Cambridge has a rich history as a University City, but also played its part in the First World War, with many buildings being used as hospital facilities. This map highlights a variety of locations that would have been of importance during the war and also places of remembrance for those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The 'Great War: Between the Lines' project is continuing to be understood and remembered. This project will be running events, exhibitions and public guided tours throughout the year to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. Further information can be found on the website www.great-war.ccan.co.uk where you can also find additional resources and events.

The project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is a collaboration between the University of Cambridge, the Cambridge County Council and the Cambridge City Council.
2 Cambridge University Library

Behind Memorial Court you will find the University Library. In 1914 the was workshops belonging to Clare and King’s College but when war broke out it was quickly nationalised by the army. It then became the main site of a large open air military hospital known as the First Eastern General Hospital. The hospital could accommodate up to 1700 wounded soldiers.

3 Trinity College

When war broke out the First Eastern General Hospital set up wards in the Cloisters and on the lawn of Trinity College. The Master Henry Montagu Butler, had three sons each involved in the Great War in the Mediterranean, France and as a Prisoner of War in Germany. A collection of letters from the master to his sons is in the college archives.

4 Clare College

Memorial Court, designed by architect Sir Giles Scott, was built in the 1930s as a permanent memorial to Clare men who lost their lives in the First World War. There you will find the name of William Charles Derick-Browne, who had a promising musical career in front of him in 1914 but was killed at Gallipoli on the 8 June 1915. William was a close friend of the well known war poet Rupert Brooke. When Rupert was offered a commission in the navy in 1914 he refused to take it until William was also commissioned.

8 Bacon Brothers

On the corner of Market Street and Rose Crescent you will find a bacon factory which in 1914 was written by C. S. Calverley. This plaque marks the site of the factory and describes the bacon produced by Bacon Brothers. The factory sent packages of cigarettes and tobacco out to soldiers stationed in the front during the war. Cambridge Archives holds a large series of postcards sent from soldiers. Writing the men for their produce. Some of the postcards are sent from prisoner of war camps in Germany.

10 Christ’s College

During World War One, the British YMCA established huts on the Eastern Front that provided soldiers with food, drink and free writing paper and envelopes. Cambridge University sponsored a hut on the front but Dr A. E. Shipley, the Master at Christ’s College, thought the college should be responsible. Shipley wrote an appeal letter to interested parties and 2700 was raised to build the hut. The hut was built in Flanders at the end of 1916.

12 Great St Mary’s Church

Although no longer home to the lector of the 16th Century it is still worth visiting St Mary’s Church in Great St Mary’s Street. In 1737 it was moved to a permanent stone building the parish church which now houses a large open air military hospital known as the Great War Memorial. The church members who gave their lives in the First World War.

13 King’s College

Sir Alfred Ewing, Emeritus Professor of Engineering at Cambridge founded the Royal Navy’s intelligence unit and recruited code breakers. One of these code breakers was Dilly Knox, an ex-student of King’s College and recruited code breaker. In 1914 Knox was killed at Gallipoli on the 8th of June. Knox was a close friend of the well known war poet David Jones, who was a long-standing friend of Dilly’s. He would encourage discussion and self-awareness. The library was built in the 1920s as a permanent memorial to Clare and King’s College. The Memorial to Henry Montagu Butler, who died in the First World War.

15 Corpus Christi College

The 2nd Officer, Captain Belfast, stationed at Corpus Christi at the end of September 1917. In the archives there are copies of the souvenir magazine produced for this group called ‘Decoy-Dump’. One copy has signatures in it and there is also a photograph of the battalion.

17 Pembroke College

Pembroke College has approximately 330 names on its war roll. In the cloisters outside the chapel this includes the names of those who were accepted for Pembroke but then decided they couldn’t start up their studies at Cambridge. It is believed Pembroke is the best proportion of members for its size to any other college.

20 Our Lady and the English Martyrs Church (OLMEN)

The majority of Belgian refugees were Catholic. The church played an important role in attending to their needs. Edward Conybeare was a prominent member of the parish of OLMEN and his diary contains interesting details of Cambridge during the war. He reports on the huge numbers attending Mass when soldiers were in Cambridge. The church set up a large open air military hospital known as the First Eastern General Hospital. The hospital could accommodate up to 1700 wounded soldiers.

23 Cambridge War Memorial

The war memorial features a returning soldier who looks back towards the train station as he heads home. The sculpture was allegedly modelled upon Kenneth Hamilton, an undergraduate of Christ’s College and a member of the University Officers’ Training Corps. Before he met the sculptor, Dr Robert Tait McKenzie, at a college dinner.

24 Cambridge Railway Station

Mr Peacock, the Cambridge Station Master, is known to have helped evacuate Belgian refugees after the war. Patients were also transported to the First Eastern General Hospital by rail, disembarking at Cambridge Railway Station before being transported by motor vehicle.