

DESIGN HISTORY

WWI REMEMBRANCE

Keywords:
WWI, DESIGN HISTORY, ENGLAND

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“These drawings are part of a series for a presentation to the Imperial War Museum in London in 2016. Their style is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the combination of traditional technical draughtsmanship with fine art and an educational purpose. Thailand, Siam was known to the Europeans’ mind as the most exotic of countries and totally alien to the all-out trench warfare prevailing in France.

Nevertheless, King Rama VI sent as a gift to King George V a specially raised regiment of Siamese troops. The regiment comprised of a battalion of combat troops, companies of medics, doctors and most astonishingly – 93 fighter pilots. However, what is true today was also true then, that the Siamese’s warriors suffered terribly from the cold and from disgustingly execrable “bully-beef-biscuit” British

Army food rations. This was initially very bad for their morale regardless of their undoubted courage. As a result there was an out pouring of sympathy from the English Public.

The gentlemen of England formed “knitting-circles” who had knitted thousands of items of warm, woolen clothing- extra-long socks, gloves, scarves, “balaclavas” and blankets, which helped to solve the first prob-

lem. The great and famous stores of London – Harrods, Fortnum & Mason, Jacksons of Piccadilly – ransacked their warehouses for the special spices, fruits and that most un-heard of all ingredients – fresh ginger! which solved the second problem and so the Siamese became, like their country the most exotic troops of the Western Front. Many never returned to their homeland, but through their sacrifices, placed Siam into global affairs.

The poppy flower is for Remembrance.





