

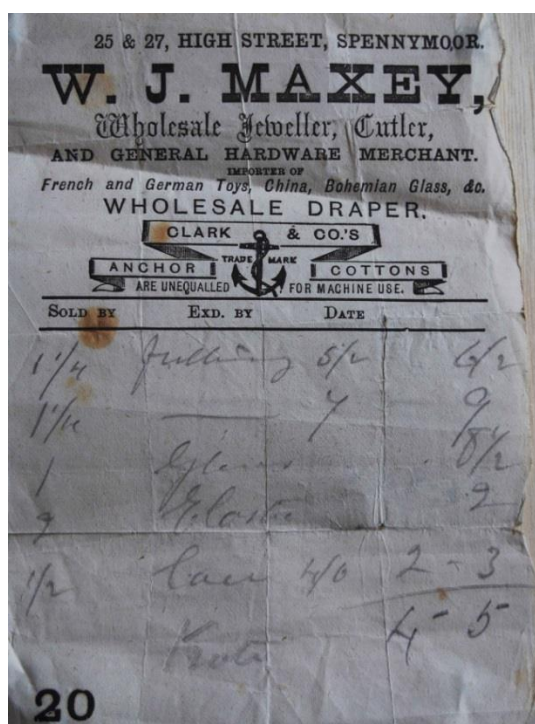
Commentary on documents collected by Kate Maxey MM, RRC, FNM

Prepared by John Banham to complement the film "Behind the Lines"

Prior to the making of the *Behind the Lines* film in winter 2017/18, with the permission of Maureen Defty, Durham County Record Office photographed the album compiled during the Great War when Sister Maxey served in France. Material from this album was used in the film along with other material from the Maxey collection which I photographed for the *Spennymoor's Great War* exhibition held in August 2014. There is little written material with the collection but, over the last five years of research, those involved have compiled information which is worth sharing as a commentary on this collection of well over 100 items; the album itself contains 96 photographs and three sketches. This is the third version of my commentary and corrects errors made in the previous version posted in 2016 (the reasons for these errors are explained in the text that follows).

Spennymoor and Leeds pre WW1

These seven images are not from the Album.



Above. Receipt from Walter Maxey's shop. The shop still exists as Defty & Son and is run by Walter's Great Grandson, Richard Defty.



Below. Kate in the early 1890s.



Top right. The Maxey family in the 1890s. Kate is sitting on the right. Walter Maxey is standing on the right.



Above - Kate as a nurse at Leeds General Infirmary c 1900.



LGI Nurse's Badge

More research into Kate Maxey's life in pre-war Leeds would be beneficial. She is described as a *scholar* in the 1891 Census living with Dr & Mrs McKane, her uncle and aunt, at 55a North Street but we don't know how she was educated (the McKane and Maxey children may even have had a governess). Oral evidence passed down through Kate's family suggests that at some stage she worked with or for the eminent surgeon Sir Berkeley Moynihan (1865-1936). He was prominent in setting up the Army's Northern General Hospital at Beckett Park, Leeds, and was a Territorial Major in the RAMC. It seems probable that this connection motivated Kate Maxey to join the TFNS in 1912.

For detail on Moynihan see:

<http://www.firstworldwarhospital.co.uk/sir-berkeley-moynihan>

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F40453>

<http://livesonline.rcseng.ac.uk/biogs/E000226b.htm>

<https://www.bmj.com/content/1/4137/649>



Kate's ID tag for the Territorial Force Nursing Service (presumably worn throughout the war).

No 8 General Hospital, Rouen

After the making of the film, research for a timeline of Kate Maxey's WW1 experiences requested by local schools was undertaken. This involved looking in more detail at No 8 General Hospital in Rouen where Kate was first posted when she arrived in France on 9 October 1914. As a result of comparison of photographs from the album with those posted on the independent *Grey and Scarlet* website, we have established beyond reasonable doubt that most of Kate Maxey's album relates to Rouen where she was from autumn 1914 to Spring 1915.



Above: I was, therefore, wrong in believing that the above photograph from the album (no 77) was of one of the buildings in Etretat housing No 1 General Hospital, where Kate served in 1916. The colonnades and architectural style of the building match a postcard from Rouen sent by Nurse L Allen in 1917. The postcard is identified on the front as *Boisguillaume Maison de Repos, route de Neufchatel* – see:

<http://www.greyandscarlet.com/no8-general-hospital-rouen.html>

Many photographs in the album show the colonnaded interior courtyard of the hospital – see nos. 47, 48, 6 & 7 across the page, top to bottom. Kate Maxey is not

among the personnel shown and the previous assumption that the group photographs were taken at Etretat is a wrong attribution.



In the winter of 1914/15 most of the patients were housed in tents (marquees) in the grounds (see no 69 below).



The nurses' quarters were in a convent some distance away by tram. Local trams ran along the Route de Neufchatel next to the hospital (no 59) to other parts of Rouen, where there were also several other war hospitals.



Nurses were allocated to their duties by the Army's Matron in Charge, Maud McCarthy, whose War Diary is in the National Archives. In January 1915, McCarthy reported that, Sir Berkeley Moynihan, for whom Kate worked at Leeds General Infirmary, was inspecting the Rouen War Hospitals. Between December 1914 and March 1915, Moynihan was an advisor to the Director General of the Army's Medical Services and the first photograph in the Maxey album shows him on an inspection (01 above right).



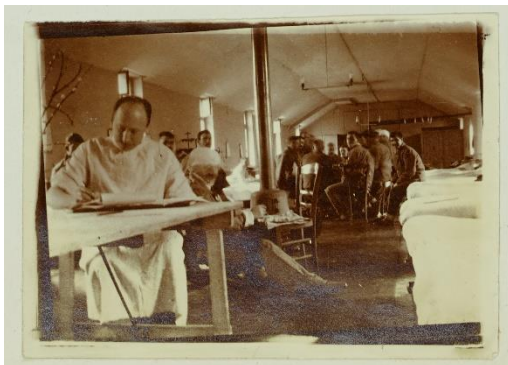
On 11 January 1915, Maud McCarthy reported that huts were taking "the place of all the marquees for patients and when all occupied may require an increase of staff, there being 12 huts, each to take 30 beds. The huts for the Nursing Staff are ready for occupation as soon as the water is laid on. They are well built and will be thoroughly comfortable in every respect ...".



These huts are shown above (no 10). Kate Maxey and fellow nurses are pictured in the nearby grounds of the hospital (no 31).



Sir Berkeley Moynihan's major contribution to the treatment of wounded soldiers was to improve surgical techniques, particularly in orthopaedic surgery (treating damaged bones and joints etc). Moynihan left France in Spring 1915 to become the Chairman of the Army's Medical Advisory Board, but it is significant that the album has several photographs relating to surgery at No 8 General Hospital and it seems likely, from the photographs (nos. 81-83 below) that Kate Maxey worked in the operating theatre at the hospital.



Orthopaedic surgery required X-rays, and these were in use, as shown (no 21).



Below. There is a photograph (see no 16 below) of a number of medical officers (including those viewing the X-rays) reading newspapers under the colonnades. They are reading the Daily Mail, but the date is unknown.



The album also has a photograph (no 63) of two Chaplains with the colonnades in the background.



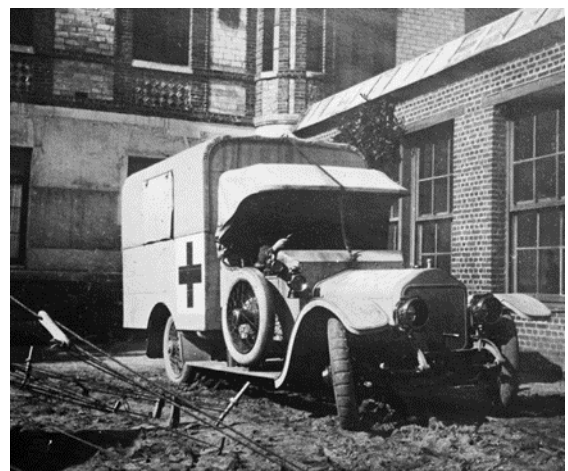
The Hospital chapel is also shown in the album (no 45) close to the colonnaded area shown in the picture below (no 68) where soldiers are assembled.



This is near the hospital gates on the Route de Neufchatel, where French soldiers are passing in the photograph below (no 67).



The photograph of the motor ambulance (no. 60 in the Album), which was originally thought to be taken at No 1 General Hospital, Etretat, in 1916, is more likely, from the architectural style of its surroundings, to have been taken at Rouen in 1915.



Motor ambulances were delivered to France in the winter of 1914/1915 as discussed on the website *The Royal Army Medical Corps on WW1 Postcards* <https://www.worldwar1postcards.com/war-wounded-and-the-ramc.php>

Indeed, on Sunday 27th September 1914, *The Times* carried the following headline: *A Great Need of Motor Ambulances - Wounded Conveyed in Lorries*

No.1 General Hospital, Etretat

Motor ambulances did figure significantly at No1 General Hospital in Etretat where Kate Maxey served with Edith Appleton in 1916. Alain Millet, a local historian of the town, writes on the Appleton website:

When a convoy arrived in Etretat Railway Station, the light wounded walked to the centre of Etretat. Buses drove those who couldn't walk and the ambulances drove the heavy wounded. ... Cecil Smith [was] the chief of the "girl drivers" ("chaufferettes")

I met him when I was young. He spoke very [good] French but in a strange manner. He had learned French through the [works] of Victor Hugo and a French Bible.

see the Websites:

<http://anurseatthefront.org.uk/information-about-etretat-and-no-1-general-hospital/>

<http://familyatwar.co.uk/index.php/home/etretat/>

So far as I can tell there are no exterior photographs of Etretat in the album, only a few interiors in the final pages. Two of these suggest the Etretat location. One (no. 96) is of a patient stood at a balcony with his back to the sea. The other (no 99) is of Kate Maxey behind a table of flowers. Edith Appleton's Diary refers to cutting flowers on 30th July 1916.

Off in afternoon went with Maxey to a glorious garden - where we cut flowers to our hearts' content & when we both had a double arms full - asked the old man how much - He - with an apologetic look of "hope it is not too much" - said - 2 francs les deux!! then we did the flowers in both

churches - took bundles to the ward - gave some away - & still had some left for our own rooms.



There is a suggestion, which needs confirmation, that the hospital ward shown in the above photograph was in Etretat Casino, which was on the sea front.

Two other photographs in the Maxey collection, but not in the album, show the interior of the same ward also with flowers



As well as the Casino, Alain Millet lists the following locations in Etretat as having hospital functions:

Hôtel Blanquet, L'Hôtel des Roches, La Villa Orphée, La Villa des Roses, Villa des Fleurs.

The Nurses' rooms were in the Hotel Blanquet, also near the sea front, as shown on the old postcard above.

It is suggested that Claude Monet stayed at the Hotel Blanquet in 1883 and 1885 and occupied the same room as Edith Appleton did in 1916.



The postcard is reproduced under a creative commons license from:

<https://www.geneanet.org/cartes-postales/view/5162410#0>



The Maxey collection also includes a group photograph of medical officers serving with No 1 General Hospital. This was probably taken outside the Villa des Roses in Etretat. Importantly, this identifies the names of the officers and some limited further research on who they are has been undertaken. See:

<http://anurseatthefront.org.uk/names-mentioned-in-the-diaries/other-people/medical-colleagues/medical-officers/>

The hospital's Commanding Officer, seated in the centre front row, was Colonel George Abraham Moore CMG DSO, then a newly promoted Lieutenant Colonel. In August 1914, as a Major, Moore organised the first ambulance train in France while working on Sir John French's staff.



Moore was from a prominent Ulster family and a veteran of the Zulu and Boer Wars.



The officer seated next to Col. Moore on the front row was Major Samuel Martyn a physician from Airdrie in Scotland. Martyn was a Territorial Force officer who received the OBE for his services (London Gazette 3 June 1919).

Conclusive evidence is provided by a story from the *Sunday Post* of 22 October 1916 headlined "Airdrie Raises £3000 for Red

Cross". This states that the Chairman of the Bazaar to raise funds for the Red Cross Society was Major Samuel Martyn, the Second in Command of the First General Hospital in France ... (Source British Newspaper Archive).

Edith Appleton's diary records the following from 10 November 1916 :

We spent a pleasant evening at the Officers' Mess last night - music & Bridge - all very pleasant - Maj Nicholson & Maxey played - Maj Martyn & me.

Major Nicholson is seated next to Major Martyn in the group photograph, but no details of his career have been unearthed.

Major Martyn is mentioned many other times in Edith's Diary see:

<http://anurseatthefront.org.uk/names-mentioned-in-the-diaries/other-people/medical-colleagues/major-martyn/>

The officer seated on the extreme left of the picture, was, I believe, Captain Alfred John Hutchinson Iles, a Taunton doctor. Iles served in the Boer War as a Sergeant in the RAMC.



Three photographs towards the end of the album (nos. 95, 97 and 98) show Kate Maxey with her colleagues and with patients



It is thought these were taken at Etretat, but there is no conclusive evidence.

Other album photographs

Four other interesting photographs in the album are very hard to put a date or place on. The first below (no 12) shows wounded soldiers in what looks like a station yard. When I first looked at the album, I interpreted this as possibly the station at Lillers near 58 CCS. However, the Colonel in the centre of the picture appears on other photographs of No.8 General Hospital in Amiens. The style of caps being worn also suggests the first years of the war.



The photograph below of the ambulance train (no. 26) also includes officers who are in other photographs taken in Amiens (nos. 16 and 21 on page 5 above).



The photograph of French civilians (no. 44) also seems likely to be from Amiens.



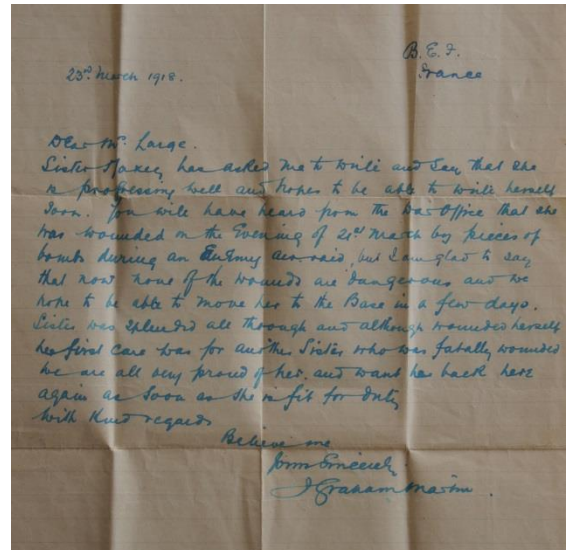
Finally, the photograph of medical supplies being loaded or unloaded from carts (no 73) seems likely from the caps to be at the start of the war.



Other material (not in Album)



Above: Sister Kate Maxey (centre) with the McKane side of her family, with who she had lived in Leeds before becoming a nurse. Possibly taken in 1916, when Kate was on leave from France.



Above : A letter from Kate Maxey's Commanding Officer at 58 CCS to her sister Amelia in Spennymoor written two days after Kate was wounded.

Below : Letter from 58 CCS Sergeant's Mess congratulating Kate on being awarded the Military Medal two weeks after she was wounded.

