

## CONSTANCE PENRUDDOCKE



Connie Penruddocke, second daughter of Charles, baronet, of Compton Chamberlayne, Wiltshire befriended many of the soldiers who came to Fovant camps during WW1. She often opened her house and garden in Dinton to provide home comforts that many of them missed, especially the Australians so far from home.

She often went to the railway station at Dinton to say goodbye to those soldiers leaving for the war in France. She gave each a signed New Testament (later she found there were so many she could not sign them all by hand and had to have a rubber stamp made).



*A regiment of the London Rifle assembling on the platform of Dinton Station*

Connie, along with other ladies in the villages, organised teas in their gardens. It was not just the officers who enjoyed these entertainments, and when they went to the Front there was a correspondence with their “Aussie Mother” in Dinton. She also undertook to correspond with their families in Australia which continued long after the war finished



*Tea with officers of the London Rifles*

*In the garden of the Rectory in Fovant.*

*Connie is second from the (R).*



*Connie has her back to the camera.*

When she died in 1936 she requested that there should not be a headstone on her grave, so the many Australian tourists who came to Dinton to remember the “Aussie Mother” so fondly thought of in their country, had difficulty finding her last resting place. In 2014 the Dinton History Society were keen to pay respect to her. After much discussion it was decided that a flat commemorative plaque would not be considered a headstone but would make it easier for those wishing to pay their respects to this kind, thoughtful lady who had been such an influence on the soldiers passing through in those dreadful days.

