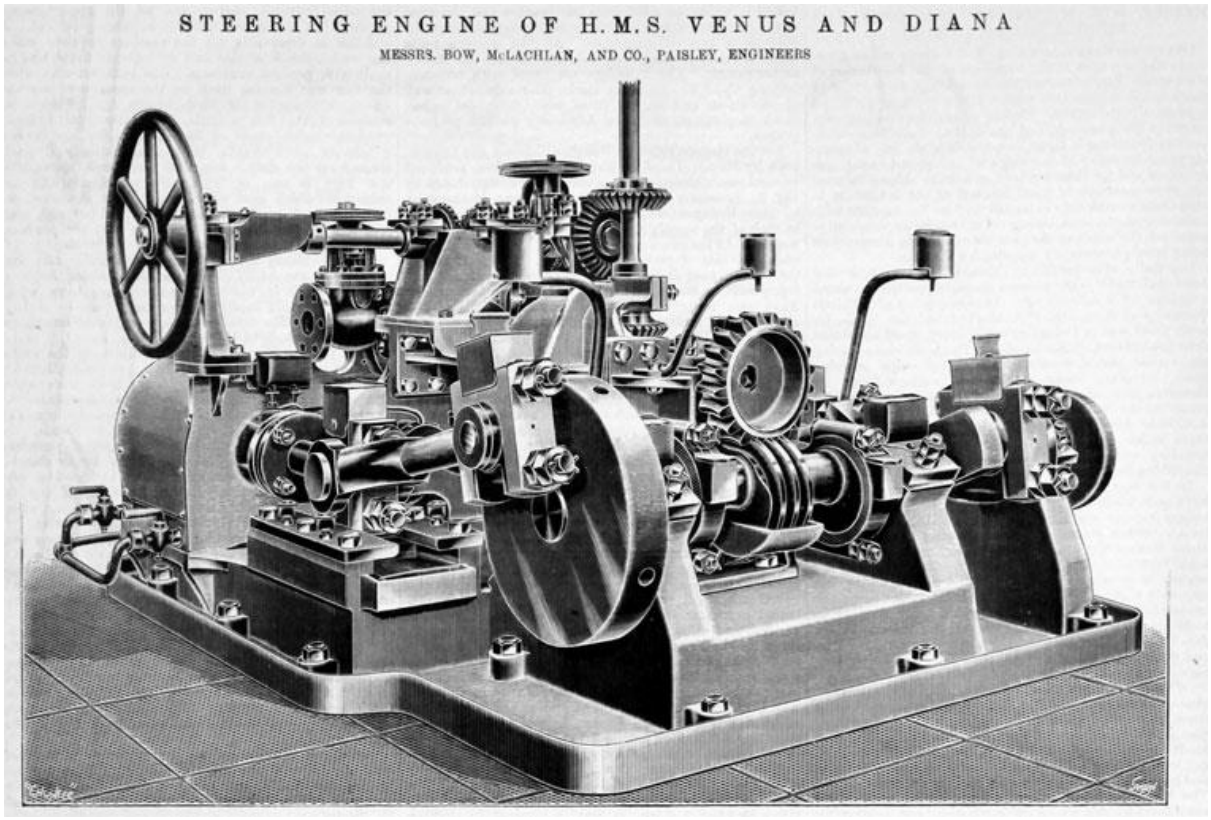
Barshaw Park and its World War One Lives

A compilation of events associated with Barshaw Park during The Great War, its benefactors and their WW1 Lives.

William Bow

William Bow is remembered at Barshaw Park for donating to the town the money for the cost of building the model yachting pond. This is his WW1 story-

William Bow (1856-1927), of Bow, McLachlan and Company, was one of five Paisley shipbuilders in the early twentieth century. Bow was a native of Paisley, his father being an



iron founder in premises situated in New Sneddon Street. Bow McLachlan and Company initially engaged in the making of steam steering gear, for which they had a patent. The business developed rapidly, and at the time was one of the best known in the country. The firm had a unique record during their long association with the Admiralty. During the First

World War they supplied at least 75 percent of the steam steering gear required by the Royal Navy during which time they never had a recorded failure.

Bow's Abbotsinch yard, based on the White Cart, specialised in tugs and was one of the pioneers of "kit boats", pre-fabricated in the upriver yard and reassembled as and where required.

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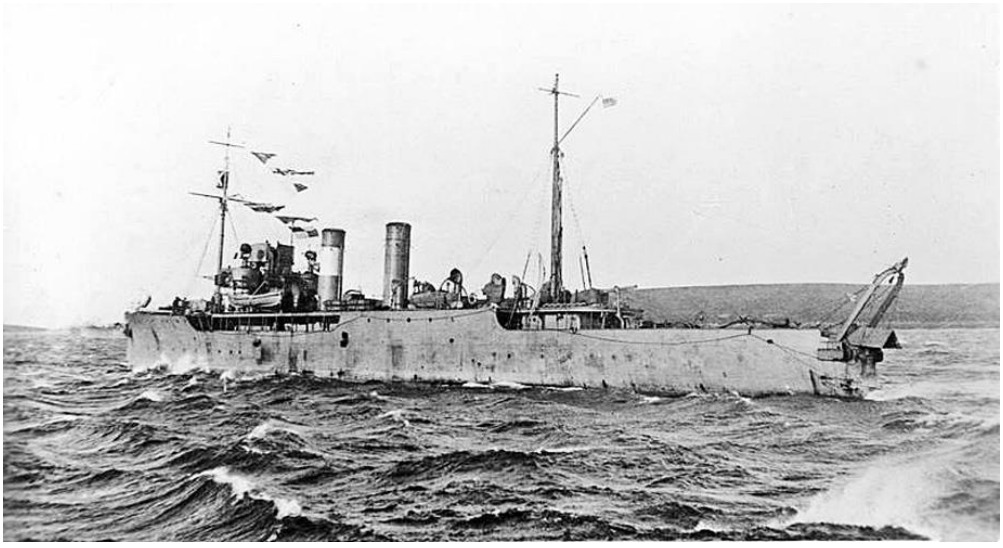
HM Tug Robust and model of Robust on the Barshaw pond 2016 opposite

In WW1 under the Emergency War Programme, the yard mainly built small Flower Class warships (Acacia, Azalea and Arabis Class sweeping sloops).Trinculo Class mooring ships, Hunt Class minesweepers and Naval Trawlers.

The Acacia class was a class of twenty-four sloops that were ordered in January 1915 under the Emergency War Programme for the Royal Navy in World War I as part of the larger



Acacia Class HMS Marigold, launched 27/05/1915, 1-screw. T3Cyl 368nhp, 17knots, Length 250.0 ft.

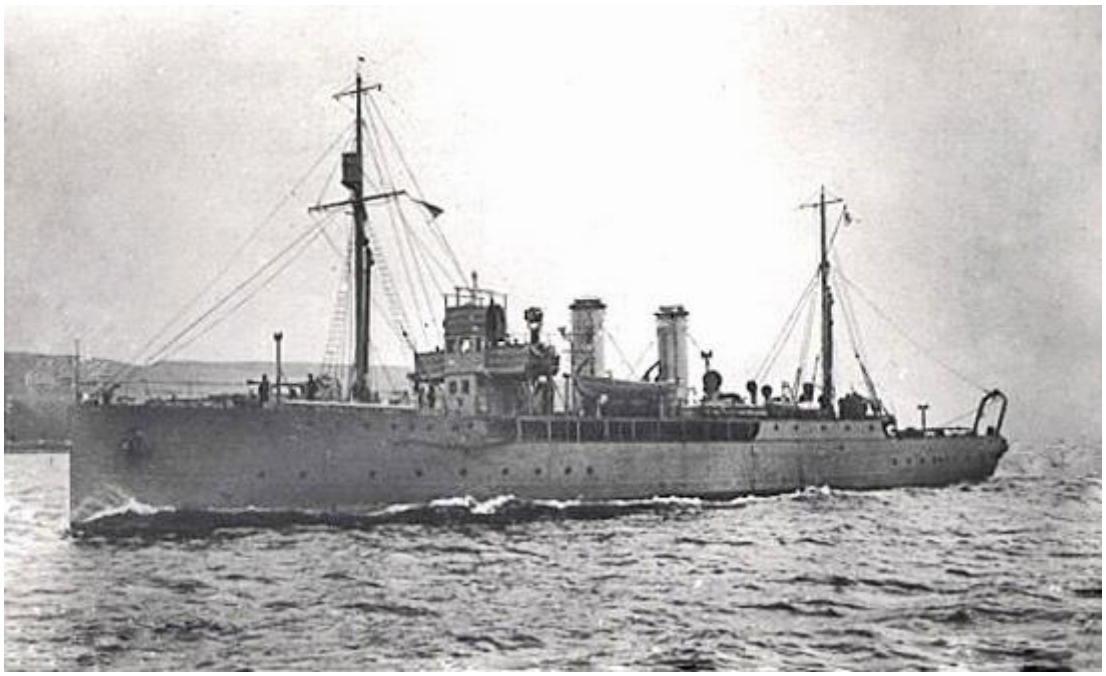
'Flower class' which were also referred to as the "Cabbage class", or "Herbaceous Borders". They were ordered in two batches, twelve ships on 1 January and another twelve on 12 January, and all were launched within about four or five months, and delivered between May

and September 1915. They were used almost entirely for minesweeping until 1917, when they were transferred to escort duty.

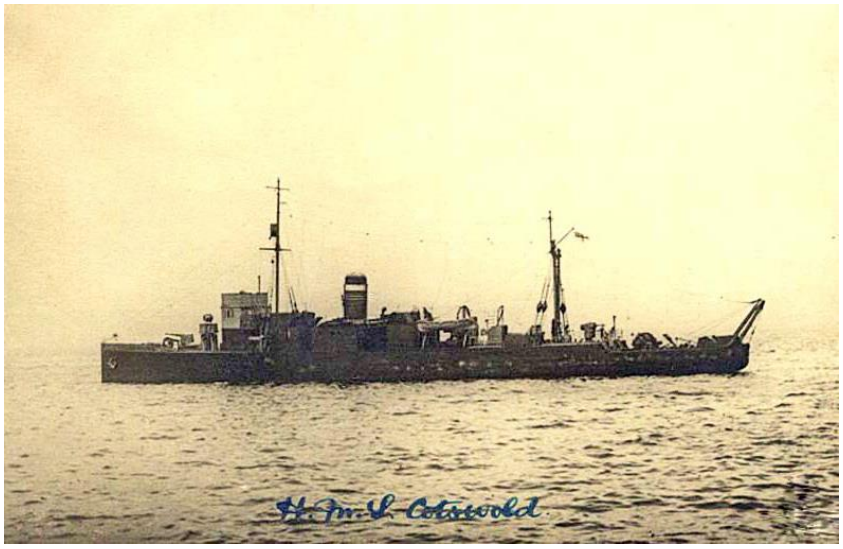
The ***Arabis*** **class** was the third class of minesweeping sloops and the largest building project completed under the Emergency War Programme for the Royal Navy in World War I. The ships were also used outside their minesweeping duties as patrol vessels, tugs, and personnel and cargo transports.

The design for the *Arabis* class was made at the end of 1914. All 36 British vessels were ordered in July 1915, and were built in three batches, averaging 12 vessels. A further 8 vessels were later built in British shipyards for the French Navy. The design was highly appealing, as most shipyards were capable of building them, and construction could be completed in five months.

Like the preceding *Acacia* and *Azalea* class sloops, these were single-screw Fleet Sweeping Vessels (Sloops) with triple hulls at the bows to give extra protection against loss when working



Arabis Class HMS Myosotis, launched 04/04/1916, 1-screw, TE, 2 boilers, coal, 2000ihp giving 16 knots, length 81.70 m



Hunt class Minesweeper ,HMS Cotswold, launched 28/11/1916 , 2 shaft, 3-cyl TE, 2 Yarrow boilers, Coal, 1,800ihp giving 16 knots, length 231ft

Sudan, Steel Paddle Steamer, launched 1915, length 236ft

One of the few surviving ships built by Bow McLachlan on the Nile in 2010. This is a picture of 'Sudan' that was sent in kit form in 1915 for assembly at the Thomas Cook shipyard, Boulac, Cairo. It is thought that she was used as a WW1 paddler hospital ship.

HM Trawler William Cummins, launched 17/11/1917, 1-screw. T3Cyl. 180lb. 61NHP, 10.5 knots, length 125ft, 1941 converted to Minesweeper and in 1944 to a danlayer. A dan is a marker buoy which consists of a long pole moored to the seabed and fitted to float vertically, usually with a coded flag at the top. Dan laying was an important part of minesweeping, and boats were fitted specifically for this purpose. The task of a danlayer was to follow the minesweepers as they worked an area, and lay the dans which defined the area swept and made it obvious where the clear channels were. This would also help the minesweepers cover areas accurately without gaps and unnecessary overlaps.

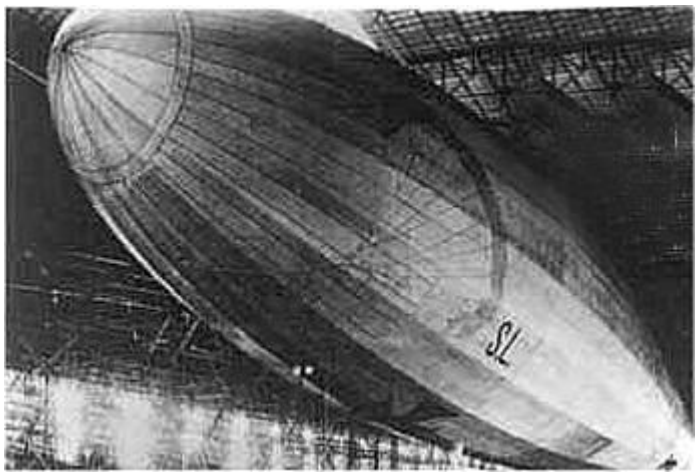
Between 1914 and 1918 the Bow McLachlan shipyard made 53 ships for the Admiralty many of which went on to serve also in WW2.

Many of Bow's Shipyard workers volunteered to serve their country.
On 9 September 1914 the *Paisley Daily Express reported* on the departure of recruits.

Shortly after one o'clock yesterday, a contingent of 120 recruits enrolled at the Town Hall left Gilmour Street Station for Glasgow. Maryhill is their destination and there the men will be

allotted to their respective units.
Recruiting was temporarily suspended during the preparations for their departure but afterwards it was resumed with the accustomed briskness. In this office meantime, men are being enlisted for the infantry only.
Subsequently, smaller contingents also took their departure. Recruiting continues today both at the Barracks and the Town Hall. From the District Tramway Service, up till today no fewer than 52 men had enlisted and it is believed that by the end of the month there will not be a young man eligible for the Army in the employment of that company.
Another large meeting of the workers at Bow McLachlan & Co Ltd (Yacht and Boat Builders) was held today and after a stirring address had been given, 11 more joined the colours. This makes a total of 107 who have left to join the Army or the Navy.

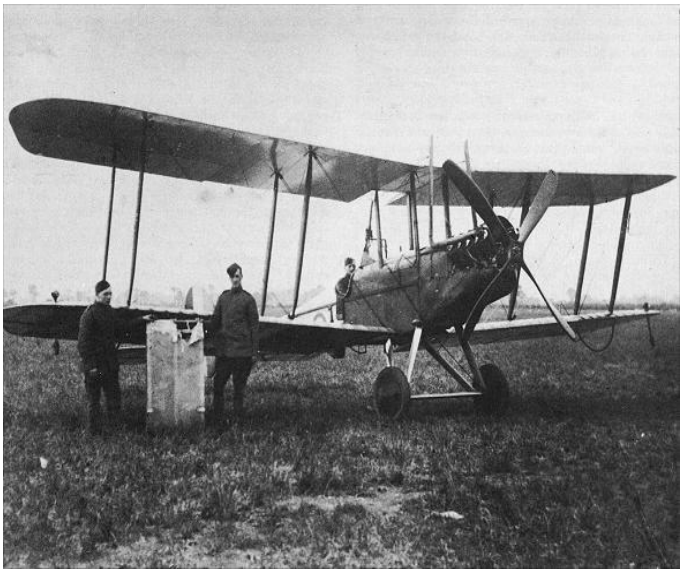
The Zeppelin Menace



SL 11 being built

In July 1915 William Bow wrote to the 'Fairplay' magazine offering a £500 reward to the first airman who shot down a Zeppelin on British soil.

On the afternoon of the 2nd September 1916, sixteen airships, twelve from the German Naval Airship Division and four from the Army Division, set out for England on what was to be the biggest air raid of the war. For the first time the two services were combining. The vessels were carrying a total load of 32 tons of bombs. On the night of 2/3 September 1916 over Cuffley, Hertfordshire, Lieutenant Robinson, flying a converted B.E.2c night fighter No. 2693, sighted a German airship. The airship was the wooden-framed Schütte-Lanz SL 11, although at the time and for many years after, it was misidentified as Zeppelin L 21. Robinson made an attack at an altitude of 11,500 ft (3,500 m) approaching from below and closing to within 500 ft (150 m) raking the airship with machine-gun fire. As he was preparing for another attack, the airship burst into flames and crashed in a field behind the Plough Inn at Cuffley, killing Commander *Hauptmann* Wilhelm Schramm and his 15-man crew. This action was witnessed by thousands of Londoners who, as they saw the airship descend in flames, cheered and sang the national anthem,



Lieut. William Leefe Robinson seated in the BE2c 2963
The mechanics hold up the upper wing centre section damaged by his own gun during the attack on SL11

one even played the bagpipes. The propaganda value of this success was enormous to the British Government, as it indicated that the German airship threat could be countered. When Robinson was awarded the VC by the King at Windsor Castle, huge crowds of admirers and onlookers were in attendance. Robinson was also awarded £3,500 in prize money from various industrialists and a silver cup donated by the people of Hornchurch. In April 1917, Robinson was posted to France as a Flight Commander with No. 48 Squadron, flying the then new Bristol F.2 Fighter. On the first patrol over the lines, on 5 April, Robinson's formation of six aircraft encountered the Albatross D.III fighters of Jasta 11, led by Manfred von Richthofen. Four were shot down. Robinson, flying Bristol F2A A3337, was shot down by *Vizefeldwebel* Sebastian Festner, and was wounded and captured. He was not well treated by the Germans. He made several attempts to escape but all failed, his health was badly affected during his time as a prisoner. He was imprisoned at Zorndorf and Holzminden, being kept in

solitary confinement at the latter camp for his escape attempts. When the war ended he returned home but died shortly afterwards on 31 December 1918 aged 23, from Spanish Flu that his poor treatment in captivity had made him more susceptible to.

King George V visits Paisley

In September 1917 King George V visited the ship yard and was met by William Bow, In addition to the work force the King was greeted by 2000 men, women and children who cheered the King as he passed them. During the visit the King launched 3 ships within an hour from each of the 3 Paisley shipyards. At the Bow McLachlan yard the King showed particular interest in the hospital barges being built for the war effort in Mesopotamia. His Majesty's attention was also drawn to a relic from the **Battle of Jutland**- the steering wheel of a torpedo boat destroyer that had obviously seen service.

King George V launches warship from Bow McLachlan yard

By 1917 Bow McLachlan yard had built about 400 vessels. When the war ended the Admiralty off- loaded its ships causing a recession for the shipbuilding industry. The yard closed in 1932 but was re-opened during the Second World War by P. W. MacLellan to fabricate landing craft for the D-Day invasion.

All that is left of Bow McLachlan shipyard on the White Cart

William Bow (wearing the bowler hat) introduces some workers to the King

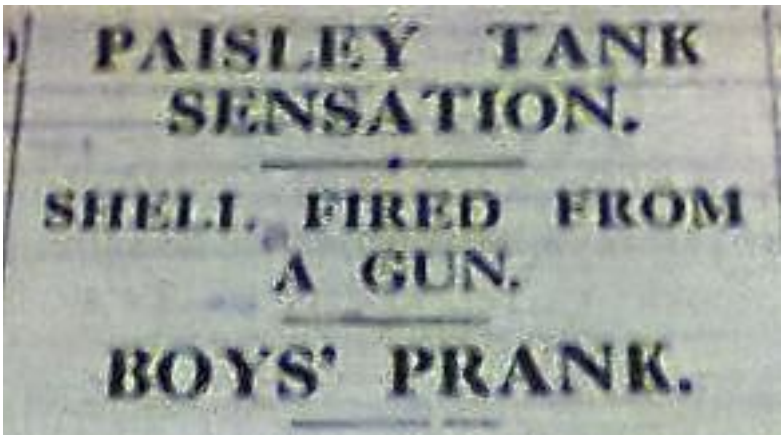
Bow was instrumental in the widening of the River Cart, the construction of the Inchinnan Swing Bridge and took great interest in its design (Scherzer) and construction and was a strong advocate of the breadth being at least 90ft. He also contributed to the cost of the bridge. When the bridge was opened on 28th March 1923 it cost £62000

Bow was an enthusiastic supporter of day-release schemes under which his apprentices attended courses at Paisley Technical College (now the University of the West of Scotland). In 1928 he gave his house, Dunscore, to the college for use as a residence for the Principal, and moved along Main Road to Priory Park. He also left the William Bow 'Post Graduate Studentship' legacy to the College. His interest in the welfare of the townspeople took a practicable form also when the model yachting pond was being constructed at Barshaw Park. This scheme was undertaken because assistance could be had from the Government. Bow sat on the town council Unemployment Grants Committee and was instrumental in the agreement to award the one penny per hour wage increase during the pond construction. The cost of the pond was over £3000, of which £1500 was secured in a grant, and Mr. Bow generously bore the expense of the balance, amounting to £1563.In 1926 William Bow accepted the post of Hon Commodore of Paisley Model Yacht Club..

The Barshaw Park Tank

The Barshaw Park tank

In February 1920, Paisley received a First World War tank from the Scottish War Savings Committee in recognition of the town's financial support during the war. The tank was situated in Barshaw Park, as a war memorial, at the Glasgow Road main gates.



PAISLEY TANK SENSATION.

SHELL FIRED FROM A GUN.

BOYS' PRANK.

There was a serious incident involving the tank on Sunday 14 March 1920.
The tank was an object of considerable interest and over 200 people were in the park at the time of the incident.

The injured man, John Maitland

Some youths gained access to the tank and found a greased shell. They loaded the shell in the gun and fired it. The shell was actually live and blasted out debris that had been accumulated in the barrel over park users in the vicinity. One member of the public, a Mr John Maitland, who resided in Caledonia Street, was blinded and several injured. As soon as the youths realised what they had done they took to their heels and Paisley Police were desirous of getting in touch with them to find out what happened!

It was fortunate that the muzzle was inclined otherwise the injuries would have been more severe. The tank fired the shell in an easterly direction towards Glasgow. There was an unconfirmed report of finding where the shell landed however Farmers east of the park were warned to look out for a shell just in case. Another two live shells were found and on further investigation a third live round was found further inside the machine the next day. It was anticipated that an official enquiry with a report to the Crown, would be undertaken into why these live shells remained in the tank and why the breach of the guns remained intact.

Where the shell is supposed to have landed

The aftermath, 15 March 1920, The Corporation instructed their clerk to write to the proper Department in the War Office intimating the accident and instructed him to see that the tank was securely closed.

5th April 1920, In view of the danger to children playing about the tank it was agreed to have it enclosed with a railing.

6th July 1920.The letter received from the War Office intimated that they were unable to admit liability in connection with the tank incident at Barshaw Park but that any claims should be forwarded for consideration with the view to making an ex gratia payment.

6th September 1920, the Council were informed that the claim from Mr Maitland would be in the region of £1500.

In *September 1921* the Council received a letter from the War Office enclosing a draft for £425 in payment of one half of the compensation paid by the Corporation in connection with the tank incident.

The tank was cut up for scrap in March 1938.

The Barshaw tank was actually one of the rarer **Male type** tanks recognisable by the Hotchkiss 6 pounder gun in the sponson. The original Hotchkiss QF 6 pounder naval gun had turned out to be too long for practical use with the current British heavy tank designs, which mounted guns in sponsons on the side rather than turrets on top as modern tanks do. The muzzles of the long barrels sometimes dug into the mud or struck obstacles when the vehicle crossed trenches or shell craters. The shortened **QF 6 pounder 6 cwt Mk I** of single tube construction was introduced in January 1917 in the Mark IV tank, and may be considered the world's first specialised tank gun.

Workman using oxyacetylene torch to cut up the Barshaw Park tank

The shortened barrel incurred a reduction in muzzle velocity, but as tank guns in World War I were used against unarmoured or lightly armoured targets such as machine gun nests and artillery pieces at relatively short ranges of a few hundred yards, this was not a

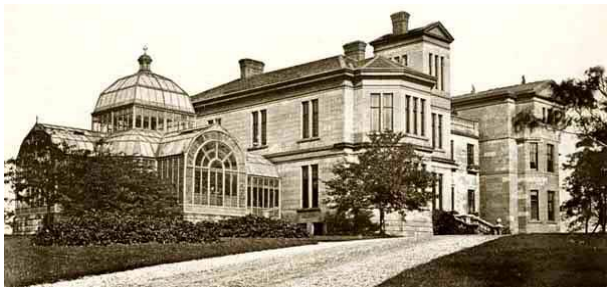
major disadvantage. With the muzzle being partly blocked by rubbish when the gun fired in the park, it was thought that the exit velocity would still be sufficient to fire the shell approx. one and a half miles.

During the War, Tank Banks were an ingenious way of raising funds to support the war effort and purchase more tanks for the front.
It all started in November 1917 when two Mark IV tanks made their debut at the Lord Mayor Show in London, this was the first time the public had seen the new "wonder machine", because of this success the Government decided to use the tank to raise money and support from the sale of War Bonds and War Savings Certificates.
Six Mark IV male tanks "Egbert" No141, "Nelson" No130, "Julian" No 113,"Old Bill" No 119, "Drake" No 137 and "Iron Rations" No 142 toured England, Wales and Scotland in 1918 raising Millions of pounds through "Tank Bank Weeks"
At the End of the War it was decided to release 264 war battered tanks to Cities and Towns in gratitude of their financial efforts. They stood in parks and other places, all were scrapped in the 1920's and 1930's.

Conversion of Park ground to grow Vegetables

In April 1916 the west end of the park, where the pond is currently situated, was converted to Garden plots to grow vegetables for the war effort.
The effects of the German submarine attacks on Britain’s merchant fleet was starting to impact the food supply.
150 plots of 110 square yards each were allotted at a rent of 4/- per annum. A water supply was installed for the use of the gardeners and the ground fenced. The Corporation however decided not to charge Rates in the annual fees. The plots remained until 1924 when the yachting pond was constructed.

The Barshaw House WW1 Story



Barshaw House was purchased in 1911 by Paisley Corporation and the grounds converted to a park that was opened to the public in 1912.The mansion house was then turned into an infirmary.

The Belgian Refugee story

In October 1914 Barshaw House underwent a change of use and was used to accommodate Belgian refugees, many of whom had escaped during the Siege of Antwerp and neighbourhood.

It was the Treaty of London of 1839 which guaranteed Belgian sovereignty in the event of invasion and provided the reason for British entry to the war. The German Government, intending to do just that so as to reach France (specifically Paris) all the faster in the opening weeks of the First World War, asked the British government in August 1914 to effectively ignore the "scrap of paper" committing Britain to the defence of Belgium. Britain refused, Germany invaded Belgium anyway: and Prime Minister Asquith took Britain into the Great War on 4 August 1914.
Together with 80,000 garrison troops, Antwerp's ring of 48 outer and inner forts presented formidable opposition to von Kluck's German First Army's flank. Von Kluck had chosen to bypass Antwerp in the German army's advance through Belgium and into France. Nevertheless, the presence of so many troops at its flank presented a constant threat.

German General von Boseler was given the task of capturing Antwerp. Assigned a force of five divisions of mostly reserve forces and 173 guns, artillery bombardment began firing upon the outer south-east forts on 28 September 1914. As at Liege and at Namur, the use of heavy guns such as the powerful

German Big Bertha siege gun

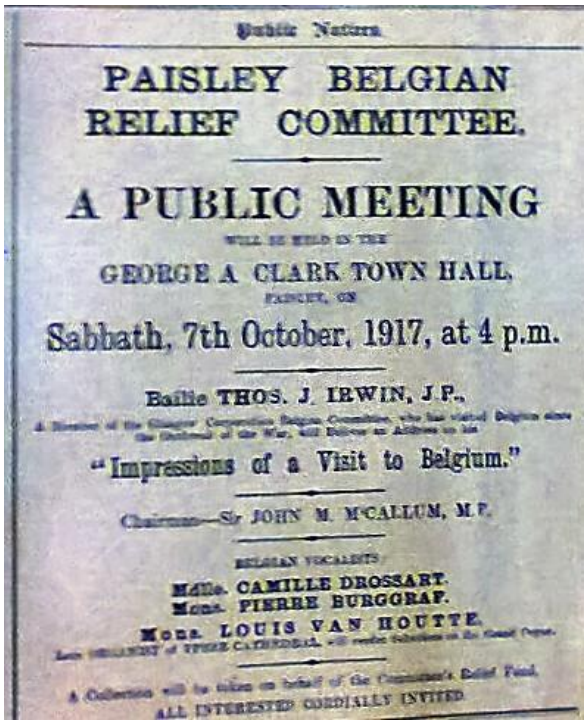
Big Bertha (a 420mm siege howitzer), effectively put the forts out of commission.

The British Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, viewed with great disquiet the siege of Antwerp, fearful that once the city and its forts had been captured the German forces would quickly move towards the channel ports, possibly threatening Britain itself. Consequently the British, led by Asquith, Kitchener (the Minister for War), Grey (the Foreign Secretary) and Churchill (the First Lord of the Admiralty), decided on 1 October to re-deploy a division of troops originally intended for the British Expeditionary Force led by Sir John French.

On 2 October the Germans succeeded in penetrating two of the city's forts. Churchill was sent to Antwerp to provide a first-hand report on the situation there. Leaving London that night he spent three days in trenches and fortifications around the city. He reported to Kitchener on 4 October that Belgian resistance was weakening with morale low.

Receiving a request from the Belgian government for more assistance, the British dispatched a further 6,000 Royal Navy troops, 2,000 on 4 October and 4,000 on the following day. The original division of 22,000 troops were also en-route for Ostend.

Landing at Ostend on 6 October the British naval forces were too late; the Belgian government relocated from Antwerp to Ostend the same day, with the city itself evacuated the following day under heavy artillery bombardment, formally surrendered by its Military Governor, General Victor Deguise to the Germans on 10 October 1914.
About one million civilian refugees left in 1914 for Great Britain, the Netherlands and France. The city of Antwerp would remain occupied by German troops until November 1918.


Public Notices.

PAISLEY BELGIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE.

A PUBLIC MEETING

GEORGE A CLARK TOWN HALL,

Sabbath, 7th October, 1917, at 4 p.m.

Bailie THOS. J. IRWIN, J.P.,

"Impressions of a Visit to Belgium."

Chairman—Sir JOHN M. M'CALLUM, M.P.

BELGIAN VOCALISTS:

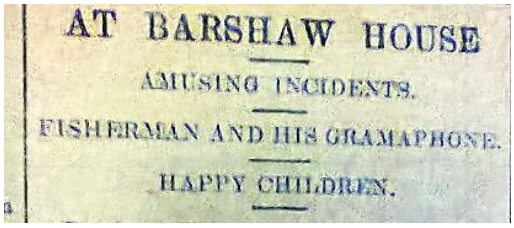
Mdlle. CAMILLE DROSSART.
Mons. PIERRE BURGGRAF.
Mons. LOUIS VAN HOUTTE.

A Collection will be taken on behalf of the Committee's Relief Fund.

ALL INTERESTED CORDIALLY INVITED

On 30 November 1914,the *Paisley Daily Express* reported:
BELGIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE

At (the) last fortnightly meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chambers - with Mr John McCallum in the chair - the secretary reported that the £1,000 voted by the Committee at its last meeting had been sent to the Commission for Relief in Belgium through the Belgian Consul in Glasgow and read a letter from the Belgian Consul-General in London thanking the generous donors of Paisley. It was reported that Mr and Mrs Den Doucker who are looking after the refugees at Barshaw House had declined to accept any remuneration for their work there. Mr and Mrs Den Doucker were cordially thanked by the Committee for the splendid services they were giving at Barshaw.


AT BARSHAW HOUSE

AMUSING INCIDENTS.

FISHERMAN AND HIS GRAMAPHONE.

HAPPY CHILDREN.

The secretary further stated that the Parish Council had agreed to give the necessary accommodation at Auchentorlie House for several maternity cases. (This house was purchased in 1910 by the Parish Council as a children's home and for maternity cases. It had a capacity for 77 inmates. Located on Seedhill Road, the original intention of Auchentorlie House was to keep children of good character from coming into contact with ordinary inmates of the Poorhouse). *It is stated that assistance was being given by the Committee to 23 families - 97 persons - brought to Paisley by the Catholic Committee. At the date of the meeting those were being paid a weekly allowance but this week it is expected that at least eight of these families will become self-supporting, as one or other of the members of the families have secured employment. Mr Den Doucker gave a survey of the position at Barshaw to date, stating that there were 91 refugees in Barshaw House and 28 housed elsewhere in town and that between Barshaw and the other house at the disposal of the Committee about 64 more refugees could be housed. Considering the urgent necessity for further funds to relieve the distress of the Belgians who still remain in their own country, it was agreed to appeal at once for subscriptions for this special purpose and it was remitted to a sub-committee to attend to the matter.*

At the start of World War I, King Albert I of Belgium, refused to comply with Germany's request for safe passage for its troops through Belgium in order to attack France, which the Germans alleged was about to advance into Belgium en-route to attacking Germany in support of Russia. In fact, the French government had told its army commander not to go into Belgium before a German invasion. King Albert, took personal command of the Belgian army and held the Germans off long enough for Britain and France to prepare for the Battle of the Marne (6–9 September 1914). He led his army through the Siege of Antwerp and the Battle of the Yser, when the Belgian army was driven back to a last tiny strip of Belgian territory near the North Sea. Here the Belgians, in collaboration with the armies of the Triple Entente, took up a war of position, in the trenches behind the River Yser, remaining there for the next four years. During this period, King Albert fought with his troops and shared their dangers, while his wife, Queen Elisabeth, worked as a nurse at

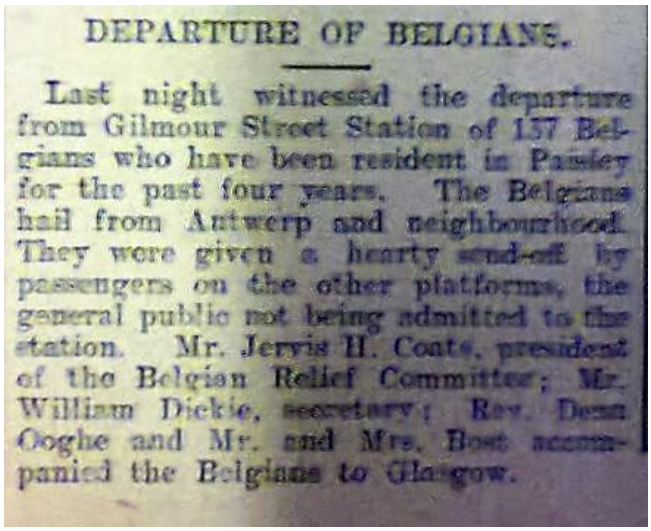

King Albert inspecting the front line with his officers

the front. During his time on the front, rumours spread on both sides of the lines that the German soldiers never fired upon him out of respect for him being the highest ranked commander in harm's way, while others feared risking punishment by the Kaiser himself. The King also allowed his 14-year-old son, Prince Leopold, to enlist in the Belgian army as a private and fight in the ranks.

The Barshaw Park Memorial Oak tree

The Belgian people thus held their King in high esteem especially as man who did not go into exile but stayed and fought beside them. To celebrate King Albert of Belgium's birthday, an oak tree was planted in Barshaw Park on 17 April 1915, just east of where the present café stands and another one planted in Sir William Dunn Square. The idea had come from the refugees themselves as it was the custom in Belgium to commemorate special events with the planting of a tree and it would also show their appreciation to the town of Paisley. Some 500 Belgian refugees attended the event in the park and were addressed by Provost John Robertson (owner of Robertsons Preserves) and Sir Thomas Glen-Coats who had been in personal contact with King Albert. The town of Paisley had been very kind to the refugees and to this end they remarked that Barshaw Park and Barshaw House would always live in the memory of the Belgian people. The tree was decorated with the Belgian National colours and was planted by M.Camille Berck, the originator of the idea of a ceremony. Provost Robertson stated "that the oak tree was one of the hardiest trees that grew in this country and when it grew in height and beauty they should remember the people of Belgium. We in Paisley accepted this token. It would be carefully guarded and as our children played around it we would tell them what it meant and what it stood for. On behalf of the community he accepted the tree and expressed the hope that it would grow to be a thing of beauty and a joy for ever".

About 1985/6 a survey was carried out to ascertain the condition of two large branches on the Oak, one close to the Cafe gable end, the other facing Glasgow Road (middle gate) .The Parks Dept. tree squad carried out the survey and it was decided to remove the two branches as they did pose a danger to the public. During the removal process they discovered extensive rot had set in and test boring of the main trunk was also carried out. It was reported that the tree was in an unstable condition due to internal rot and they took the decision to remove the tree completely.



DEPARTURE OF BELGIANS.

Last night witnessed the departure from Gilmour Street Station of 137 Belgians who have been resident in Paisley for the past four years. The Belgians hail from Antwerp and neighbourhood. They were given a hearty send-off by passengers on the other platforms, the general public not being admitted to the station. Mr. Jervis H. Coats, president of the Belgian Relief Committee; Mr. William Dickie, secretary; Rev. Dean Ooghe and Mr. and Mrs. Bost accompanied the Belgians to Glasgow.

Belgians leave Paisley 14 December 1918

When the war ended, The British government wanted the refugees out to make room for its own soldiers returning home from the various ex theatres of war and withdrew the refugees work permits. This also suited the Belgian Government who needed its people back home to help rebuild their own country. The British Government offered the refugees free passage back to Belgium for a restricted period of time, thus the vast majority of the refugees returned home to Belgium.

Barshaw House as an Auxiliary Red Cross Hospital

In October 1916 the Corporation at the bequest of Captain Colledge on behalf of the British Red Cross Society agreed to it being occupied as an auxiliary hospital for wounded soldiers. Captain Colledge stated that it was desired that certain sections of the grounds be fenced off for the sake of privacy and that the Society would be at the expense of this and any expense to put the house in order as a hospital.

In December, the public were informed that the house would be used as a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital of 60 beds for wounded soldiers. The Matron would be Mrs Holmes, a fully trained nurse and wife of Dr.J.D Holmes. The hospital would be staffed by members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments in the district (VAD).Anyone wishing to assist the hospital by donations in money or kind, including furnishings or equipment etc. might communicate with Capt. Colledge. As in other hospitals a donation of £50 would name a bed and other substantial articles of equipment could be named as desired by the owner.

The VAD. In 1909 the British Red Cross Society was given the role of providing supplementary aid to the Territorial Forces Medical Service in the event of war. In order to provide trained personnel for this task, county branches of the British Red Cross Society organised units called Voluntary Aid Detachments were formed. All Voluntary Aid Detachment members, who came to be known simply as "V.A.D.'s" were trained in First Aid and Nursing. Within twelve months they numbered well over 6000.

Following the outbreak of war in 1914 the number of Detachments increased dramatically. The British Red Cross Society and the Order of St John of Jerusalem, a body which was also empowered to raise detachments under the War Office Voluntary Aid Scheme, combined to form the Joint War Committee in order to administer their wartime relief work with the greatest possible efficiency and economy, under the protection of the Red Cross emblem and name.

V.A.D.'s, who initially were mostly middle-class women eager to "do their bit," performed a variety of duties. At home the organisation administered auxiliary hospitals and convalescent homes and much of the V.A.D. service consisted of general nursing duties and administering first aid. Qualified nurses were also employed to work in these establishments. In addition, clerical and kitchen duties were performed by V.A.D.'s, and as many men were engaged in military service, female V.A.D.'s took on roles such as ambulance drivers, civil defence workers and welfare officers.

Even before war was declared in August 1914, preparations were being made to establish auxiliary hospitals around the country in anticipation of potential casualties. At that time, no-one could have imagined the scale of the operation, or how many casualties would require these services.

Nurses in the Barshaw House greenhouse

Volunteers contributed to the medical care of patients as well as taking on duties as orderlies, cleaners and cooks.

Offers of accommodation were submitted to the War Office and Joint War Committee for selection – premises ranged from town halls and schools to private houses both in towns and in the country. There were over 3,000 auxiliary hospitals in the United Kingdom, funded by grants from the War Office.
The highest rate of payment from the Government, irrespective of the injury was £1.4s.6d. per patient per week to cover treatment, food and other costs.

Barshaw House opened to the wounded soldiers on 6th March 1917.
By the time it closed as an Aux Hospital and reverted back to the Paisley Corporation on 12 April 1919 it had treated between seven and eight hundred wounded soldiers.

Recuperating soldiers having a game of tennis

Auxiliary hospitals were attached to central Military Hospitals, which looked after patients who remained under military control. The patients at these hospitals were generally less seriously wounded than at other hospitals and they needed to convalesce.

The servicemen preferred the auxiliary hospitals to military hospitals because they were not so strict, they were less crowded and the surroundings were more homely.

The blue hospital suit . When he arrived in Britain, a battle wounded soldier was sent to a hospital specialising in his type of wound or to one of the numerous convalescent establishments scattered throughout the UK. There, he was issued with "a special hospital uniform consisting of a blue single-breasted jacket with a white lining - worn open at the neck, blue trousers, a white shirt and a red tie. To complete the outfit he wore his own khaki service cap with its regimental badge." The suit was also known as the ‘blue invalid uniform’, ‘hospital suit’ and ‘hospital blues'. Curiously - it usually had no pockets. The lack of pockets in the convalescent blue uniform was a feature that fitted

with economy, as it saved on fabric, and with disciplinary arrangements, especially the rule that soldiers were not allowed to hold money while in hospital. Finally, the Blues served an important propagandistic function during the war, helping to put the wounded Tommy on public display and to facilitate public appreciation of his service to King and Country.

Soldiers at a party in Barshaw House

Soldiers in the Barshaw House grounds

Raising funds and gifts for Barshaw House Aux Hospital

ANCHOR MILLS RED CROSS FETE DAY.

OVER £800 REALISED.

Nurses of the Anchor mills VAD with Mrs Clark Neil

BARSHAW AUXILIARY HOSPITAL.

The Matron and Staff beg to acknowledge with thanks the following gifts:—Money Donations—Mrs. Johnstone, 15 Johnston Street; employees of R. Cochran & Sons; Paisley and District Fleshers, for the purpose of naming two beds; Caledonia Bowling Club, per Scottish Bowling Association; children of west-end of Johnston Street; children and neighbours of 11, 13, 15 Andrew Street; part proceeds of cake and candy sale held at Mrs. M'Caig's, 20 Blackstoun Road; proceeds of garden fete, per Mrs. Newton, Mandala; employees, Soho Works, £1 10s. Other Gifts—Girls of Anchor Mills, weekly supply of fish, ham, and sausages; No. 26 Renfrew V.A.D., weekly supply of buns; National Egg Collection, weekly supply of eggs; C[illegible] Mrs. Newton, [illegible] sandwiches, etc.; Mrs. Cochran, Maryville, pears; Mrs. Bell, Middlepark, plums; Mrs. Farquhar, 5 Athole Gardens, Glasgow, cake; Mrs. Nisbet, 2 Colinslee Terrace, fruit cakes; Red Cross Game Depot, 30 Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow, 18 brace grouse, 1 brace black game; Miss J. Smith, Whitebaugh, cakes; Mrs. Balderston, Inchcape, cigarettes for patients, teaspoons for staff; Mrs. Foulds, Potterhill, tarts; Paisley Baths Committee, free use of baths; Brown & Polson, Parking Department, sweets, cakes, cigarettes, tobacco; Mrs. Smith, Whiteleigh, case of apples; Mr. John Gibson, of Andrew Gibson & Son, scones; Mr. Herbert Robson, Florence Villa, flowers; Rev. Thos. Proudfoot, Wesleyan Methodist Church, fruit from harvest thanksgiving service; Mrs. Field Wilson, scones; Miss Boyle, Williamsburgh School, magazines; Miss E.

Extract thanking patrons for their gifts to the hospital and National Egg Collection

The VAD raised funds to support their work and assist the wounded soldiers by holding fairs, fetes and flag weeks. Many Works had their own VAD units. The monies raised was distributed among the Renfrewshire Auxiliary hospitals. Above picture shows Mrs Clark Neil with her VAD guard of honour, addressing the crowd in front of Kilnside House. J.O.M Clark, the owner of the Anchor Mills, who is also in the picture was a Honary Commodore of Paisley Model Yacht Club.

The public and local businesses also donated gifts to the Barshaw Aux Hospital supplying food and goods to support the soldiers.

The National Egg collection for Wounded Soldiers and Sailors.

The National Egg Collection was launched in November 1914 following proposals put forward by Frederick Carl, the editor of *Poultry World*. The aim initially was to provide 20,000 newly-laid eggs a week to the wounded in hospital in Boulogne. However, very soon the organisation began to aim even higher, endeavouring to collect or purchase 200,000 eggs a week: a target that was reached at Easter 1915. In the following August, partly to celebrate the fact that Queen Alexandra had become the patron of the scheme, the War Office decided to see if the number could be increased to one million eggs a week. 1,030,380 eggs were received during the week 16-23 August, not including

those sent directly to local hospitals, a practice which *Poultry World* discouraged. Special boxes and labels were supplied (there were over 2000 depots run by local groups and churches) and free transport was provided by the railways. A central collection point was established in London in a warehouse initially provided free of charge by Harrods.

The National Egg Collection was one of a range of initiatives appealing to all classes and to all ages but especially to children. A variety of posters were issued, one depicting a hen wearing a red sash, a sort of honorary soldier 'enlisted for duration of the war', thus echoing the sentiment expressed by *Poultry World* that 'every British hen should be on active service'. Cardboard or silk lapel pins and badges were sold on flag days and advertisements employing a mixture of patriotic idealism and emotional blackmail placed in the newspapers. 'Do your duty by the wounded men. You cannot eat eggs and feel that the wounded are going without.' Those not participating were deemed to be not worthy of the name 'Britisher'.

Donors were encouraged to write their name and address on the eggs with a message for the wounded (*Poultry World* called them 'eggograms') and often the grateful recipient of an egg would write to thank the sender.

Barshaw Park WW1 Memorial Bandstand.

When the war ended, the Paisley War Memorial Fund was established and the Council were open to suggestions what format the memorial should take.
In March 1920 the War Memorial organising committee were recorded as making arrangements for open air church services to be held in Barshaw Park and the offertory collection being taken in aid of the Memorial Fund.


MEMORIAL BANDSTAND

BAILIE M'GEORGE'S SUGGESTION AT WARD MEETING.

In October 1920, Bailie McGeorge made the suggestion at a Ward meeting , aimed at the War Memorial Committee, that their scheme might take the form of a memorial bandstand in Barshaw Park, where he regretted there was no proper place from which to render selections, especially as it was Paisley's most popular park.

The Paisley Cenotaph was unveiled on 28 July 1924 in the Town Centre. However the concept of having a bandstand in the Barshaw Park was still discussed regularly at council meetings but it would have to wait due to the lack of public funds.

In early 1930 it was proposed that a Bandstand be constructed in Barshaw Park and it was suggested that the Government Unemployment Grants Scheme could be used to pay for the project.

On 15th April 1930, The Unemployment Grants Committee reported to Council that they did not see their way to approve of the bandstand construction in the park under the Unemployment Grants Scheme. The Clerk was instructed to push for approval of the scheme and it was remitted to the Provost and Councillor McGeorge, (who first made the proposal in 1920) who were travelling to London for other Council business at the end of the month, to take up the matter with the Government Unemployment Committee.
By the 2nd September 1930, the issues surrounding the Unemployment Grants Scheme had been resolved and the submitted plan showing the site of the proposed bandstand at Barshaw Park was subsequently approved by the Council.

On Tuesday 16th June 1931 at 2.30pm, the new Barshaw Park Bandstand was opened as a Memorial to the First World War. Total expenditure for the Bandstand was £2049 12s 11d

The Demise of the Bandstand

By late 1966 the Bandstand had been vandalised and had fallen into disrepair.
The Paisley Corporation Council delayed a decision on what was to be done for several months, however at the 28th August 1967 Council meeting it was agreed that the Bandstand be demolished owing to its dangerous condition. The Bandstand site is now the location of the Nature Corner.