

A KISS CARD FROM WALTER- CLOKS 2016

Chard is a small market town in South Somerset, with a population today of approximately 13,000. Not a lot happens here now, but it was a busy place in 1914. The ordinary people of Chard didn't do much at first glance, but when we looked into it, it turned out they were making uniforms and armaments and mosquito netting, and sending pit props and food to the front. Local un-sung heroes developed the best lenses for use in telescopes and the wounded soldiers were sent here to be provided with world class artificial limbs.

But the most important part of the story is the heart-breaking letters that we've been given access to, -letters which kept the ordinary people who were going off to fight linked with their sweethearts and families at home. They are full of the every-day details about life and extraordinary emotion.

As with our usual shows there are large chorus numbers involving most of the cast as well as a variety of shorter scenes giving lots of children the opportunity to speak and act. There are approximately 50 speaking parts and although quite a few are small parts this does mean that everyone should get the chance to say something. There are cameo/comic parts, serious acting parts and as usual many people will be playing a chorus part and as well as having a character. We will need a football team, a group of men enlisting, nurses and factory workers to name but a few. It is going to be a very exciting project unlike anything we have done before.

There will be original songs as well as some traditional WW1 songs and we will be accompanied by the Chard Concert Brass Band.

*****AUDITIONS*****

SATURDAY 12th December 10- 2pm Crowshute House.

We will start the morning with a talk from the writers of our script who will tell you in more detail about the show. This will be followed by auditions. We would like you to prepare a short poem from either the first or Second World War. This does not have to be learnt but please familiarise yourself with it so that it can be read with expression and feeling.

If you wish to be considered for a singing solo or as part of a small group you will need to prepare a short song, again from either World War. This will need to be sung with a backing track or unaccompanied.

CAST LIST:

Walter Stacey- (The Postman) early 20s. Married to Kitty. The 'Kiss Card' of the title belongs to them. He sings a duet with Kitty. He is an honest, reliable and hardworking man- one of the first to Volunteer

Kitty Stacey- Kitty and Walter are very much in love with each other. She has some very emotional scenes when Walter leaves and when the news comes of his death. A key character with two songs. In her 20s.

Tom Trott- Tommy is married to Florence. He is involved some sensitive and emotional scenes. He has joined with Percy Harwood in their joint business (Trott and Harwood- doing contract work on farms) he is a true and loyal friend so when Percy is conscripted he Tom volunteers to go with him.

Florence Trott- Florence (married to Tommy) is lively and funny and outgoing. very proud of her husband. They have 3 children. She is a strong woman who works hard on the farm. She is a good friend to Ethel and Kitty.

Percy Harwood- he is involved in all the key scenes of the play. In his 20s. Married to Ethel and in business with Tommy. He is a good natured and easy going man and very much in love with his wife Ethel. Very practical and hard working.

Ethel Harwood- Married to Percy involved in most key scenes. She is a hard working independat woman. Rhoda and Arthur are her mother and father and the Harwood's are a team to be reckoned with.

Arthur Harwood- the oldest character, he is strong willed and feisty. He has worked hard all his life and never takes orders from anyone. His horses are very valuable to him and when an army big wig tells him what to do and treats his horses badly he argues with the man. This is a mistake he lives to regret and as a result he loses his business and his son.

Rhoda Harwood- Arthur's wife and Florence's mother. She is also feisty and speaks her mind. She is furious with Arthur for sounding off an getting Percy called up. She still mothers Percy if he will let her.

Harry- Aged 15 (nearly an adult in those days but too young to officially go to war) he is a hero and role model for the younger kids. Honest reliable and hard working young man he starts to work for Col. Gifford in his lab making lenses as part of the war effort.

Jess- Aged 15- Harry's sweetheart and works in the Lace factory. She is the first to wear trousers and is interested in women's rights.

William Hockey- Was the mayor of Chard during the war and also the station master. he was also a member of the reserved occupation board. He is quite bossy and important.

Editor (of Chard and Ilminster) - He has a key role in the play. He narrates a lot and tells the audience about the men who have died in the war. He is a compassionate man and volunteers for the Red Cross as a runner in the trenches and he carries Walter's letter to Kitty.

Alfred Emery- he is the photographer at the Chard and Ilminster. He is a bit of a comic character and involved in the football match at the start. As the war goes on he too joins up.

Colonel Gifford- he was a really important man in Chard. He had been wounded in the Boer war so couldn't fight in this war. He was in charge of organising volunteers and training conscripts. He had a laboratory in his house where he made lenses and he advised the war office on the use of telescopes and periscopes for viewing the enemy in opposite trenches.

Eddie Follett- Works for the Editor of the Chard and Ilminster replacing the photographer from the beginning of the play who himself goes to war. Follett is too young to enlist at the start but goes eventually.

Norrington- He wants to volunteer but is too old and Gifford won't accept him. He is not happy about this.

Denning, Inge, Brown and Small- Are men who ran shops, factories and breweries in Chard. They are all on the 'reserved occupation Board'

Bessie Martin- Gets the play going with great force. She also appears as one of the volunteer nurses.

Referee- Speaks at the beginning of the play and referees the football match.
he needs comic timing and needs to be able to convince the audience that he can see and hear the match (even though the action is off stage)

Fooks, Collins, Dowell and Partridge- Appear in a short scene as the voices of soldiers they are real people whose names appear on the memorial.

Women 1, 2, 3 and 4- Appear in a short scene as the voices of many women who are thinking and dreaming of their husbands at the front.

Sally and Jo- Younger children in modern costume who are looking in their Grandparent's attic for memorabilia about WW1. They introduce and close the play and link the past with the present.

Matron- The matron at the hospital. She runs a team of volunteers and has to be bossy and organised. She is also kind and compassionate to the injured Captain. A powerful woman and one of the early pioneers in women's rights.

Mrs Gifford- A force to be reckoned with she gave up part of her house to set up the hospital. She recruited and trained up the nurses from the local community.

Mrs Harriman, Parham, Laws, Toms and Mitchell- Wives of local shopkeepers who until the onset of war led sheltered lives. They volunteer as nurses.

Dr Prowne- A cameo role. He was a real doctor in Chard and his son was killed, there is a memorial to him in St Mary's church.

Jane, Charlotte, Sidney and Winnie- This group are in some of the lighter scenes and also in the seaside scene. They have a hard time in the war, always short of food and having to fend for themselves. They look up to Harry, he is their role model.

Scriven- A small part, comic character. A young man who wants to go to war but wants to take his pet dog.

Albert- Postman- replaces Walter when he volunteered.

Mrs Dowell- Part of the Lace Factory scene but older than the other workers.

She is a pacifist at a time when that was very unpopular. She has one long speech when she explains by the war starts.

Mr Moore- Foreman of the lace factory. He struggles to keep control of the girls who have replaced the men working in the factory.

Sarah, Annie, Patience, Victoria, Lottie, Elizabeth, Maisie- the young girls who have started to take over the men's jobs at the factory. They are feisty and funny and a mime scene in the factory working the machines.

More details of who will be singing what song will be available soon.

A lot of the smaller characters will also double up as chorus members in the larger scenes.

If you have any questions about the auditions or characters please text, email or face book me.