the battalion's company officers or its casualties.¹⁷ The cyclist company was one of two mounted formations in the division. All Other Ranks carried full service kit, including rifles, but their main purpose was reconnaissance.¹⁸

The 7th Division had arrived in Zeebrugge on 7 October with orders to assist the Belgian army in the defence of Antwerp, but it was too little and too late.¹⁹ After travelling by train to Bruges, the division marched to Ostend and then entrained for Ghent, arriving on 9 October. Their situation has been described thus:

Here was an isolated division, with practically no base and with no available reinforcements, operating entirely by itself, while large bodies of the enemy were reported in every direction. But for the information, which was regularly supplied by the aircraft, such a position would have become impossible.²⁰

Once news arrived of the fall of Antwerp, the division's mission was abandoned and on 11 October it began the long march to join the rest of the BEF at Ypres. With the Germans close on their heels, they finally arrived at 2pm on 14 October, just in time to participate in the First Battle of Ypres. At some point during the early clashes of this battle Lloyd was to be wounded.

In what came to be called the Battle of Langemarck (21 to 24 October 1914) the 7th Division had a daunting task, to cover a dog-leg seven-mile line that ran partly eastward from Zandvoorde to Kruiseecke and then northward to Zonnebeke, facing several German *Cavalry Corps* along the first part and the *XXVII Reserve Corps* along the rest. In 1914 the Cyclist Companies were not expected to keep war diaries, so there is no direct

¹³ Medal Index Card, M K A Lloyd, TNA, PRO, Kew.

¹⁴ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283.

¹⁵ *The Times*, 31 October 1914.

¹⁶ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283.

¹⁷ Sir Frederick Ponsonby, *The Grenadier Guards in the Great War of 1914-1918*, 3 vols (London 1920), i, pp. 87-88, 129-30.

¹⁸ Cyclist Companies, one for each division, were first formed in May 1914, less than three months before war was declared. Alan Mallinson, *1914: Fight the Good Fight. Britain, the Army and the Coming of the First World War* (London 2013), p. 84.

¹⁹ J.E. Edmonds, *Official History of the Great War: Military Operations France and Belgium 1914*, 2 vols (London 1924), ii, p. 50.

²⁰ Ponsonby, *Grenadier Guards*, p. 92.

evidence of the 7th Company's operations in this battle, but it is known that on the 21st it was ordered to help defend a mile-wide gap in the line between Hollebecke and Zandvoorde caused by the withdrawal of the 2nd Cavalry Division.²¹

Although no contemporary Cyclist Company war diary exists, a subsequent diary of 1916, in a brief synopsis of earlier actions, states that on the 24 October 1914 the company, being the only divisional reserve left, was attached to 20th Brigade to assist in a counter-attack on a farm. In this action about half the company became casualties.²² This attack would have been to reclaim that part of the line near Polygon Wood that had been breached when the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment was surrounded and forced to surrender. The Germans were driven back to their own lines.²³

It remains unclear where the Company was between the 21st and the 24th, during which time, if the telegram announcing Lloyd's death is correct, he had been wounded. Given that Lloyd took refuge in a barn, in a place that obviously was in British possession when he was found, it is likely that he was wounded on the 24th rather than the 23rd. That he was declared dead rather than wounded might suggest that the barn was in a sector that either remained in no-man's land or changed hands in the intervening period between his wounding and his discovery. The chaotic state of affairs along the 7th Division's front during this period, however, makes any interpretation little more than guesswork. The Division's historian admitted that the events of 24 October defied 'all efforts at elucidation'.²⁴ What is known is that Lloyd was wounded in the head by shell splinters.

Resurrection and the Cat

Sir Marteine was busy recruiting for the army in Wales when the news came of his son's death. Having only one son and inordinately conscious and proud of his family's long lineage, it must have been a shattering moment. After nearly a thousand years the family's direct line of succession had ended. A wave of sadness swept south Wales, reflected in the cancellation of the Carmarthenshire Hunt's fixtures, a special meeting of Newport Corporation on 2 November, and official condolences from a variety of other public bodies. On Sunday 1 November a special memorial service was held in Newport's parish church.²⁵

On 4 November, and again on the 6th, a lady calling herself Violet Whitla (Mrs George Whitla) wrote to the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener (whose name was on every War Office telegram announcing an officer's death at this time), asking for further news of Lloyd. In the second letter she claimed to be his sister.²⁶ Who she was remains a mystery, but she certainly was not Lloyd's sibling. It is thus understandable that when she wrote the second letter she had not yet heard that Sir Marteine had received a War Office telegram, dated 5 November, tersely stating that '2nd Lieut M K A Lloyd Grenadier

²¹ Edmonds, *Official History 1914*, ii, p. 155.

²² I am very grateful to Colin W. Taylor, a member of the Great War Forum, for this information.

²³ Adrian Gilbert, *Challenge of Battle: The Real Story of the British Army in 1914* (Oxford 2014), p. 222; Ian F.W. Beckett, *Ypres 1914: The First Battle* (Harlow 2006), p. 108.

²⁴ A.C. Atkinson, *The Seventh Division, 1914-1918* (London 1927), p. 51.

²⁵ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 6 November 1914.

²⁶ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283.

Guards is now reported alive and well'.²⁷ It was a time for celebration. The news was immediately published in the local newspaper. Sir Marteine, faced with the odd, but happy, situation of having to reply to letters of condolence knowing that his son was alive, subsequently placed an announcement in *The Times* thanking the writers and promising to reply when he could.²⁸

Lloyd was certainly alive, but he was not 'well'. It appears from his medical records that he was found unconscious on 1 November and for another three days was only occasionally aware of his surroundings. He was diagnosed with concussion and shock, as well as suffering from the effects of a few small bones in his right ankle that had been broken. He was taken to a hospital in Boulogne and repatriated to England on 15 November. Lloyd spent several weeks in an officers' hospital at Highclere Castle, Newbury, where he continued to suffer from loss of memory accompanied by severe headaches. On 8 December a medical board meeting in London gave him leave for six weeks and he returned to Bronwydd in time for Christmas.²⁹

Lloyd arrived in Wales a minor national celebrity. He was the Guards officer whose life had been saved by a cat. On a hospital visit Sir Marteine had been told what his son remembered about the events around Ypres. Back in Wales, on 6 December he gave an address on behalf of the Belgian Refugee Fund at Llangynllo. According to the local newspaper, Sir Marteine:

related to a few friends at the close how his son had narrowly escaped death from fatigue and exposure. After a desperate fight near the French frontier, Lieutenant Lloyd got detached from his regiment. At night he found refuge in an outhouse where he remained in an exhausted condition for two or three days. When he was found it was discovered that loosely curled round his neck was a cat, and it was the conviction of his rescuers that but for this cat Lieutenant Lloyd would have perished. 'How we wish we could find that faithful cat!', said Sir Marteine. 'How well it would be cared for at Bronwydd!'³⁰

Sir Marteine neither mentioned that his son had been wounded, nor that he was suffering from memory loss. There was, therefore, no reason to question the accuracy of this account of feline first aid.

To the chagrin of the Lloyd family, this story "went viral". At a time when good news was at a premium and stories of animals made good copy, it was inevitable that other newspapers published the report. But the extent of its diffusion was surprising. Within days newspapers throughout Britain had published Sir Marteine's conversation, in Scotland, the northern counties, the midlands and the south-west.³¹ It even made the

²⁷ Ibid. The War Office gave Violet the good news on the 6th.

²⁸ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 6 November 1914; *The Times*, 14 November 1914.

²⁹ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283.

³⁰ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 11 December 1914. This newspaper first published the report a few days earlier.

³¹ *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 10 December 1914; *Evening Telegraph and Post*, 10 December 1914; *Newcastle Journal*, 11 December 1914; *Hull Daily Mail*, 12 December 1914; *Birmingham Daily Mail*, 10

American newspapers.³² The most extravagant response came from the London *Pall Mall Gazette*, then owned by the American millionaire William Waldorf Astor and edited by the influential journalist J L Garvin. The *Gazette* claimed that subscriptions were to be raised for a monument to the cat in Newport Castle! At the time that the cat story broke, Garvin's only son Ged was under training in Hampshire as 2nd Lieutenant in the 7th South Lancashire Regiment, having volunteered in August and receiving a commission in September. He, like Lloyd, was an only son and his father, a strong supporter of the war, may have seen the cat story, slightly embellished, as a way of raising national (and possibly his own) morale at a time when officer casualties were rising alarmingly.³³

That a cat had been present when Lloyd was found should not surprise, for the Ypres salient in October 1914 was not the grim place of desolation that it was soon to become. When the 7th Division arrived in the town on 14 October, it was:

carrying on with its normal peace-time activities. The town had the day before received a visit from a body of German cavalry, and a few shrapnel shells had been burst over the outskirts. ... Not one of us who admired the ancient town then, with its imposing buildings, tree-bordered streets, rows of handsome shops, and spick-and-span townsfolk, could foresee the ghastly dust-heap to which it was doomed to be reduced in the next few weeks.³⁴

The surrounding countryside, too, was still scarcely damaged, the small farms that scattered the landscape still standing.³⁵ With abandoned livestock in abundance, a farm cat in a barn would normally not have warranted comment.³⁶ One nestled with a wounded officer, however, would have.

The gist of the story of Lloyd and the cat was thus probably true, although whether the latter "saved" the former remains moot. Drifting in and out of consciousness and helpless for several days at least, Lloyd would have taken comfort from the cat's presence. The cat too would have been terrified, as its usual haunts were destroyed around it. They probably sustained each other. Sir Martine, however, gave the story some embellishment or, possibly, one of his friends did so when talking to the local newspaper reporter. The result was that the cat became the hero of the story and the Lloyd family became increasingly embarrassed. On the first day of the New Year, the *Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser* published a short paragraph, stating that 'what was a trivial incident has been

December 1914; *Liverpool Echo*, 9 December 1914; *Western Daily Press*, 10 December 1914; *Western Mail*, 9 December 1914.

³² *Duluth Evening Herald*, 30 December 1914.

³³ Mark Pottle and John G.G. Ledingham (eds), *We Hope to Get Word Tomorrow: The Garvin Family Letters 1914-1916* (Barnsley 2009), p. 5. Garvin was killed on the Somme in July 1916. To give some scale of the casualties, by the evening of 29 October 1914 Lloyd's own battalion, having been at Ypres for just a fortnight, had been reduced to four officers and one hundred men. Max Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe Goes to War 1914* (London 2013), p. 478.

³⁴ Robert Lloyd, 1st Lifeguards, quoted in Gilbert, *Challenge of Battle*, p. 204.

³⁵ Hastings, *Catastrophe*, p. 469.

³⁶ For unintended cows in the battle zone, see Beckett, *Ypres*, p. 94.

greatly exaggerated, to the annoyance of the Bronwydd family'.³⁷ The Belgian cat was not to be memorialized in Wales after all.

What was not known at the time was that Lloyd was more seriously wounded than the doctors had diagnosed. He was still suffering from headaches and lapses of memory. His official medical records stated that he was wounded on 1 November, the day he was found, suggesting that he remembered little of his ordeal, and even as late as October 1915, in a letter applying for a wound gratuity, Lloyd claimed to have been wounded on 20 November 1914. At the end of his leave in January 1915 he returned to hospital in London, where an X-ray confirmed that he had a depressed fracture of the skull. For the rest of his short life he had a dent in his head.³⁸ In another era it is doubtful that Lloyd would subsequently have been passed fit for frontline duty.

Aftermath

Lloyd was not to be declared fit for general service until October 1915, his recovery being retarded in July when he seriously injured his right ankle again. It was the policy of the Guards Division by this time to ease inexperienced and formerly wounded officers in to frontline soldiering by attaching them to their 7th Entrenching Battalion and it was to this unit that Lloyd reported when he returned to France in October. Its role was to act as 'a kind of advanced Depot—a stepping stone to the trenches, where the young officers and soldiers are near enough to the front line to get used to the smell of gunpowder and the noise of shells, before actually joining their battalions'.³⁹ Now holding the rank of Captain, Lloyd was to remain with the unit for six months, being appointed Adjutant in December. During this time he had many opportunities to ride to local towns in Picardy and to enjoy the epicurean treats for which the Guards regiments were famous (or infamous).⁴⁰ When Rowland Feilding, OC Coldstream Company in the unit, returned from leave in May 1916 with plovers' eggs and smoked salmon packed by his wife, Lloyd was reported to have commented, 'If only I could find a woman like that, I'd marry her'.⁴¹ Finding another such paragon was unlikely, for in July Lloyd was transferred to the 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards, where he commanded half of No. 2 Company.

The Guards Division arrived on the Somme from Flanders two months after the great campaign had begun. There had been two major battles, on 1 and 14 July, and thereafter numerous smaller attacks on narrow fronts, partly attritional in purpose and partly aimed at establishing a line from which another major battle, this time aimed at the enemy's original third defensive position, could begin.⁴² This third position had been hastily fortified during the early Somme battles and was not so formidable as the first two

³⁷ Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser, 1 January 1915.

³⁸ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283.

³⁹ Rowland Feilding, *War Letters to a Wife* (London 1929), p. 71. See also, Cuthbert Headlam, *History of the Guards Division in the Great War 1915-1918*, 2 vols (London 1924), ii, pp. 320-21.

⁴⁰ Ponsonby, *Grenadier Guards*, iii, p. 203.

⁴¹ Feilding, *War Letters*, p. 75.

⁴² Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *The Somme* (London 2005), pp. 140-72; Peter Hart, *The Somme* (London 2006), pp. 283-360. The use of a creeping barrage on and after 14 July required an infantry jump-off line parallel to it and encouraged linear attack formations. Shelford Bidwell & Dominick Graham, *Fire-Power: British Army Weapons and Theories of War 1904-1945* (1982: Barnsley 2004), p. 112.

German lines. It nevertheless would be a tough nut to crack, stretching as it did roughly from Courcellette in the north through Martinpuich, Flers and Lesboeuufs to Morval in the south. The Guards Division's final objective was Lesboeuufs. This village was on the "Red line", about 3500 yards (two miles) from the starting point. Before there, however, were three other lines that the Division was expected to capture. These were enemy trench systems that had no natural distinguishing features.⁴³ Complete success according to plan would have put the division on the Red line four and a half hours after the Zero Hour of 6.20am on 15 September. The 2nd Grenadier Guards Battalion, part of 1st Guards Brigade, was initially to advance behind the Coldstream Guards and consolidate the first objective.

There were several reasons why the Guards' attack on Lesboeuufs was disastrous. One of these was their starting-off position, which was just to the east of Ginchy, a small devastated village that had been captured only days before. There was no room for the supporting battalions to line up immediately behind the first waves and it was recognized that Ginchy itself would be the subject of an intense enemy artillery bombardment as soon as the attack began. The 2nd Battalion, therefore, lined up just to the west of Ginchy. Lloyd's participation in the battle was to be distressingly short. According to the Battalion war diary:

At 6.20am on the 15th, our bombardment began and we moved off in two lines of platoon blobs. The German barrage dropped before we reached Ginchy and we went through the middle of it, on the whole losing extraordinarily few men, considering the intensity of the fire. At about 6.40am we halted in Ginchy, luckily the bulk of the barrage was out on the south edge, but we lost a good many men and Capt MKA Lloyd.⁴⁴

At the same time as Lloyd was killed the future Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, then a young subaltern in the 2nd Battalion, was hit by a shell fragment in his right knee. He continued on until much more seriously wounded in the pelvis while attacking a German machine gun. Macmillan subsequently mentioned Lloyd's death in his memoirs, but said that 'I did not see this'.⁴⁵

Nor, apparently, did any other officer at the time, for Lloyd was originally reported missing, believed killed. The Lloyd family received notice of this by telegram dated 21 September. No doubt, although feeling uneasy, memories of October 1914 enabled them to hope for the best. But such hopes were dashed within days, when first, a letter was received from a Grenadier officer telling them that Lloyd had been killed, and then, on 24 September, confirmation arrived by another War Office telegram. His body had been found when the battleground was being cleared on the 18th.⁴⁶

⁴³ Sir John Ross, *The Coldstream Guards 1914-1918*, 2 vols (Oxford 1928), i, p. 488.

⁴⁴ War Diary, 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards, 15 September 1916, TNA WO 95/1215/2.

⁴⁵ Harold Macmillan, *Winds of Change 1914-1939* (London 1966), pp. 87-88.

⁴⁶ Personal File, Captain M K A Lloyd, TNA PRO WO 339/7283; *Western Mail*, 25 September 1916.

For a second time, therefore, the Lloyds had to undergo the misery of holding memorial services for their only son, one at Newport and another at Llangynllo Church.⁴⁷ There was also a memorial service held at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, in October for all Grenadier Guardsmen killed on the Somme, but it is not known if the Lloyds attended.⁴⁸ The War Office subsequently informed the family of Lloyd's burial place: fifty yards north of Ginchy, on the west side of the Ginchy-Flers Road. In 1920, when burials were being concentrated in dedicated cemeteries, his remains were disinterred and reburied in Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval (see photo below). Most of his effects—identity disc, revolver, binoculars and a religious charm on a chain—were returned, although the wristwatch and notebook he took into battle were not recovered.

As befitted the last of his family's male line, Lloyd was commemorated widely. His mother dedicated her book on the Lloyds published in 1930 to him.⁴⁹ His name can be found on three war memorials, at Eton College, Aberbanc and Newport, and several monuments were raised in his memory. One was a marble tablet in the Guards Chapel in London (it was destroyed with many others when the church was hit by a V1 rocket in 1944). Another was a mural in St Cynog Church, Llangynog, sited there because of the kinship between the Lloyds and the Morrisises, a prominent banking family. The dedication mentions Lloyd's 'glorious death in France' and ends with an epitaph—popular with bereaved families—that offers the promise of meeting again: 'Till the barrage lifts'.⁵⁰ For reasons that remain obscure, Lloyd is also commemorated in the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Ghost in Basingstoke, Hampshire. His is one of twenty-four names, including two VC winners', on a plaque beneath a stained glass window.⁵¹

The most spectacular memorial, however, is the stained glass window in Bronwydd's local parish church of St Cynllo (see photo below). It shows Lloyd in the central light as a medieval knight in armour offering his sword and receiving in return the Crown of Life. This theme of willing Christian self-sacrifice—"Faithful unto Death" is the inscription below the knight—was very common in stained glass windows dedicated to soldiers killed in the Great War.⁵² The two other lights contain soldier-saints, St George, England's patron saint, and St Martin, both Lloyd's namesake and patron saint of France. On a tablet below the window is the dedication:

In ever loving memory of MKA Lloyd, Capt Grenadier Guards and Master of Foxhounds, only beloved son of Sir M. Lloyd, Bart, Lord Marcher of Kemes and Lady Lloyd. He was wounded at Ypres in 1914 and was killed in action in France on September 15th, 1916. He lies where he fell at Ginchy on the Somme, aged 26 (sic) years. This window is erected by his devoted mother and father. Lux perpetua luceat Ei [May perpetual light shine upon him].

⁴⁷ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 27 October, 3 November 1916.

⁴⁸ *The Times*, 16 October 1916. The memorial service was held on the 14th; Sir Marteine was at Bronwydd on the 18th.

⁴⁹ Miles, *Lords of Cemais*, p. 75.

⁵⁰ National Inventory of War Memorials, Imperial War Museum, War Memorials Archive, no. 56923.

⁵¹ www.warmemorials.hampshire.org.uk.

⁵² "Be Thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a Crown of Life" (Revelation ii. 10).

The dedication ceremony was held on 10 December 1919 before a packed congregation. General Sir Henry Mackinnon, Grenadier Guards, unveiled the window, saying to the Bishop of St David's: 'I ask you, Sir, to take this window and keep it for all time, in memory of a brave soldier, a gallant gentleman, a good sportsman and a loyal comrade'.⁵³

Conclusion

There appears to be nothing remarkable about Marteine Kemes Arundel Lloyd. He was a typical product of an Edwardian country gentleman's family and representative of the privileged part of the junior officer class of the British Army that went to war in 1914. The absence of personal correspondence, however, means that his character cannot be fully plumbed.⁵⁴ His commemoration in a Roman Catholic Church and the charm he was wearing at his death are, however, suggestive of a religious hinterland that unfortunately must remain elusive. So too must his emotional life, although his connection with the mysterious Violet Whitla, who pretended to be his sister, is tantalizing.

With his love of fox hunting, Lloyd spent his life surrounded by animals. As Master of Fox Hounds, he would have been responsible for the hunting packs, including the beagles at Bronwydd. The only full-length photograph of Lloyd shows him in military clothes with his rather militant pet dog, Peter (see photo below). What distinguishes him from his contemporaries is his fleeting acquaintance with a cat, which brought him a short period of celebrity that was unwanted by him and his family. He survived the maelstrom of October 1914 at Ypres—one of the most critical periods of the war—but unfortunately not having nine lives, he could not survive his next great test.

⁵³ *The Cardigan and Tivy-Side Advertiser*, 12 December 1919.

⁵⁴ There is a local tradition that Lloyd's gambling habits seriously undermined the family fortunes, but this cannot be confirmed. See Great War Forum, comment by Huw Davies, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=158864&hl=%2Bmarteine+%2Blloyd>.



Capt. M. Kemes A. Lloyd, Gren. Guards
and Peter.

There is no picture of Lloyd with a cat, but this is the next best thing.
Source: www.stcynlloschurch.co.uk



Lloyd's final resting place in Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval, following reinterment in 1920.

Source: West Wales War Memorial Project,
<http://www.wwwmp.co.uk/ceredigion/llangynllo-war-memorial/>



Source: www.stcynlloschurch.co.uk



Bronwydd Castle, 1960

Source: www.stcynlloschurch.co.uk

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