

If you are considering going on a tour of the WWI Battlefields then I can highly recommend Solway Battlefields Tours. In fact, they are so good I have been three times! Tour guides Mark and Lesley are both former history teachers and the range and depth of their knowledge is fantastic. They are passionate about their subject and are meticulous in their research. They will help you track down the graves of your relatives or if there is no known grave they will show you where they are commemorated and, if at all possible will even try to take you to the site where they fell.

From the moment you join the tour and board the comfortable coach you are made to feel welcome. Mark and Lesley's relaxed, friendly approach encompasses everyone and soon you feel part of one, big family. Nothing is too much trouble for them and they go out of their way to do everything they can to ensure everyone has a truly enjoyable experience and gets the best out of the trip. Nothing is too much trouble for them. For example, each person is given a Solway Battlefields Tours business card with Mark and Lesley's contact details in case of emergencies but it is attached to a bag of Lesley's delicious home-made tablet. There are quizzes on the journey to the ferry (plenty of comfort stops included!) to help pass the time and there is a box of books about all aspects of WWI kept at the front of the coach for anyone who wants to do some background reading. These thoughtful touches are what helps to give Solway Battlefields Tours the edge over other tour operators.

In Ypres, Mark and Lesley have selected a very comfortable hotel which is about a ten minute walk from the Menin Gate where the moving and poignant Last Post ceremony is held each evening. On every tour Mark and Lesley arrange for three clients from the trip to take part in the wreath laying ceremony. I have had the honour of being chosen to be lay a wreath. It was a hugely emotional experience and one I'll never forget.

Despite the fact a battlefields tour is very emotive and at times you will undoubtedly be moved to tears it is not all doom and gloom; Mark and Lesley still manage to provide a lot of lighthearted moments and the banter is great! On each trip I have made there has been something new to see and learn and I have always come away with the desire to return again. I can guarantee that if you choose to go on a trip with Solway Battlefields Tours you will not be disappointed.