

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Gunner Ernest John Buffin (76110)
Machine Gun Corps (Tanks)

Ernest John Buffin was born at Fairplay Cottages, Plump Hill, Mitcheldean in 1896, the son of Henry and Elizabeth Buffin. He started his working life as a hod boy in a local colliery (hod boys were employed to drag wooden boxes on skids loaded with coal from the coalface, a menial and arduous job). In 1912, at the age of 16, he left home and went to work in the South Wales coalfields.

He enlisted in January 1915, at Bargoed, Glamorganshire, in the Royal Army Medical Corps as Private 49780, before transferring in June to The King's Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI). He landed in France on 1 September 1915 as Private

20021, 1st Battalion KSLI employed as a stretcher-bearer. He was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps (Tanks) as Gunner 76110 in January 1917.

He was killed in action on 31 July 1917 aged 21 years, and was buried at Poelcapelle British Cemetery.

He is the only named tank crewman buried in Poelcapelle British Cemetery and, as such, his memory is revered by the local tank group, The Poelcapelle 1917 Association. He is also remembered on the dedication plaque for the war memorial bells in Holy Trinity Church, Drybrook.