

THE FARNINGHAM TANK

Acquiring and installing the tank was a complicated affair as shown in FARNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES - 1:

4 February 1919

Dartford Rural District Council asked if Farningham Parish Council would like to have a war trophy.

Unanimous – Application be made for a tank, which was most fitting as Major Wilson, the designer of the tank, resided at Farningham, at Charton.

13 May 1919

It had been hoped to place the tank on the Main Road in front of the Manor House, but Mr H.F. Waring, refused to have it so near his house -

"He did not think the tank was a war trophy in any way whatever"

However, he would consider a site near the Church end of the green.

3 June 1919

It was agreed that tank be erected on two concrete slabs, surrounded by iron rails high enough to prevent children climbing over, and for a stone or brass tablet to be placed with names of all the parishioners who had served in the War and those who had been killed.

THE FARNINGHAM TANK

JULY 1919 - SPECIFICATION OF WORKS for the formation of an emplacement for the **WAR MEMORIAL 'TANK'** near the Church, Farningham

- 1) **Take down part of existing wood fence** for a distance of 32' and prepare and lay the site 32' x 15' as shown on plan bringing area to a uniform surface.
- 2) **Excavate and form two concrete slab foundations** 9' long 2' wide and 2' thick, spaced sufficiently wide apart to take the tank runners, brought to the same level and finished a smooth travelled surface, the front slab to be no more than 6" above ground.
- 3) **Haul the Tank from 'Bull Inn' yard** into position on the concrete slabs when set, making provision not to damage the concrete during the operation.
- 4) **Supply and fix a 6' unclimbable iron fence and gate** fitted with lock and key (to be selected similar to H901 for the gate and H1704 for the gate in Messrs. Bayliss, Jones and Bayliss' price list) all round the site (about 94 feet) and paint same four coats of good oil colour.
- 5) **Make good the wood fence** up to the enclosure this formed, providing any new posts, rails and pales as necessary.

THE FARNINGHAM
TANK

COACH BUILDER.
UNDERTAKER.

Oct: 21¹²² 1919
T. F. H. W. Smith, Esq.
Braeside, Farningham.

ALBERT KNOWLES,

SUCCESSOR TO HENRY MARCHANT.

TELEPHONE: FARNINGHAM 4.

Builder, Decorator and General Contractor,
FARNINGHAM.

TEAM SAW MILLS.

"Estimate"

Dear Sir

I have much pleasure in handing you
my Estimate of Twenty-seven pounds £27-0-0
to carry out the work all in accordance
with Item No 1, 2 & 5 in specification.

Trusting this will be acceptable to you.

Yours faithfully
T. F. H. W. Smith

Estimate for £27 for
installing tank from
Albert Knowles based
on Parish Council's
specification.

Mr Knowles
Cannot undertake
traction of tank
& it is thought
by him that
other means
non-raising
which are
likely to be
costly & will
be necessary
to be
Mr. G. H. Smith
27/11/19
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3 November 1919

Tank Training Camp agreed to send team to drive tank to Farningham.

3/XI/19.
Thank you for letter & Enclosed
Bill announcing Meeting.
The Authorities at the
Tank Training Camp have
written to tell me that on
receiving due notice they
will send up a team to
move our War Trophy. Do
you think 7.40 will be soon
enough for previous Meeting of Council?

T.F.H. Smith
London

3 November 1919,
Note from T.F.H.
Smith, parish
councillor, about
moving tank to
Farningham by Tank
Training Camp

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11 November 1919 (1st Anniversary of the Armistice)

Agreement by Mrs M.A.W. Howard (daughter of the deceased H.F. Waring) to lease a plot of land for tank to Farningham Parish Council signed at a special public meeting, and parishioners agreed that the costs of the site works and preparation of the tank be met from the rates.

3 February 1920

After discussion with War Office £20 was allocated to cover the tank crew's costs of rail fares from Dorsetshire, billeting and provisioning them while in Farningham.

20 April 1920

Mr H.J. Ward of Mill House to pay for a brass tablet for the tank. Servicemen's names not now included:-

Presented by the War Office as a War Trophy to Farningham and accepted in view of the important part in its design by Major W.G. Wilson C.M.G. of Charton, Farningham.

It was being made by J. & E. Hall's Engineering of Dartford, where Wilson had once worked.

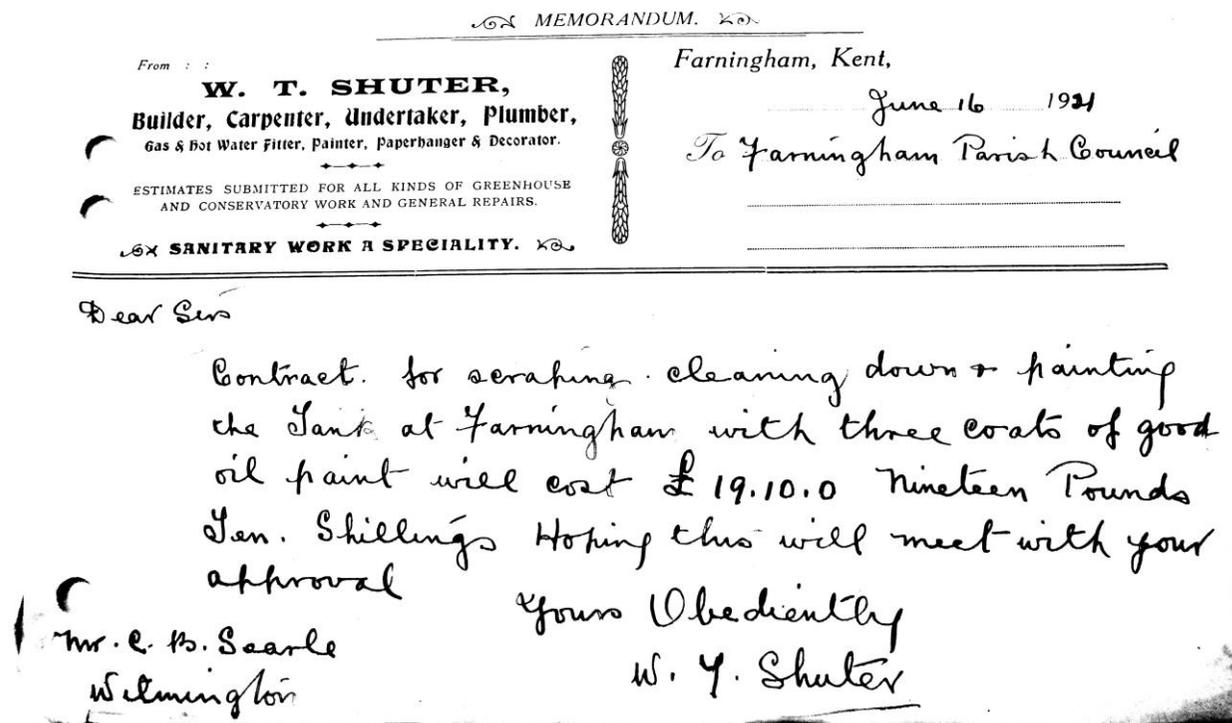
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3 August 1920 - Tank in place, but War Office refused to pay £5 10s for the petrol and oil used to remove tank from Swanley Junction to Farningham.

5 October 1920
Brass tablet fixed to tank.

16 June 1921
Estimate for scraping off old paint and applying new - £19 10s.

7 July 1921
Sir Irving Albery, now owner of Farningham Manor to put posts and chain along front of green.



P.S. After all that effort, the tank, though popular, required constant maintenance, and during the Second World war, after all non-urgent local expenditure had been stopped by the Government, the tank was sold for £25 for scrap in July 1940.

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