

TOBACCO SILKS, CIGARETTES AND CIGARETTE CARDS

"Cigarette Silks" are woven lithographs and were issued with their popular BDV cigarette brand, initially made to attract the new market of female smokers who would collect these colourful images and sew them together creating pillows or quilt covers. Given away free inside Yesteryear's cigarette packets in the same manner as cigarette cards. Sometimes they came on a backing card or in a paper packet and more often than not with nothing at all. With the passing of years they have become increasingly collectable and valuable. There were silk issues in the USA from the late Victorian period and the UK's own Godfrey Phillips had issued over 20 different series between 1910 and the outbreak of war.

Although there were many different subject matters the outbreak of World War One saw the rise in themes such as Military Badges, Regimental Colours, Uniforms, Medals and Warships became the order of the day especially for the male smokers. By 1921 one of the last sets produced in this format was their football series entitled "League Colours" produced in two sizes.

BDV Silks

The London based Godfrey Phillips Ltd was founded in 1884 and was one of the first tobacco companies to issue cigarette cards to the UK market. Godfrey Phillips were universally known as 'Pinnacle' after a specific brand name. 1915 Godfrey Phillips Regimental Colours and Crests – Coloured Regimental Silks.

Four Large Regimental Coloured silks issued in 1915 includes: The Prince of Wales Royal Lancers, Coldstream Guards, South Staffordshire (38th & 80th), & 20th Hussars.



These

large ones are commonly known as Postcard sized among collectors and are more sought after than the small ones. They came on large cigarette boxes of 100!!, as opposed to smaller packs of 20 or 25. The five large, or "postcard", military silks below all have B.D.V. in blue imprinted in the lower right and a series number in blue in the lower left. There is a small additional collection which is included and has an example of the normal size B.D.V. silk, two examples of the later Kensitas issue, a Godfrey Phillips (G.P.) Territorial Badge, and some unmarked flag issues.



Some of the Regimental and Battalion series now held by the Basildon Borough Heritage Society:



English

County Cricket Club series (17 clubs in the complete set).



Some of the Scottish Clan Tartans series now held by the Basildon Borough Heritage Society:



Graham

Leslie

Maclaren



Douglas



Chisholm



MacMillan

QUILTS

Fabric has always been an important part of the life of a household. Not only does it make up our clothing, but it is also used to warm our homes when used for window coverings, furnishings, and bedding. When fabric is used as part of the décor of a home, it can bring great pleasure, surrounding us with our favourite colors and textures.

One of the ways that fabrics have been used for warmth and pleasure is in the making of quilts. Used on beds, quilts can warm the chilliest nights while charming us with their use of fabric and pattern. Throughout the years quilts have been made with many unusual textiles, and one of the most unusual is the tobacco related textiles.

TOBACCO INSERTS

The practice of inserting advertising in tobacco products and packaging began about 1870 and was common throughout the late 19th Century and the first decades of the 20th Century. The inserts or premiums were varied, some more functional than others, but altogether interesting, and therefore they became collectible items to thousands of men, women and children. Tin tobacco tags, cigarette cards, cigar ribbons, cigarette silks, and tobacco flannels, are a small portion of the collectibles classified as Tobacciana. These items are not as well-known nor collected, as other tobacco related items like cigar boxes or tins, cigarette cases and lighters. However, though they may not be the most popular of collectibles, tobacco inserts or premiums were popular in their time, and continue to be collectibles. A great deal of their charm comes from the fact that they were free, packed in or on cigarette and tobacco products.

The textile tobacco insert, often catalogued as a tobacco card novelty, is truly a novelty and these items may be of interest to the student of quilt history. Identifying these items as tobacco inserts or premiums is not always easy, and it is often difficult to know exactly how they were obtained.

The tobacco insert is described as the item that was actually inserted into the tobacco packaging, sometimes packed in with the tobacco product and often enclosed in an envelope. At other times they were attached to the outside of the package, as when they were attached to tins of loose tobacco.

The tobacco premium was given away by the tobacco company, in exchange for coupons. The paper coupons were inserted in some tobacco products packaging. The coupons were printed by tobacco companies and were honoured as having value when they were exchanged for premiums offered in catalogues that were distributed by the tobacco companies. Coupons were gathered and saved until the consumer had enough to send for an item in the tobacco companies' catalogue. Everything from furniture, clothing, sporting goods and silk textiles could be redeemed with these coupons. Textiles tobacco inserts, including silks, flannels, rugs or carpets, and cigar ribbons, are unique and fascinating because they were used to make quilts and other quilt like textile objects, demonstrating how the quilt maker used imagination and available materials, to create interesting and beautiful items to grace her home.



P. Lorillard Co. paper envelope containing one of the flannel flags. Envelopes were "attached to each 10c tin of STAG TOBACCO" The flannel flags were probably the most popular of these inserts or premiums.

Leggitt and Myers Tobacco Company catalogue called a "Booklet of Presents". The coupons could be exchanged for a silk rug or a pillow top, both items required 60 of these coupons.

TOBACCO TIN TAGS

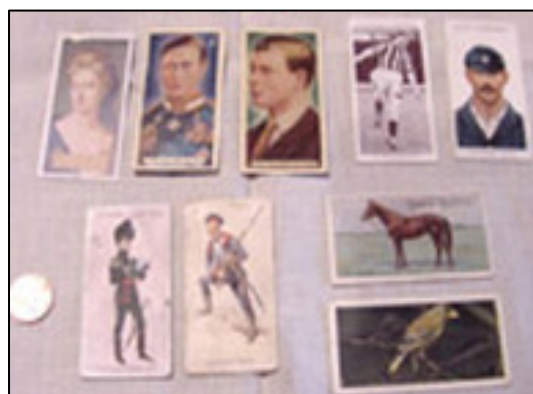
The first tobacco inserts were the small metal, or tin, tags that came primarily in plug chewing tobacco, and sometimes in loose smoking and chewing tobacco. They were introduced in the 1870's as advertisements and as labels, to identify the manufacturer of the tobacco product, and to distinguish one brand from another at the retail level. The small tags were actually inserted into or onto the plug of tobacco, and after the tobacco product was purchased and used, the tag was a reminder to the buyer of the brand name of the tobacco.



Tobacco tags are small and came in an infinite variety. They are a popular collectibles even today. They primarily came with plug and loose tobacco.

Another early tobacco insert advertisement was the printed cigarette card, they were another important form of advertisement for the tobacco companies. Given away in cigarette packaging from the 1870's through the 1930's they fell out of production during WWII due to the shortage of paper during the war.

While a few cigarette companies issued cards post WWII (mostly in Europe), the practice was not widespread and most cards originate from before the War in America. The cards were inserted into packages of cigarettes, and were a long lasting advertisement for the cigarette manufacture. Consumers gathered and saved these cards as collectibles, trading with friends for more desirable cards or trading to complete a series set. Cigarette cards are usually about 1 ½ x 2 ½ inches tall, with a printed design on one side of the card and an advertisement for the company on the reverse. Many are polychrome prints and are colourful and attractive.



Cigarette cards came in hundreds of themes including English peerage, football players, military, and animal and bird themes.

Floral cigarette silks with designs similar to the cigarette cards.



CIGARETTE CARDS IN A

VARIETY OF THEMES

The subjects of the cards vary widely with themes like flowers, animals, Hollywood actors and actresses, European Royalty, American Indians, sports stars of the day, and military themes. Many of the tobacco cards were distributed in series format, encouraging the collector to gather all of the cards from a series, which of course meant more sales for the tobacco company. Collector books or albums were available for purchase with illustrations of the card series, while other albums were meant to hold the series cards, with collectors striving to collect all of the cards in the series to fill the appropriate spaces in the albums.

Today cigarette cards may be the most popular of the tobacco insert collectibles, having come in hundreds, perhaps thousands, of themes and series, giving the collector any number of subjects to collect. Though they are no longer distributed, they continue to be collected and one may even purchase new reproductions for some of the hard to find older cards.

TEXTILE TOBACCO INSERTS

It was between 1905 and 1910 that tobacco companies in America, began inserting textile items into their cigarette and tobacco products. Most books written on the subject say the fad for these textiles was between 1910 and 1916. They also agree that at the beginning of WWI the practice of inserting textiles into cigarette or other tobacco packaging, was more or less abandoned.

The ribbons came in attractive bright colors and were printed with the manufacturer's or distributing cigar company's name, usually printed in black. The most common colors for ribbons were gold and yellow, but we also find ribbons in colors like blue, green, orange, purple and red. The printing styles vary, with some ribbons simply printed with the name of the company, while others are elaborately printed with additional information such as dates or country of origin. Sometimes fancy design motifs are printed on the ribbons, for example, elaborate scroll work designs decorate some ribbons. A few ribbons were woven with the company's name woven right in.

Cigar ribbons are narrow in width, usually about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide, by about 12-15 inches long. They are made of silk and are fragile and can show the same signs of fabric tendering, or deterioration, as other antique silk fabrics.

Cigar Ribbons showing typical colors and cigar manufacturer's names.



CIGARETTE SILKS

As said earlier, one of the most popular of the tobacco inserts was the tobacco or cigarette "silk". While they are called silks they were actually made from a variety of fabrics such as silk or silk satin, a cloth combination of silk and cotton, a cotton sateen or even a plain woven cotton. The silks were often beautifully poly-chrome printed with varied subjects, and were usually printed with the tobacco company name. Very often the designs were the same types of designs as those seen on the cigarette cards.



As with the cigarette cards mentioned earlier, many of these silks were distributed in series, with some categories having dozens of different designs. One of the most popular categories was that of popular sports activities, with football players and athletes of every variety printed on the silks. Some silks unite two popular subjects, for example colleges and sports. Consumers could trade coupons for the larger silks, many measuring from 3 to 5 inches tall. One of the largest silks offered in the coupon catalogues is what was called a "pillow top" and is approximately 24 inches square. These larger silks displayed some of the same lovely designs as the smaller silks, while others were beautifully hand painted with fantastic landscapes, including one Japanese seaside scene.



Animal silks are popular and colourful.

Unusual and colourful silks featuring bulldogs make up this small quilt top



Large hand painted floral

silk premium, 24" x 24", from Fatima Cigarettes, Liggett and Myers Tobacco Co. The silk pillow top piece here and at the right are shown with the original literature and mailing tubes, dated June 1913.



FLANNELS

Another popular textile insert or premium was the tobacco flannel. These were made of a cotton flannel fabric and printed in many designs, again in themes similar to the themes used on the cigarette cards. Popular subjects were flags of all the different countries of the world and athletes participating in various sports. Some subjects seemingly targeted women, like butterflies, but the majority of flannel themes were male oriented.

Flannel Flags came in several different sizes up to 30 inches long.

As with the silks these flannels were distributed in or on, cigarette and tobacco products, and sent to consumers in exchange for coupons, (which were also distributed in tobacco packaging.)



Baseball flannels are some of the most sought after premiums. There are an estimated 180 different players in this series.

A crib sized quilt top, the edges finished with embroidery, is made up of flag flannels from many different countries.

CARPETS OR RUGS

Another tobacco insert or premium is the small rug or carpet, which is sometimes confused with the flannels. The American Card Catalogue gives the flannels and rugs separately, noting that the rug has a fringe and the flannel does not. Rugs



were distributed in the same way as the flannels, in or on cigarette or tobacco packaging. One advertisement for Egyptian Straight cigarettes states that the consumer will receive one rug in each package, plus a free rug from the tobacco shop dealer, "to induce you to try these wonderfully good cigarettes". The dealer was instructed to apply to the manufacturer for the supply of free rugs so they would have them on hand, in the shop, enabling them to participate in the promotion.

The rugs were unusual in some of their designs, while other designs were similar to the designs used on tobacco cards and flannels. Overall there do seem to be fewer rug themes than we see in the tobacco flannels. Oriental carpets are the most common, other themes, children's rhymes, and sports designs.



Three small rugs designed with Children's Rhymes, including Little Miss Muffet, Mary Had a Little Lamb, and Little Boy Blue.

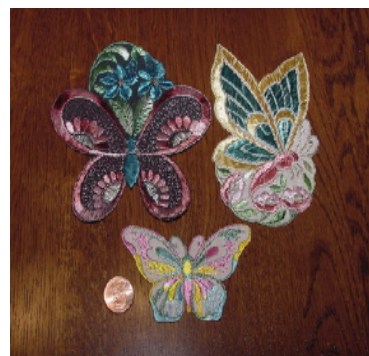
There sometimes seems to be a relationship between the types of tobacco in the package and the design on the rug insert. For example the Oriental rugs often came with the cigarettes made from Turkish tobacco. Turkish tobacco products were of a high quality, and advertisements of these products often emphasized the flamboyancy associated with all things Turkish. The Turkish tobacco products were more expensive and carried some of the nicer inserts.

TOBACCO INSERTS

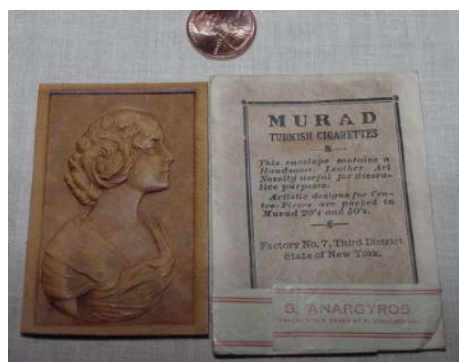
In addition to the already mentioned tobacco inserts, there were others that are less well known. One of the most unusual is the leather tobacco "card." Made from leather and stamped with a variety of themes, these cards are often some of the most attractive of the inserts.

Another rarely seen is the embroidered applique. Usually seen in flora and fauna like themes, these are some of the most beautiful. These are most likely European distributions.

These unusual embroidered appliqué butterflies are European tobacco issues.



OTHER



Cigarette Leather insert, and original envelope from Murad Turkish Cigarettes

This flag came from "The Happy Home" magazine.



NON TOBACCO PREMIUMS

In addition to tobacco, other products like chewing gum, candy, and baking goods are associated with these textiles. Some brands of chewing gum were wrapped in paper wrappers that were actually printed coupons, and these could be exchanged for the same premiums as those for which the tobacco coupons were exchanged. Some of the premium books offer premiums in exchange for not only tobacco coupons but also the gum wrappers.

For example the Kewpie designs, that are sometimes associated with tobacco, are catalogued as "Non Tobacco Issues".

While the majority of the textile premiums we encounter came from tobacco products, some came from altogether different venues.

QUILTS AND TEXTILE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Women used these tobacco inserts or premiums to make items for the home, and one of the most unusual, looking back from our point in time, was the quilt. Quilts were made from silks, flannels, cigar ribbons and even the small, relatively thick rugs. While these quilts are seen in all sizes, they are usually small, simple in construction, and tied rather than quilted. That they were small is understandable, since the premiums are usually small and it probably took a good while to collect enough of them to make a quilt. Sometimes larger sized quilts are found, but generally, the large sized quilt is scarce, and this is especially true for the quilt made of silks.

FLANNEL AND RUG QUILTS.

The most popular tobacco premium used in quilts was the flannel. Perhaps this is because generally, the flannels are somewhat larger than the silks. Quilts made with tobacco flannels are found with a variety of colourful designs, but the flannel with the flag design is the one we see used most often. Sometimes quilts contain a variety of flag designs and at other times the quilt maker was careful to use a more discriminating selection. Other quilts contain a variety of flannel designs, for example, a quilt may contain flag designs along with butterfly and sportsmen.

Crib sized quilts or throws are the size most often found. We do sometimes see large bed sized quilts made from a variety of flannels, though these are scarce. Doll quilts are sometimes seen, and they are colourful and often made with the less masculine designed flannels, using flannels with butterflies or other fanciful designs.



The flannel quilts are usually simple in construction, often flannels are sewn edge to edge, and seldom have alternate squares of fabric or sashing to separate the flannels. When alternating squares or sashing strips are used, the fabric is often a solid black, perhaps because it would coordinate better with the busy designs. Sometimes we see embroidery embellishment used on these quilts, the stitches covering the seams as it does in many crazy quilts.

Flannel quilts can be heavy, and are usually tied, but occasionally they are batted and quilted.

The small rugs are seldom used alone, but are seen, used in conjunction with the flannels in quilts. The texture of the rugs can be similar to the texture of the flannels, and sewn into a quilt, they are often difficult to distinguish from the flannels, with similar designs and colouring. The thickness of the rugs would make stitching difficult, certainly only the most dedicated quilter would try and quilt through these rugs. While they are often found alongside flannels in quilts, they are seldom found used in quilts along with the silks, which are very different in weight and texture.

CIGARETTE SILK QUILTS

As stated, Silks were also used to make quilts, and again the majority of quilts are small. Since the size of most cigarette silks is about 1 ½ x 2 ½ it would take a considerable effort to gather enough silks to make a large quilt. We find most cigarette silk quilts in small, doll or crib sizes, with the doll quilt perhaps the most popular size. Even this small size takes a large collection of the small silks. Small quilts are found made with beautiful silks, often designs with women, flowers, butterflies, and are all the more lovely for the diminutive size of the silks.



When we do see full sized quilts they often contain hundreds of silks. Larger full sized quilts when found are wonderful in their collections of silks. Often the quilt maker placed a larger silk, or collection of larger silks, as the centre emphasis of the quilt top. Usually the larger sized, scarce, silk premiums used in the centre, are surrounded by smaller silks that make up the rest of the quilt top. The quilts are often made with a variety of designs, and silks with flowers, actresses, queens, butterflies, flags, and military officers and medals, are displayed side by side. Again like the flannel quilt, these quilts are usually tied, but sometimes they are batted and quilted.

Sometimes tobacco silks are found in quilts like the silk crazy quilts. At other times silks in quilts that are thought to be tobacco inserts, may actually be silks from advertisement trade cards or silk ads issued by other manufacturers. Fabrics printed with tobacco advertisement or designs similar to tobacco cards like actresses or other popular personalities of the day may be found in quilts and mistaken for tobacco inserts. It takes a careful study of the history of tobacco inserts and premiums to distinguish these other silks in quilts.

SILK CIGAR RIBBON QUILTS

Perhaps the most rare of these tobacco novelty quilts is the cigar ribbon quilt. The ribbons are narrow, as previously noted, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide. Making a quilt from these ribbons requires gathering hundreds of them together. While cigars were the number one tobacco product used at the time, it must have taken years to collect enough ribbons to make a textile of any considerable size. Cigar ribbon manufacturers encouraged the collecting of the ribbons and even offered ribbons for sale to aid the homemaker in gathering enough ribbons for her project. Manufacturers or other dealers may have also offered kits to make pillows and small quilts, the kit including a muslin background marked with a pattern layout and a large supply of the cigar ribbons. Ads can be found in magazines of the period offering cigar ribbons for sale.

Cigar ribbon quilts are usually small crib sized pieces. It is often difficult to identify the original purpose of these items, and distinguishing between quilts, throws, and table covers, can be impossible. In making one of these quilts, the ribbons were placed side by side and stitched down, and were usually sewn down onto a foundation fabric. Since the ribbons are narrow and short in length, makers of these items used the ribbons in unique ways, sewing the ribbons together in various configurations of squares, diamonds and triangles to make up the top of the quilt. Ribbons are sometimes interlaced to give a checkerboard effect, or sometimes pieces are embellished with embroidery, often black, in stitching similar to crazy quilt stitching. Cigar ribbons bare the name of their manufacturer and it can be interesting to note the use of the names in arranging the ribbons.

The names sometimes become an important element in the design, and are carefully placed and arranged on the piece. At other times the names seem secondary and of no importance, being seemingly ignored in the design. Sometimes, but rarely, entire pieces are made with one brand of cigar. More often a variety of cigar brands are used. Coloured ribbons are not often found, and items sporting a rainbow of coloured ribbons are rare.

Cigar ribbon pieces are often trimmed with fringe or buttonhole embroidery stitches around the edges. Backs are often silk or sateen fabrics in black or gold. They seldom contain batting, nor are they quilted, being held to the backing with ties or straight stitching.

PILLOWS

Since they were small in size, and perhaps thought of as more easily made, the sofa pillow or cushion, as they were sometimes called, are the most often found article made from textile tobacco inserts and premiums. These pillows could be made with a reasonably sized collection of inserts, and often pillows are found with matched sets of designs or even entire series of designs. Pillows are often trimmed with fancy rope trim or ruffles. Often pillow tops that were never made into pillows are found, with the tobacco textiles still colourful and strong, having been stored away and never used.

Twelve bathing beauty silks make up this patriotic pillow top, made in red, white, and blue with a ruffle around the edge.



The most often encountered tobacco insert used for pillows is the cigarette silk. Women were encouraged to gather the silks and make sofa pillows or cushions for the home. Averaging about 20 inches in size, the pillow top can be made with a small collection of silks. When we find these pillows today they are often minus their stuffing, and sometimes have even been separated from their backing. Perhaps they are separated and removed because the weight of the added cotton batting can cause stress to the delicate silks. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether these small pieces made from cigarette silks are doll quilts or pillow tops.

Tobacco flannels were used occasionally to make pillow tops or covers. These often have backing and buttonhole embroidery along the outside edges. Cigar silks pillows, are the most rare of the pillows. They can be unique designs made with interwoven ribbons and embellished with embroidery. Pillows are certainly the most often found of the cigar ribbon textiles, the larger quilts as noted above, are rare.

TABLE CLOTHS AND COVERINGS

Table coverings are often confused with quilts and throws, because they are sized similarly, and often they are made in the same way the quilts were. Sometimes one can tell by the design, but other times only the choice of trim or the presence, or absence, of the backing, that gives us a clue, as to whether the item is a quilt or table cover.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Tobacco premiums were used to make other articles like purses or reticules, and even articles of clothing. Men's smoking jackets and robes have been seen made of cigar ribbons, appropriately perhaps, since men smoked the cigars. Even seen slippers made with the cigar ribbons.

The textile tobacco insert or premium was unique among the tobacco advertisement giveaways. The practice of using these textiles as inserts was initiated in an effort to encourage their collecting among women, thereby boosting the sales of the advertised tobacco manufacturer. This practice may also have been an effort to entice women into smoking at a time when competition for business between the tobacco companies was fierce. Though the practice of giving away these textiles in tobacco products, which sometimes cost more than the product itself, was understandably short lived, we now, almost one hundred years later, still find these textiles sewn into quilts and other household articles. These unusual, tobacco related quilts and household textile items are another wonderful example of women endeavouring to make their homes a more comfortable and attractive place to live.

CIGARETTES AND CIGARETTE CARDS

As the First World War began in the early days of August 1914, a stream of wealthy and well-connected people visited Whitehall and volunteered to put their substantial resources at the disposal of the War Office. Nearly 18,000 charities were established during the four years of the war. The most popular causes were "comforts" - including clothing, books and food - for British and Empire troops, medical services, support for disabled servicemen, organisations for relieving distress at home, post-war remembrance and celebration, aid for refugees and countries overseas, and assistance to prisoners of war.

Newspapers ran appeals for everything from sports equipment to tinned food and hard cash. The aims of the *Daily Express's* Cheery Fund were "to oblige everybody at the front who asks for things, and cheer up those who do not want anything". Men on active service received an extraordinary range of gifts from the fund, including footballs and cricket equipment, gramophones and records, books, banjos, violins and games.

Tobacco and cigarettes were among the most popular causes: one of the largest charities, the Smokes for Wounded Soldiers and Sailors Society – known popularly as the SSS – distributed more than a billion cigarettes to wounded men bought with funds raised through events such as "Fag Day".

A number of tobacco funds were set up which used picture postcards in their advertising campaigns. For example, *The Weekly Dispatch Tobacco Fund* published at least two appeal cards, which carried the slogan "**Every 6d. will gladden the heart of a HERO.**" One of the cards featured the classic '**Arf A Mo KAISER!**' sketch by Bert Thomas, which he drew in less than 15 minutes. (By the end of the war, the sketch had helped to raise more than £250,000 for charities).



Bert Thomas donated the original sketches on these two postcards to the Weekly Dispatch Tobacco Fund.

The *Daily Mail* called the image on the card on the right "**the funniest picture of the war**", although not everyone agreed with the comment. The cards were printed at Aldershot by Gale & Polden. The one on the left was number 1312 and was posted in 1915. The card on the right was number 1293 and was posted from Chelmsford to Leeds on 1st December 1916.

The Reverend Studdert Kennedy M.C.

Soon, cheap cigarettes were as much a part of trench life as barbed wire. The Rev. Studdert Kennedy, M.C, an Army Chaplain, sometimes known as 'Woodbine Willie' (from his habit of distributing cigarettes around the front-line trenches) wrote in *ROUGH RHYMES OF A PADRE*;

"Quarters kids us it's the rations, And the dinners as we gets, But I know what keeps us smiling, It's the Woodbine cigarettes."

The Rev. Theodore Bayley Hardy, V.C, D.S.O, M.C, asking Kennedy for advice when working with the men in the frontline, was advised, "Live with the men. Go everywhere they go. Make up your mind that you will share all their risks, and more if you can do any good...Do not be bamboozled into believing that your proper place is behind the line; it is not.

If you stay behind you, might as well come down, you will not do a ha'porth of good.

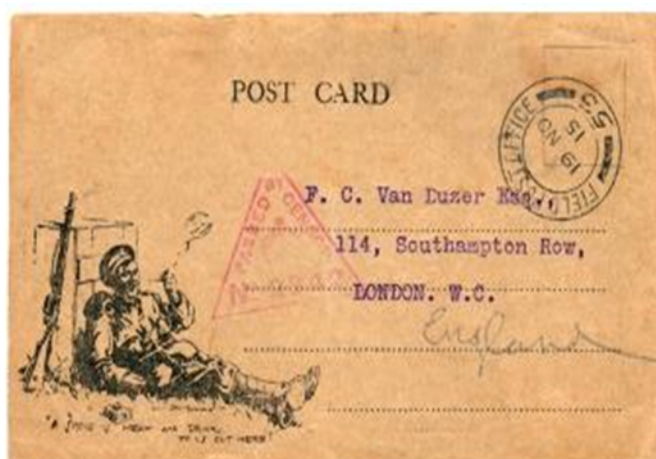
Your place is in the front. The line is the key to the whole business. Work in the front, and they will listen to you when they come out to rest...the men will forgive you anything but lack of courage and devotion; without that you are useless. There is very little purely spiritual work, it is all muddled and mixed - but it is all spiritual. Take a box of fags in your haversack and a great deal of love in your heart, and go up to them, laugh with them, joke with them; you can pray with them sometimes, but pray for them always."



Smokes Acknowledgement cards

By early 1915, the *Weekly Dispatch* was joined by other national and local newspapers who established their own Tobacco Funds. For example, the *Bexley Heath Observer* started a fund and used a Bert Thomas cartoon on its 'Cigarette and tobacco acknowledgement cards.'

The cards were usually buff-coloured with the name and address of a subscriber entered on the front and put into a parcel of 'smokes' and sent to the front and given to a soldier. The man who received the parcel then wrote a few words of thanks to the person named on the card. It was then posted into the military postal system, which returned it to the U.K. or wherever else the gift had originated from.



LEFT: This illustrated 'acknowledgement' card was returned by a soldier serving in 37 Brigade on the Western Front, to a girl in Standard 4, Uplands School, Bexley Heath. The 37 Brigade together with 35 and 36 formed the 12th (Eastern) Division and arrived in France on 1st June 1915. Its principal battles were Loos 1915, the Somme 1916, Arras and also Cambrai 1917 and the Somme in 1918. The tobacco fund requested the return of the card to its headquarters, if the message on the back was anything more than personal interest, it **"would probably help the organizer to stimulate further subscriptions, and a lot more money is required to keep up supplies to the brave men."** The message from the soldier was simply a personal **"thank you"**.

RIGHT: The illustration on this smoke's acknowledgement card is again by Bert Thomas. The card was posted at Field Post Office 53 on 19th November 1915. This was the field post office of 53 Brigade, which together with 54 and 55 formed the 18th (Eastern) Division, which arrived in France on 24th July 1915. The principal battles in which the division was involved were the Somme 1916, Ancre Operations, Ypres and Passchendaele 1917 and Somme in 1918.



LEFT: This smoke's acknowledgement card was posted by a member of 18 Brigade at "FIELD POST OFFICE 18" on 15th August 1916. This brigade, together with 16 and 17 formed the 6th Division. The division arrived in France on 9th September 1914 and fought at the Aisne. Other principle battles were Armentieres Oct 1914, the Somme Sep-Oct 1916, Cambrai Nov 1917, Lys Apr 1918. After the Armistice the division entered Germany on 13th December 1918 as part of the Rhineland Occupation Force. The card also carries a CM4 type censor mark. Drawn by Lieutenant Frank Osborne the cartoon was reproduced from the 'B.A.T. Bulletin.'

RIGHT: This card, stamped "**FIELD POST OFFICE 47**" and dated 15th February 1916, was mailed by a member off 47 Brigade, which with 48 and 49 formed the 16th (Irish) Division. Part of the division arrived in France on 18th December 1915 and was completed on 24th February 1916. Principle battles were Somme Sep 1916, Ypres Aug 1917, Somme Mar-Apr 1918. The division suffered heavy casualties and was reduced to a Composite Brigade in Apr 1918 and then acted as a Training Division. The parcel had been sent to the Front by the Countess of Courtown, Gorey, Ireland. The cartoon was "**Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietors of 'London' Punch.**" The censor mark was number 2249 and type CM4

Concerns about Health and Tobacco

The distribution of free cigarettes was not without controversy. On 3rd October 1916, a letter appeared in *The Times* sent by an enlightened but worried Sir Thomas Fraser, in which he questioned the wisdom of sending huge quantities of free cigarettes to the men at the front.

He wrote, "**It is fully recognized by medical men that excessive smoking is injurious. It disorders the functions of the nervous and digestive systems and perhaps more emphatically of the heart and blood vessels...Is it, therefore, an actual kindness so indiscriminately and profusely to supply tobacco our gallant troops, and by so doing actually to encourage and further the habit of excessive smoking?**"

Sir Thomas was also worried that young soldiers who had never used cigarettes before joining the army were now becoming seasoned smokers because of the free distribution by Tobacco Funds.

However, he relented a little, by saying "**Entire deprivation is not called for**", but went on, "**tobacco distribution should be regarded as a ration. It should no longer be permissible to supply it indiscriminately by independent organisations or private friends, but only by them under official supervision, guided by the medical officers.**"



This picture postcard also expressed the danger of tobacco - albeit in a humorous way. It was printed and published by J. Salmon.

Nevertheless, many more picture postcards expressed the 'benefits' of smoking than the dangers of doing so. For example, the three featured below express the idea that smoking a pipe, cigarette or cigar would make you worry less, smile more and experience a feeling of well-being.



The talented artist Reg Maurice was responsible for these three postcard illustrations. The card on the left was number 2206 in **"The REGENT Series."** The centre card was number 582 in the **"Wit & Wisdom Series."** and posted from Croydon on 26th June 1916. The card on the right was another in **"The REGENT Series"** and released by the Regent Publishing Co., Ltd., London and was number 2117.

On 4th October, the day after Sir Thomas Fraser's letter condemning the use of tobacco, appeared in *The Times*, Evelyn Wrench, the Hon. Organizer of The Overseas Club, replied to it **"with some amazement"** and said, **"On behalf of one of 'the praiseworthy organizations' referred to...may I put the opposite point of few...The prevention of over smoking by individuals may surely left to military discipline...and it is in the hope of preventing any diminution in the supply that I am moved to write this letter."**

The 'Honorable Organizer' gave the names of newspapers and journals, which The Overseas Club had collaborated with, in raising £165,000 from generous subscribers **"for our men both in the Army and the Navy."**

Two years' experience had taught the club that the average soldier would sooner go without any other luxury than 'a fag' and there was some truth in this. Every week from the Front, commanding officers, army chaplains and even officers in the Royal Army Medical Corps sent hundreds of letters to the club **"testifying to the soothing effect of the parcels of tobacco and cigarettes we forward."** For example, Lieut.-Col. Steven wrote from Mesopotamia, **"In this land where nothing is locally procurable but flies! Presents of this sort are like manna from heaven."** Australian Lieut. Alan Hutton wrote, **"The stuff came along just at the right time - after we had just had our turn in the attack - and is very heartily appreciated by all ranks."**

Second Lieutenant C. Witcombe, Gloucester Regiment, wrote from France; **"I only wish you could see my men standing around our company quartermaster-sergeant as he opens the case; their eyes are 'all on' the box, I can assure you."**

Major W. Mitchell, 2nd Divisional Train, France, seemed to answer the critics, of whether or not to send free smokes to the troops; **"They appreciate it more than words can tell, and nothing you can send them is more welcome."**

Performers lend a hand with Tobacco Fund-raising

During the summer of 1916, unscrupulous tricksters forced the government to introduce the War Charities Act, which was to provide for the registration of charities connected with the war.



Miss Cissie Lupino was featured on the card on the left. *The Performer* issued a publicity postcard telling of its tobacco fund, and considered it prudent to issue the following statement; **"The Performer Tobacco Fund is a branch of the newspaper's Patriotic Fund, which is approved by the War Office and licensed by the War Charities Act 1916."**

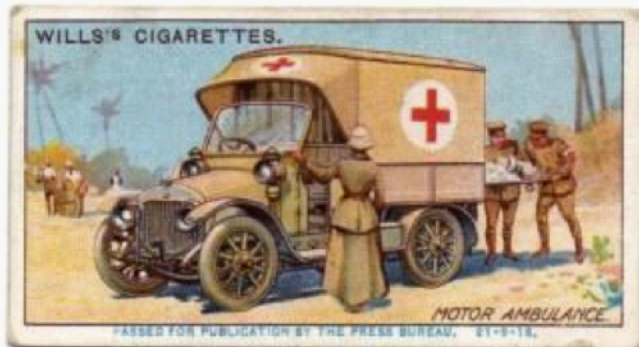
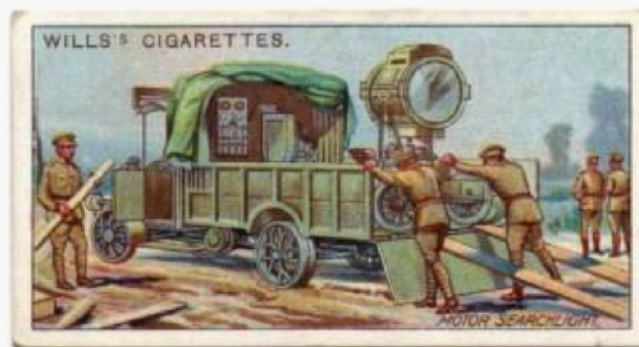
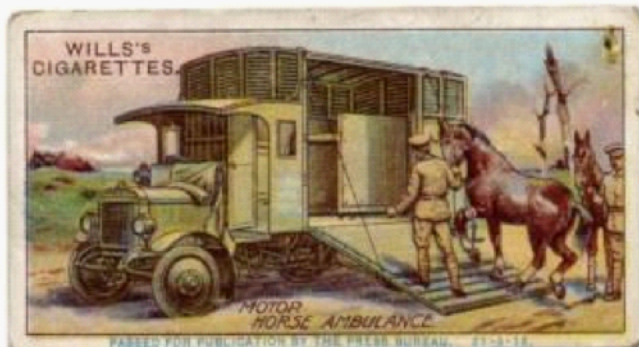
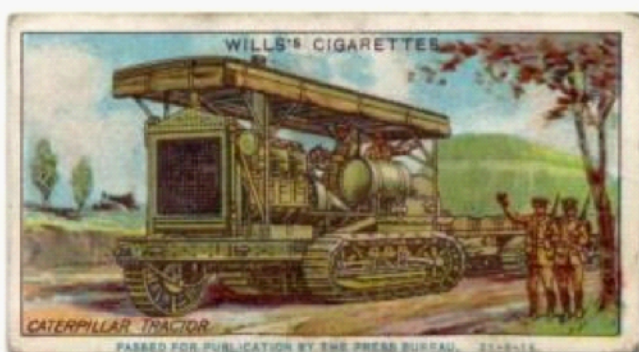
The announcement went on to say that **"nearly all the leading artistes are selling their photographs through 'The Performer' Tobacco Fund, you can make a souvenir collection."** The postcards could be acquired in bulk lots: **"5/- will buy a collection of 20 "artists; £5 will buy a collection of 500 artists, everyone different."** Collectors were told that every 1/- spent on the postcards would buy 3/6 worth of cigarettes for the troops. Collectors were further informed that **"The military authorities have kindly undertaken to collect and deliver the parcels to the men-at-the-front free of charge."**

The cards were printed in sepia and showed a head and shoulders portrait of the artist, framed by a square or oval border and a tablet bearing the performer's signature. Each one was numbered in the bottom right hand corner, prefixed by the letter 'P'.

WW1 Cigarette Cards

It was not only soldiers and civilians who enjoyed the contents of a cigarette packet. Many children did too - but for a different reason. A cigarette card was usually inserted into each packet and they were eagerly collected by children. Many subjects featured on these cards and one that was extremely popular during the 1914-1918 war, was a set of fifty cards produced by W. D. & H. O Wills.

It was titled 'Military Motors.' However, there were two distinct versions of the set. The first was captioned along the bottom edge of the cards **"PASSED FOR PUBLICATION BY THE PRESS CENSOR. 21-9-16."** The second version did not carry the caption. On the back of each card was a full description of the vehicle featured. The vehicles were British and French.



Black Cat WW1 Cigarette Cards

The tobacco company Carreras Ltd., produced an interesting set of cigarette cards which it inserted in its Black Cat cigarette packets. The images thereon were based on the wartime cartoons of the extraordinary Dutch artist Louis Raemaekers.



This advertisement, featuring Raemaekers war cartoon cigarette cards, appeared in *The Times* on 18th October 1916.

Released in 1916, there were 140 cards in the Raemaekers set and unlike most of the artists postcards, which were produced in sepia or black and white, these cigarette cards were all in colour.

Children's Efforts to Help the Tobacco Funds

British school children composed verses during the war to help various charity funds and their efforts were often printed onto postcards. Others would use their artistic skills and paint or draw a patriotic scene (Usually the flags of the Allies and a rousing slogan.) onto a blank postcard and sell it for a penny to fund their favourite charity.

The "Over-seas Club."

British schoolchildren contributed to the war effort in ways other than designing and painting fund raising postcards. For example, a few weeks before Christmas 1915, the 'Over-seas Club' launched an appeal aimed at the children of Britain.

It invited each of them to take at least one penny to school, where their teachers would set up collection points. The money collected would go to providing parcels of tobacco and cigarettes and other comforts, "so that everyone of our brave soldiers and sailors will be happy on Christmas day." said a publicity leaflet. The appeal was a great success and each child was given a colourful certificate bearing his/her name – to show that they had contributed to the 'Penny Fund'.

The Club had already had an appeal



that year - on Empire Day, when it also awarded a certificate to participants. In 1916, in the days leading up to Empire Day and Christmas Day the Over-seas Club repeated the appeal.

Christmas Day, 1915.

An Appeal

to British Boys and Girls
to help our brave Sailors and Soldiers

Dear Boys and Girls,

We are all beginning to think about Christmas. Have you thought what a strange Christmas it will be for our soldiers who are fighting so bravely in the trenches, and for our gallant sailors who are keeping watch for us in the North Sea.

They will be thinking of home and the dear ones they have left behind, they will remember the merry Christmas times of old, the games they used to play, the plum puddings, the holly and all the things that make Christmas such a happy time.

Nearly all of us have someone we love at the front. Let us show them that although far away they are not forgotten.

We want to send out thousands and thousands of parcels of tobacco and cigarettes and comforts, so that every one of our brave soldiers and sailors will be happy on Christmas Day.

Will you help by bringing a penny to your teacher?



Your pennies will make our brave sailors and soldiers very happy at Christmas.

Your teacher will give you a beautiful Certificate which you will be proud of in years to come. It will help you to remember that you have made a little sacrifice to bring comfort and happiness on Christmas Day to our brave soldiers and sailors.

Please read the letter from Queen Alexandra, on the back of this leaflet.

Every boy and girl will be proud to know that over three million pennies were subscribed by the School-children of Great Britain to the Over-Seas Club Fund on Empire Day.

This enabled us to send more than 250,000 splendid parcels of tobacco, cigarettes, chocolate and other comforts, to our brave sailors and soldiers at the front.

We want to do even better than this for Christmas, will you help us?

Her Majesty Queen Alexandra
has sent the following gracious letter:—

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,

13th October, 1915.

I am desired by Queen Alexandra to say that Her Majesty hears with much interest of the Appeal which the Over-Seas Club is to make again to British Boys and Girls in our Schools, to provide Christmas Gifts to our soldiers and sailors, by a penny contribution.

I am to assure you of Her Majesty's sympathy in this movement, and to express her hope that the great success achieved by your Club last time will be repeated.

HENRY STREATFEILD,
Private Secretary to
QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

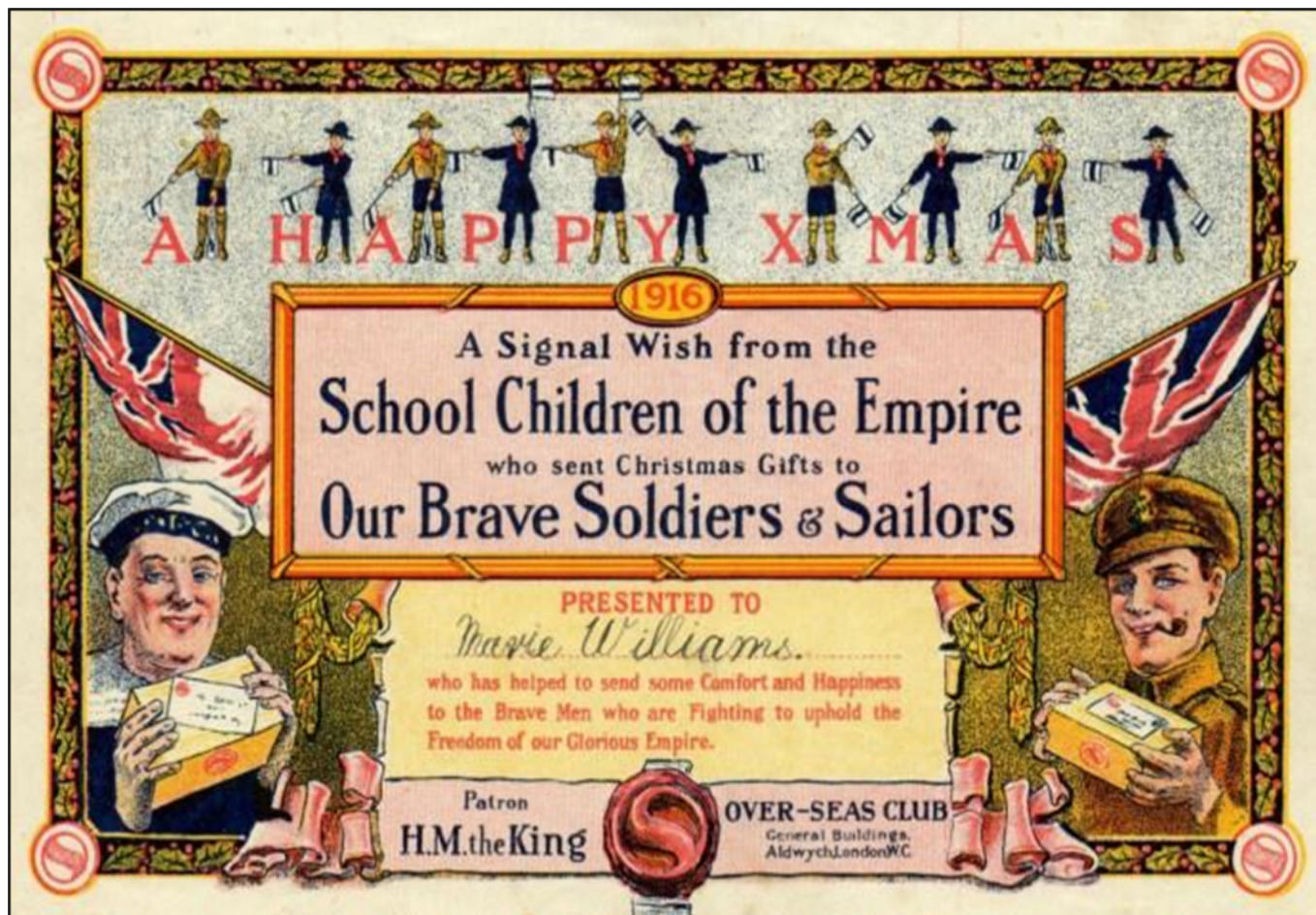
Please bring your pennies to your teacher to-morrow.

We hope every schoolboy and every schoolgirl in Great Britain will give at least one penny. If you can spare two or three pennies it will be better still.

This Penny Fund is organised by the
OVER-SEAS CLUB
General Building, Albany - London, W.C.
Patron: HIS MAJESTY THE KING







LEFT: Released by The Regent Publishing Co., Ltd., this card was number 2751. Reg Maurice was the artist.

CENTRE: The Corona Publishing Company, Blackpool, England, released this card. It was number 1143 in the 'Regal Series.' The artist did not sign the picture. A message on the reverse reads, "Dear Uncle Tom, I helped Mr Lawrence back to the station with his kit bag but I would rather help you with yours...Kisses from Kate."

RIGHT: This card was published by the "Art and Humour Publishing Co., Limited, Chancery Lane, London. W.C. It was number 1018 in the "A & H 'Topical Tickles' Series."

LEFT: A convalescent soldier enjoys a cigarette. "This is the time we have longed to come true, when we're together dear, just I and you." says the caption. The card was number 5122 in the "Philco Series". A message in the 'stamp box' encouraged people to "INVEST in Government Securities."



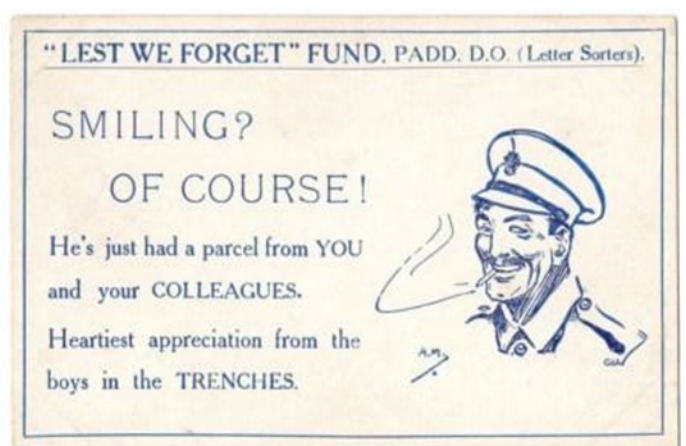
RIGHT: "Boys of the Bulldog Breed!" A sailor and soldier light their cigarettes. J. Salmon of Sevenoaks, printed and published the card.



LEFT: "Every 6d. will gladden the Heart of a HERO." says this fund raising postcard from the *Weekly Dispatch Tobacco Fund*. "The only possible happiness we can give them is something to smoke." says the message.

CENTRE: "THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A CIGARETTE TO MAKE A SOLDIER SMILE!" says this card and it also encouraged the recipient of it to respond with a letter. Published by 'W. & F. London' it was from Series No. 3670 F.

RIGHT: "KEEP SMILING!" with a reference to matches, this card was printed and published by J. Salmon. 'Elsie' mailed the card on 30th October 1918 to 'Miss E. Betts who lived in Warwick.



The never ending demand by soldiers for tobacco and cigarettes, perhaps inspired the artist of this card to encourage donors to the tobacco funds to **"send along some woodbines about as big as this!"** The card was by 'C. P. C.' in 'Series 404.'

RIGHT: A card from the "LEST WE FORGET" FUND. Perhaps sent to donors to the fund as a thank you from postal workers.

Augustus John and "Three on a match"

An image on a card from the fund-raising Daily Mail Official War Pictures series - captioned **"A "FAG" AFTER A FIGHT"** - later became famous when the popular artist Augustus John based a drawing on it.

A "FAG" AFTER A FIGHT. Daily Mail card number 11 from Series 2, released in 1916. The caption on the back reads, "Before battle, in battle, and after battle our 'Tommie's' are ready for a fag." These men are lighting up after a scrap". The caption implies the men had just come out of a fight, but the houses, trees and road in the picture all appear untouched by shellfire. The action they had taken part in was probably a long way behind them. In the front line 'three to a match' was a dangerous habit. Two soldiers just might use one match to light their cigarettes, but if the match stayed alight any longer, an enemy sniper might just have time to take aim on the third man.



Titled "**FRATERNITY**" this postcard depicted Augustus John's version of the image on the *Daily Mail* card. The card was issued by the Imperial War Museum - probably post war

Bamforth Song Cards

Bamforths & Co, Ltd. of Holmfirth, England and New York, also got in on the act of promoting the tobacco habit with the release of a three-card set in their popular song card series. The



set was titled "SMOKE CLOUDS."

The verse on card number one reads, **"I think we are sometimes inclined to forget; What we owe to the puff of just one cigarette, It's a wonderful friend to a poor tired soul, And it helps one to think life's not bad on the whole."** Despite protests against the use of tobacco by medical men and others, the supply of free or cheap cigarettes and tobacco to the troops continued, and was for them, one of the 'comforts' of trench life. Soldiers carried their cigarettes around in a tin, safe and dry in a tunic pocket and frequently shared with comrades, as seen on the Daily Mail card illustrated above. A British corporal, Jack Turner, composed verses singing the praises of cigarettes - he called it **'FAGS'**.

The poem was used on show-cards advertising 'MURAD' Turkish cigarettes and the last line summed up the soldiers feeling about tobacco: **"We can do without a lot of things and still win out, you bet, But I'd hate to think of soldiering without a cigarette."**

The trade journal 'Tobacco, in an editorial of October 1914, claimed that 'it might be said that a man in the firing line first thinks of his cartridges and the very next thing he seems to worry about is ammunition for his pipe. The pipe itself is only less precious than the rifle.' While frontline troops were more concerned with the lack of regular food or effective footwear to cope with the often waterlogged trenches, nevertheless tobacco and cigarettes were highly valued comforts.



Packing cigarettes at the Teofani Tobacco Factory Brixton South London 1916.

British soldiers and sailors smoked 1,000 tons of cigarettes and 700 tons of pipe tobacco in 1915. The tobacco trade journals quoted from an article in the *Lancet*:

We may surely brush aside much prejudice against the use of tobacco when we consider what a source of comfort it is to the soldier and sailor engaged in a nerve-racking campaign ... There can indeed be little doubt that tobacco fills an important place in the psycho-physiological affairs of the human race.



Compiled by
Bambridge
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August 2021.

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