

North Wall

Many figures on the 'Peace Wall' are portraits of known people, some from Balcombe. The artist Neville Lytton is playing a flute, while his second wife holds a guitar; both she and their daughter appear several times in different guises.

Lady Denman, under a Sussex Oak, is shown studying the plans of the hall with her Clerk of the Works on Balcombe Estate. Other workers on the Estate and friends of Neville Lytton and Lady Denman are also included in these symbolic peace scenes.

South Wall

This wall, although divided by window openings, shows fast, skilled painting on rougher plaster than elsewhere.

It emphasises the pain and misery, the hate and despair of any war and is as relevant today as when painted. Total exhaustion, compassion and incredulity are all shown within a limited space. This above all must read 'Lest we forget'.

East Wall

This accomplished painting is in complete contrast to the North Wall. It shows the central figures bearing a symbolic dead soldier on a stretcher, with a background of broken trees and mine shafts of Flanders. A huddle of wounded German prisoners to one side and the youthful British soldiers marching out of the picture complete the scene, but one's eye is invariably drawn to the covered stretcher.

SW and NW corner

The two figures of Dolor and Spes (Sorrow and Hope) are symbolic representations of the futility of war and the hope of peace.

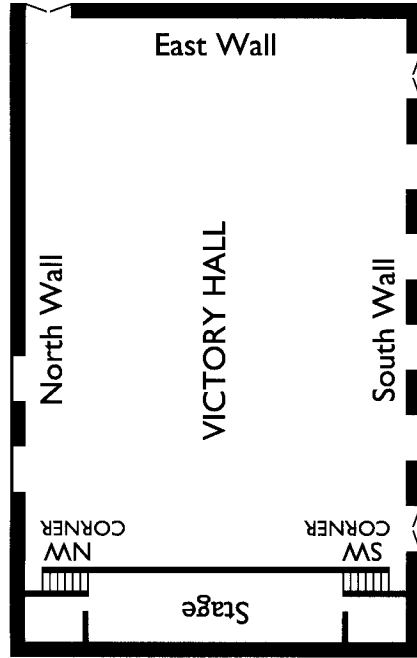
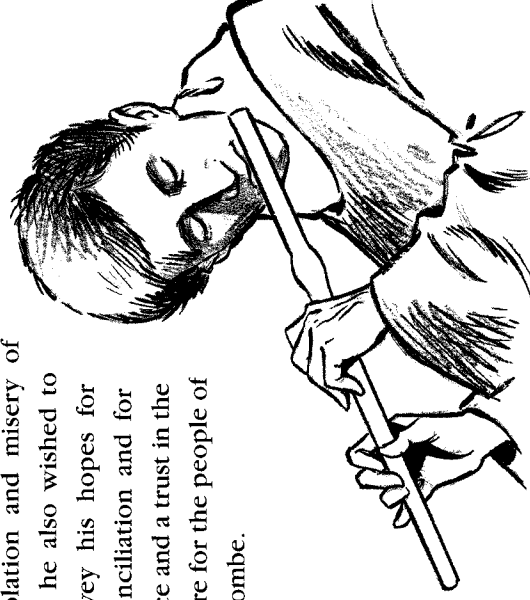


Lady Denman



Neville Lytton

The painter of the frescoes which decorate the Victory Hall was Neville Lytton, a member of the distinguished artistic Lytton family. Originally trained as an artist in Paris and an accomplished portrait painter, he was 45 when he designed and crafted these paintings, just after the 1st World War. It was his experience as a War Correspondent in France which had a profound influence on his choice of subject. He had personal experience of the horrors of trench warfare. Wounded himself and witness to the desolation and misery of war, he also wished to convey his hopes for reconciliation and for peace and a trust in the future for the people of Balcombe.



Victory Hall

The Victory Hall was built in 1923 as a memorial to Balcombe men who had fought and died in the 1st World War 1914-18. It was funded by public subscription and by the generosity of Lady Denman, who lived in Balcombe. Her enthusiasm and influence on the planning of the project ensured the completion and decoration of the hall. Balcombe people are very proud of their village hall with its historic murals. Day-to-day running of the hall is entrusted to members of a Management Committee, who work hard to maintain it to a good standard.