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**THE PORTUGUESE FIREPLACE  
IN THE NEW FOREST  
Carol Rankin**

During World War I Britain was no longer able to rely on imported timber for its needs and had to become more self-sufficient. The New Forest was an obvious source of supply, but a shortage of labour arose as many forest workers departed for military service. It fell to a Portuguese army unit working within the Canadian Timber Corps to support the local population in felling timber for the war effort. The Portuguese took up residence in a camp about two miles west of Emery Down and in it they had a cookhouse where meals were reputedly prepared "in the Portuguese tradition". When the camp was later demolished, the fireplace from their kitchen was salvaged and re-erected as a memorial which remains to this day. The plaque beside it reads:

*PORTUGUESE FIREPLACE*

*This is the site of a hutted camp occupied by a Portuguese Army unit during the First World War. This unit assisted the depleted local labour force in producing timber for the war effort.*

*The Forestry Commission have retained this fireplace from the cookhouse as a memorial to the men who lived and worked here, and acknowledge the financial assistance of the Portuguese government in its renovation.*



*CAROL RANKIN (BA Hons) spent many years leading Fine Arts tours to Portugal and wrote part of two guide books. She has lectured to the BHS on a variety of subjects and contributed articles to previous Annual Reports. She currently works as an Archivist and researcher.*