

Has the Moulin Rouge a Subtext?

Suspecting there were Belgian traitors signaling
To Germans on the other side of No Man's Land,
And that the code was how they set their windmill sails,
The British turned artillery upon the mills.
Had they not heard of Don Quixote? Or did years
Of Boy Scout Manuals condition them to think
All arms are semaphores and any breeze a chance
To raise flag signals. But of course the winds do speak.
They say the gas attack will go as it was planned
Or turn on the attackers; say the millstones turn,
That is, that there is grain, that famine is not yet.
Lt. De La Mancha of the B.E.F.
Artillery, how rueful is your countenance
And what romance impelled you to the stalled assault
In which you are? *The Boy Cadets at Waterloo?*
Beware of any local vision you might make
Your Dulcinea. Mata Hari spied in French
But spoke in Dutch.

What is the speech of carillons?
Might not bell tones in sequence be another code?
Is that sufficient hint to bring in fire control?
To implement the "sweet bells jangled out of tune?"
The rain sweeps in from Ostend, and the ruined mills
No longer may betray, but they no longer pump.
Quixotic, that the foe you tilt at should be mud;
That belfries using wirelesses may speak *en clair*.