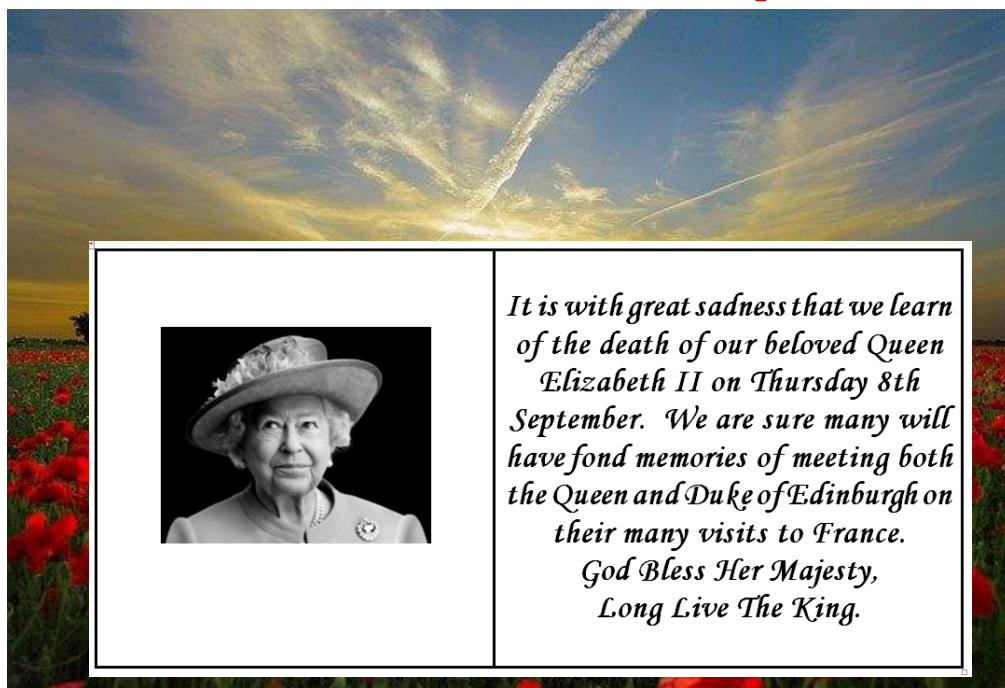




Paris  
Branch

# Newsletter

September 2022



*It is with great sadness that we learn of the death of our beloved Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 8th September. We are sure many will have fond memories of meeting both the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh on their many visits to France. God Bless Her Majesty, Long Live The King.*

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**This month's lunch**  
Wed 28/Sept  
1215 for 1230

See below for  
menu

Dear members,

It is with a heavy heart that I write the introduction to this month's newsletter.

On Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> September Pierre and I visited the Embassy in the morning to discuss the annual remembrance service. After lunch we went to our branch HQ to load pictures, poppy boxes and table clothes in preparation for the planned unveiling of the memorial bench and rose garden at Bennecourt.

Whilst doing so Pierre received news that members of Her Majesty's family were on their way to see her at Balmoral, and that her doctors were attending her as she was unwell. I remarked that it must be serious if the all family were going to see her.

Needless to say when I later got home there was further news: I received a text from Caroline who had been watching the BBC news live. Her message: "OMG! The Queen is dead".

I was absolutely stunned by this news, as we must all have been.

Our thoughts must at this time be for her Majesty's family, and in particular Prince Charles, now King Charles III.

As a sign of respect for Her Majesty, and in consultation with the mayor of Bennecourt, Didier Dumont, we have decided to cancel the ceremony which was to have taken place there on 17 September.

This event will now be reprogrammed for October. We will keep you posted as to the new date.

God Save The King.

Richard Neave.

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## In Memoriam

Sandra Cheyne: 7.12.51 - 28.7.22

We have learnt with sadness that Sandra died on 28 July. Even though very ill she continued to be President of the BCWA, managing to fit in the meetings around her chemo dates and, when her two years were up, offering to continue in the job for a while longer. And even before she was President, we learned to appreciate her good sense and equally good humour during her time as Membership Secretary.

In addition to her activities with the BCWA, Sandra was also a much appreciated member of the RBL Paris branch.

## PEDAL TO PARIS 2022.

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September; hot and sunny, it was Pedal to Paris day. Myself, Janet Warby, Pierre Quenot and Bill Beauclerk were there to welcome all those who took part.

This year we were joined by the Royal British Legion's new National Chairman Jason Coward who flew over from London. He was, he said, very impressed and delighted to attend. He, our Honorary President Colonel Howard Wilkinson and General James Bashall participated in the presentation of medals. Both Howard and James had taken part in the race and came in well on time.



250 cyclists took part this year, and I am informed that £200,000 pounds have been raised from the event - a most satisfactory result for RBL funds.

We were particularly pleased to see members of the Royal Marines band play at the ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe after the presentation.

We hope more of our Paris Branch members will be able to attend this impressive annual event next year.

[Click here to see more photos of this year's Pedal to Paris.](#)

*(You'll see a couple of ads and they're in the wrong order but it's the best I can do. MY)*

*You may remember Howard launched an appeal connected to his participation in Pedal to Paris. He aims to collect £1500 and needs a further £150 to reach his target. Every little helps and you can donate here:*

[\*Howard Wilkinson is fundraising for The Royal British Legion \(justgiving.com\)\*](#)

*If you prefer, or if the link doesn't work, just send a cheque to "Royal British Legion. 28 rue des Acacias 75017 PARIS" Mark on the back "Colonel Howard Wilkinson appeal."*

Richard Neave

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***A historian friend has recently published a booklet in which he gives some curious details of how Napoleon nearly got a submarine. Here is a quick version. MY***

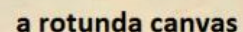
### **Fulton and Napoleonic Underwater Warfare**

Son of a small farmer in Pennsylvania, Robert Fulton (1765-1818) became, surprisingly for one of a farming background, an artist and then, surprisingly for an artist, became an engineer - and inventor. He devised an inclined plane to replace canal locks (a handy solution when water is short). Canals were big in Britain at the time so he crossed the Atlantic, patented his ideas in England but couldn't raise any capital. He went to France in 1797 to try his luck there. In passing it is surprising to note that this was quite easy in spite of the intermittent wars in which France and Britain were engaged at the time. On arrival, a law of 2 Germinal year IV (24/3/1794) stipulated "persons arriving from England must obtain a passport before continuing their way in France" and this cost him a couple of weeks' wait. He seems to have occupied his time trying to get Françoise de Gontaut, a 24 year old lady who had similarly arrived from England but somehow aroused the ire of the Republic, out of prison. Speaking through the judas on her cell door, "Marry me" he offered (Fulton was well considered by the authorities and could have got her out as his wife). "I'm already married ." she replied. "What a pity!" he said and wandered off. That was the end of what must be one of the briefest affairs in the history of Calais . For the record, and happily, the young lady eventually found another solution to her predicament. Arriving in Paris Fulton quickly found consolation in the arms of Ruth Barlow whose husband



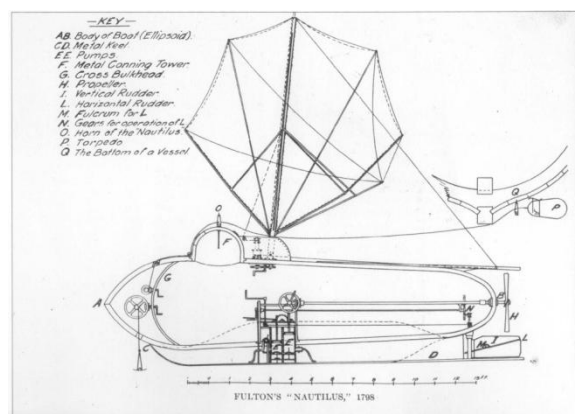
The French too were interested in canals. Enthusiasm for them was much like that for the railway some half a century later - but somehow or other Fulton's contributions didn't quite get, as it were, off the ground.

The English, however, had got wind of the project and in 1798 Lord Stanhope seems to have been involved in a first plot for the secret service to bribe Fulton to come over to England. He was approached by a certain Wolstoncraft. Fulton denounced him as an English spy and Wolstoncraft was arrested and put on the first boat from Le Havre to England (he seems to have got off remarkably lightly for those times). In 1799 Fulton, by now short of cash but with typical



Napoleon got back from Egypt in Oct 1799. There followed the November *coup d'état* that ended the revolution and created the *consulat* with Napoleon as one of the three consuls. Seeing which way the wind was blowing Fulton re-presented his submarine project, started a company with money raised by selling the flourishing "panorama" business to an American friend and built his "Nautilus" (his spelling having apparently improved). This submarine, built in Rouen, was brought to Paris where its performance was demonstrated in the Seine in June 1800 opposite les Invalides. It was 6m50 long, made of copper, had a propeller turned by hand and a sail for surface navigation. Fulton made the government what seems a generous offer: for any English ship sunk he was to receive the same as each of the French crew plus, as a sort of bonus, any captured English property. He also, interestingly, insisted that the crew be considered authorised combatants, presumably by the granting of "a *lettre de marque*" - but these were never granted to a fire ship and there seems to have been doubt that the Nautilus could be considered one. The "*lettre de marque*" was an ancient and fascinating convention which made a distinction between pirates and corsairs, a difference which could have catastrophic consequences for the individual if captured by an enemy, corsairs being treated as prisoners of war, pirates... well, not. The last "*lettres de marque*" ever issued are said to have been for American dirigibles hunting submarines in 1941/42. Unfortunately for lovers of the arcane it seems this was not the case. After many appeals to the French admiralty a "*lettre de marque*" was indeed issued for Fulton and his vessel which, curiously, was named "Unicorne" in that document.

In July, near Rouen he made two dives, one at a depth of 25 feet for 17 minutes. The Seine had currents which caused problems however, so Fulton had the sub towed to Le Havre where he undertook more demanding test dives. One lasted three hours with a crew of three aboard. The time had come to try out the Nautilus in combat. Navigating at a speed of up to 7k an hour he reached Grandcamp in the Cotentin on 28/11/1800. The weather was bad, with equinoctial tides but two English brigs were at anchor offshore. Twice Fulton attempted to attack them but twice, by accident or design, the boats set sail as he approached and eluded him. Nonetheless, in one attempt the Nautilus had remained submerged with a breathing tube for six hours. The



weather worsened, winter was approaching. It was time to return to Paris and, although no ship had been sunk, he could produce evidence of his vessel's remarkable performance - a performance which had, incidentally, aroused great curiosity amongst the French troops manning coastal batteries nearby.

It is now known that the British had been keeping a close eye on all these proceedings and it is likely that the two brigs had been part of a surveillance which could account for their cautious behaviour.

Somewhat the worse for wear after its long voyage, the Nautilus was overhauled and, once more on the Seine, impressed spectators, including an increasing number of influential officials with its impressive performance. This included demonstrations of the sail (surely a unique accessory for a submarine!) which could be deployed when the vessel was on the surface. Guyton de Morveau, an important scientist of the time proposed extending the period of submersion by incorporating a means of removing carbon dioxide from the air supply.

Satisfied with the performance of his submarine Fulton now turned his attention to "*torpilles*", this time at Brest. He experimented with a copper globe of compressed air. He proposed to attack British frigates lying offshore with a "*torpille*" (more of a mine than a torpedo) attached to a line behind his submarine. He asked for an armed escort to cover his retreat after the attack. This was refused him.

In September 1801 Fulton returned to Paris, disgusted.

Stanhope, back in England was still following Fulton's exploits with interest and had made Pitt, the Prime Minister, aware of them. Such was fear of possible consequences that Fulton's elimination was considered. Fulton however had met Stanhope when in Britain and now wrote to him (in spite of the war between the two countries) A high level decision was made to bring Fulton over to England. An emissary was found, a Dr Gregory, who had met Fulton already. Fulton asked for £10,000 and outlined his project.

At this point Napoleon finally gave instructions on 21 July 1804 that Fulton's projects be examined and encouraged and that he be given an urgent report. Too late. Fulton had left.

Fulton was now working for the British Admiralty which seems to have been more interested in Fulton's 1797 experiments with "*fourneaux submergés*", the mines described above. The project had been insultingly turned down by the French, "*... your inventions are good only for Algerians and pirates...!*" Now he was set to work at Portsmouth with Home Popham and another inventor, colonel Shapnell, to develop the project. In October 1804 an attack on the French Boulogne fleet was undertaken - but with Popham's idea of using a sort of catamaran to

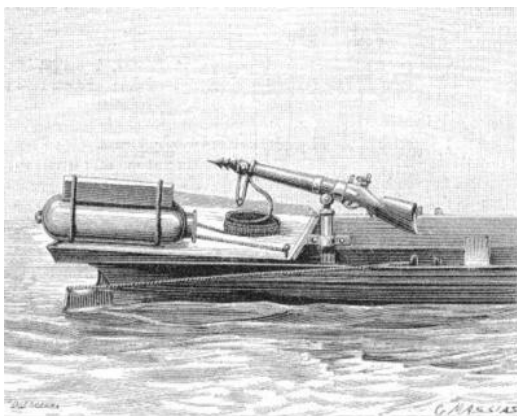
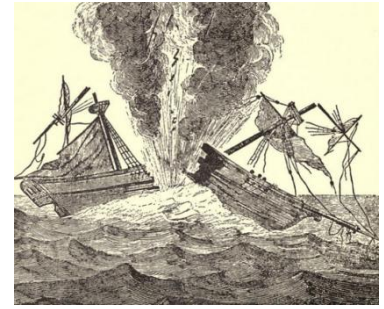


Fig. 2. — Vue d'une chaloupe à torpille préparée pour l'attaque.  
(D'après un dessin de Fulton.)

transport floating barrels filled with black powder and incendiary grenades which were to be thrown overboard at a propitious moment. The expedition was a failure. Submarines were sidelined but in 1805 Fulton was authorised to try more attacks on the Boulogne fleet with artifacts of his own invention. He devised a curious delivery system depending on a harpoon gun fired from a small boat. The results were interesting but hardly conclusive, so a demonstration was arranged to convince the government to continue its support for project. A 200 ton Danish brig, the

Dorothée, was chosen as "victim". Using two longboats Fulton had two of his "torpedoes" launched at the target. The ship was blown in two and completely destroyed.



Fulton now proposed a new submarine but his major supporter, Pitt, died in January 1806 and official enthusiasm waned. *"The prime minister was the greatest fool to have ever existed, to encourage a mode of war which they who command the sea did not want and which, if successful, would deprive them of it."* wrote Lord St. Vincent and the prevailing view came to be that a submarine would constitute a future threat to Britain's dominance on the sea. Fulton was offered £1500 to abandon his project. It would seem he refused this - a testimony at least to his being already relatively well-off, for this was an enormous sum for the time - and, probably somewhat miffed, he decided to return to his native US. In his luggage he took an example of the biggest steam engine on the market. This was a harbinger of his subsequent career as creator of the first river steamboat line - but that is another story.

*With thanks to Christian Bailleux whose book "Robert Fulton et les Boulonnais" provided most of the material for this article.*



Don't forget to book  
for this month's  
lunch.

Wednesday 28 Sept  
1215 for 1230  
Only €23 - Pay on the  
day (in cash please)

Reserve through Richard at 06 45 10 47 70 or  
richard.neave05@gmail.com

*Book soon to be sure of a place.  
(Cancellations up to 48h before)*



#### **LUNCH MENU 28th SEPTEMBER**

##### **APERITIF**

**STARTER**  
xxxxx crudités

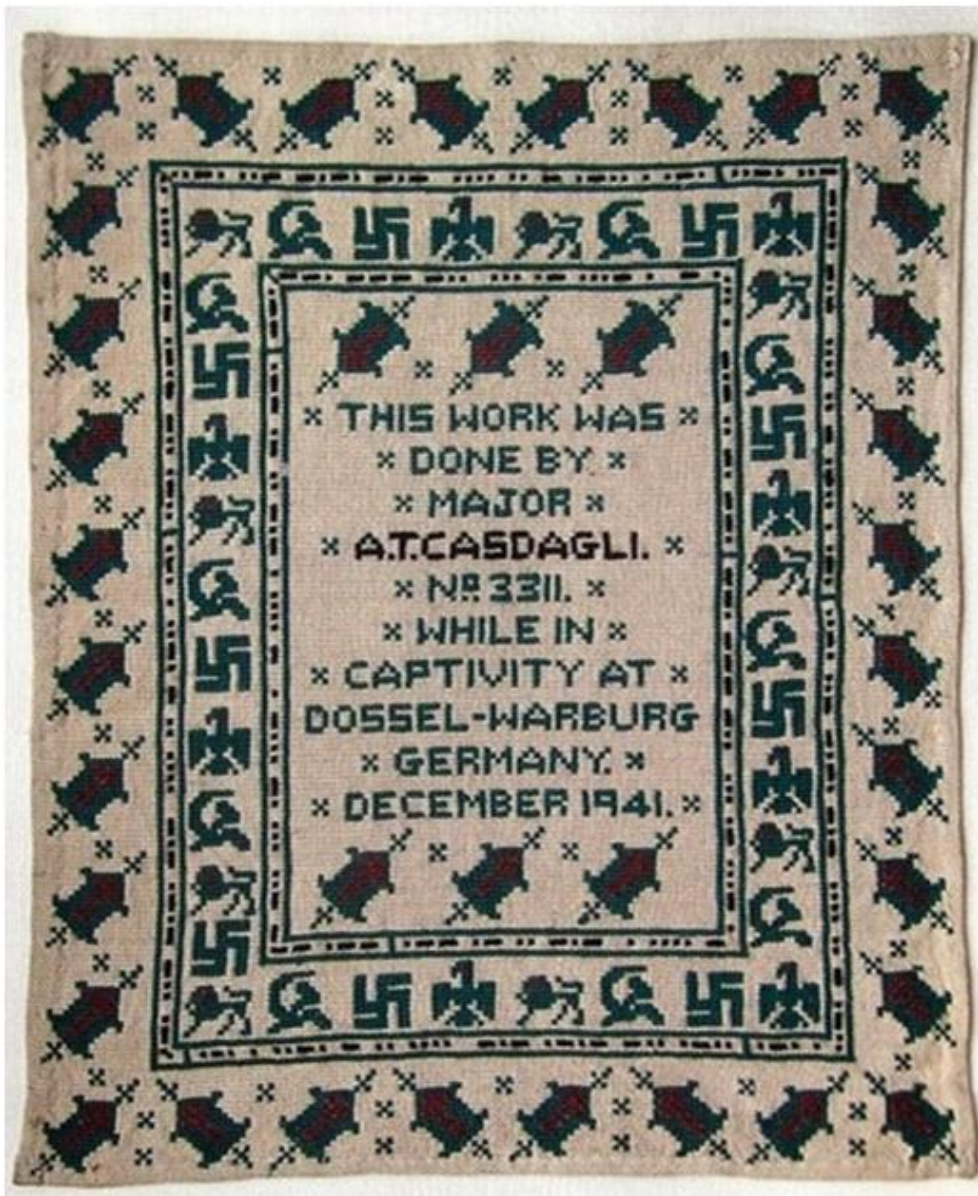
**MAIN COURSE**  
braised beef with red wine and  
cranberry

**DESSERT**  
waffle with red fruit, ice cream or  
cream

**WINE SERVED WITH THE MEAL**

**COFFEE OR TEA**





Major Alexis Casdagli was a man of many talents one of which was sewing. Captured by the Germans in 1941, he exercised his hobby in several prison camps. Here is a tapestry he created in December 1941. His German captors, impressed, allowed him to hang it in all the camps he stayed in and even to give sewing lessons to other prisoners. However this piece of work includes two hidden messages - one of which might well have got him killed had it been found. The original piece is now on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Your task here is to examine the picture and figure out what the messages are. I will not give you the answer as it includes a word you may not approve of.

If you can't find the answer there is a substantial clue on page xx below:

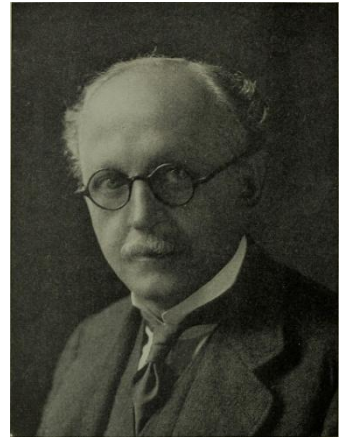
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## SIR EDWIN LANDSEER LUTYENS, OM, KCIE, PRA FRIBA

29<sup>th</sup> March 1869 - 1<sup>st</sup> January 1944

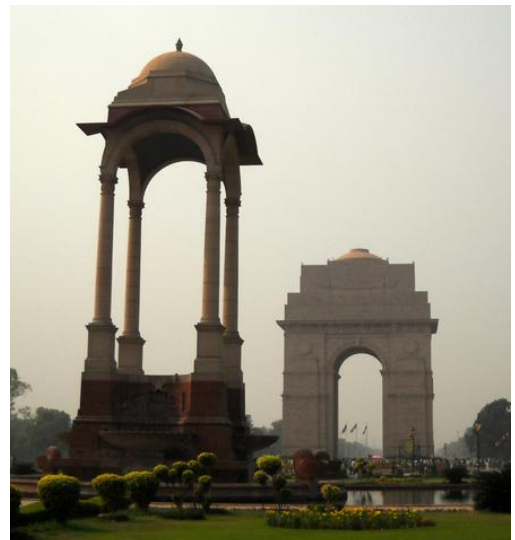


Sir Edwin Lutyens was an English architect known for imaginatively adapting traditional architectural styles to the taste of the times. He designed many English country houses, war memorials and public buildings. In his biography, the writer Christopher Hussey wrote, "In his lifetime (Lutyens) was widely held to be our greatest architect since Wren if not, as many maintained, his superior". The architectural historian Gavin Stamp described him as "surely the greatest British architect of the twentieth (or any other) century".



Lutyens played an instrumental role in designing and building New Delhi which was to become the seat of the Government of India. He made several trips there, two during WWI stopping off in Spain on the way - he had a contract from a Spanish Duke and he was glad to get away from war-torn Britain - On his 2015 trip the Duke gave him a Spanish ham for the Viceroy. Lutyens' ship came under attack by a German submarine in the Mediterranean for one hour and twenty minutes. He, the ham and the ship happily survived.

New Delhi is also known as "Lutyens' Delhi" in recognition of his part in its creation. In collaboration with Sir Herbert Baker he was also the architect of several monuments there such as the India Gate; he also designed Viceroy's House, now known as the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Many of his works were inspired by Indian architecture. He was elected Master of the Art Workers' Guild in 1933.



Clue 1 to the tapestry text:

A ● -	J ● - - -	S ● ● ●
B - ● ● ●	K - - ●	T -
C - ● - ●	L ● - ● ●	U ● ● -
D - ● ●	M - -	V ● ● ● -
E ●	N - ●	W ● - -
F ● ● - ●	O - - -	X - ● ● -
G - - ●	P ● - - ●	Y - ● - -
H ● ● ● ●	Q - - ● -	Z - - ● ●
I ● ●	R ● - ●	

If you still can't find it a further clue  
is on the next page

Lutyens was born in Kensington, London, the tenth of thirteen children of Mary Theresa Gallwey (1832/33-1906) from Killarney, Ireland and Captain Charles Henry Augustus Lutyens (1829-1915), a soldier and

painter. His sister, Mary Constance Elphinstone Lutyens (1868-1951), wrote novels under her married name of Mrs George Wemyss. He grew up in Thursley, Surrey and was named after a friend of his father, the painter and sculptor Edwin Henry Landseer. Lutyens studied architecture at South Kensington School of Art, London, from 1885 to 1887. After college he joined the Ernest George and Harold Peto architectural practice. It was here that he first met Sir Herbert Baker best known for his work in South Africa. For many years Lutyens worked from offices at 29 Bloomsbury Square, London.

He began his own practice in 1888 and his first commission was a private house in Crooksbury, Farnham, Surrey. During this work, he met Gertrude Jekyll, a remarkable garden designer. In 1896 Lutyens began work on a house for Jekyll at Munstead Wood near Godalming, Surrey. It was the beginning of a professional partnership that would define the look of many Lutyens country houses. Jekyll's impressionistic style flower borders in later life may, it has been suggested, have been due to - or inspired by - her deteriorating eyesight, sadly a condition which eventually put an end to her career.

Before the end of the First World War, Lutyens was appointed one of three principal architects for the Imperial War Graves Commission (now Commonwealth War Graves Commission) and was involved in the creation of many monuments to commemorate the dead. Larger cemeteries have a Stone of Remembrance which he designed. The best known of these monuments are the Cenotaph in Whitehall, Westminster, and the Memorial to the Missing of



the Somme, Thiepval. The Cenotaph was originally commissioned by David Lloyd George as a temporary structure to be the centrepiece of the Allied Victory Parade in 1919. Lloyd George proposed a catafalque, a low empty platform, but it was Lutyens' idea to construct a taller monument. The design took less than six hours to complete. Lutyens designed many war memorials, and others are based on, or inspired by, Lutyens' designs. Examples of his other war memorials include the War Memorial Gardens in Dublin, the Tower Hill memorial, the Manchester Cenotaph and the Arch of Remembrance memorial in Leicester.

Lutyens married Lady Emily Bulwer-Lytton (1874-1964) on 4 August 1897 at Knebworth, Hertfordshire. A daughter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Lytton, a former Viceroy of India noted for his ruthless approach to the 1876 famine and the 2nd Afghan war - but also for presiding the Delhi Durbar when Queen Victoria was declared Empress of India - Lady Emily had proposed to Lutyens two years before the wedding. This must have been unconventional for its time but she was an unconventional character, a doctrinaire vegetarian, subsisting on nut cutlets

Clue 2 to the tapestry text:

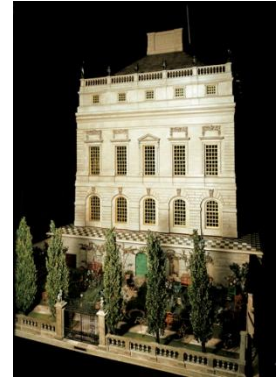
Look in the two narrow internal borders. The text is in morse code.

No more clues and no answer - you are on your own!



disguised as lamb with a piece of macaroni wrapped in a paper frill instead of a bone. Her parents disapproved of their marriage. They had five children, but their marriage was largely unsatisfactory, with Lady Emily developing interests in theosophy, Eastern religions and the visionary Jiddu Krishnamurti. There must have been some familial conflict of interest as, while her husband was busily designing New Delhi, the new imperial capital of the sub-continent, she was holding meetings to support Indian home rule in her drawing-room in London

Lutyens was knighted in 1918 and elected a Royal Academician in March 1920. In 1924, he was appointed a member of the newly created Royal Fine Art Commission, a position he held until his death. In spite of his professional speciality with monuments to the dead, Lutyens did after all, have his light side and he built a circular nursery so that children couldn't be asked to stand in a corner. And then there is the fact that one of his most lauded – and smallest – designs, constructed in 1924 is the one twelfth scale Queen Mary's Dolls' House which was shown at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley and which can still be seen at Windsor Castle.



The dolls' House

During the later years of his life, Lutyens suffered with several bouts of pneumonia. In the early 1940's he was diagnosed with cancer. He died on 1 January 1944 and was cremated at Golders Green Crematorium where he had designed the Philipson Mausoleum in 1914-1916. His ashes were buried in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, beneath a memorial designed by his friend and fellow architect William Curtis Green.

Janet Warby

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### COMING EVENT: RBL Centenary



**This event, the opening of a commemorative rose garden, has been postponed until after the Queen's funeral. We will keep you informed.**