



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

It was with a great deal of sadness that we learnt of the passing of Colin Hardy at the beginning of this month. Colin was a true supporter of the branch from our earliest days and engaged in many ways - presenting talks to the branch, being a valued committee member, providing a succession of fascinating articles for *The Sentinel* and joining many of the branch trips - both home and abroad. We will all sorely miss him and I am sure that you will join me in sending condolences and very best wishes to his family and wife Val.

The following projects have been brought to our attention. *The Unremembered* commemorates the army of workers from around the world who supported the war effort during the First World War. WFA branches can research local graves and share their stories with the wider community, as well as commemorating the individuals they are researching. (www.theunremembered.org)

Passchendaele at Home is a nationwide research project that invites community groups

and schools to discover graves in the UK belonging to servicemen who served in the Battle of Passchendaele but who died of their wounds in the UK. WFA branches can research local graves to discover if they fit the criteria, before uploading their research onto the Lives of the First World War website. (bigideascompany.org/project/passchendaele-at-home)

The *Ribbon of Poppies* project has been launched with the aim of creating a carpet of poppies from Land's End to John O'Groats to remember all those killed or wounded in the war. Hundreds of scout, cub, guide and brownie groups have pledged support, as well as a number of schools. Further information can be found at facebook.com/ribbonofpoppies.

And finally, a reminder that our November meeting will be in the Star Theatre here at the NSC. Tickets are £6 and are available from Hilary tonight. We shall be holding a raffle so anything you can donate will be very welcome.

Peter

Future events

Tuesday, 14 November

Meeting the enemy :

The human face of the Great War

Richard van Emden

Star Theatre, National Star College at 7:30pm

Richard tells the story of what happened when Britain and Germany - nations with long-established ties of culture and friendship - clashed on both the Western and the Home Fronts during the Great War. From the first British casualty of the war, an elderly language teacher mortally wounded as he attempted to leave Germany, to the account of the only British prisoner temporarily released by the Kaiser to visit his dying mother, Richard has unearthed remarkable human stories of two peoples divided by war. From the story of how British prisoners of war were sent to work in the Russian snow, to the raising of the 'Kaiser's Own', two British battalions of English born children of German extraction, Richard touches on stories that have never been told before.

Richard spent over twenty years interviewing more than 270 veterans of the First World War. With Harry Patch he wrote *The Last Fighting Tommy*. His other books include *Meeting the Enemy*, *Boy Soldiers of the Great War* and *The Quick and the Dead*. Richard's latest book, *The Somme: The Epic Battle in Soldiers' Words and Photographs* was published in May 2016. Richard has appeared on over 30 television documentaries and has acted as historical consultant for programmes on both BBC and Channel Four.

Tuesday, 12 December

Members' Evening

The Aviator Inn, Gloucestershire Airport

7pm - 10pm

For this meeting we draw on the expertise and knowledge of our members and we have six ten-minute presentations. There will be a buffet available and tickets will be on sale at the November meeting.

Please note the change of venue for these meetings.

204239 Private Frederick White 7th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry

Frederick White was born in Great Tew, near Enstone in Oxfordshire, and enlisted in Cirencester. He served as 32046 Private Frederick White in the Worcestershire Regiment before being transferred to the Somerset Light Infantry; at some stage he also served with the Gloucestershire Regiment. He was the son of George White of 1 Station Road, Lechlade and the husband of Caroline White.

The circumstances of Frederick White's death at the age of 32 are unclear but after his death his grave was lost and he is listed on Tyne Cot Memorial. We can state the general situation on the day Private White was killed as 16 August was the first day of the Battle of Langemarck (16-18 August 1917) and the first day for names to be included on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

White's battalion was part of 61st Brigade, 20th Division, XIV Corps, which engaged in an attempt to push the front line forward in the vicinity of the village of Langemarck. His battalion attacked around 4pm in response to a German counter-attack on the 60th and 61st Brigades to the south west of the village. Along with 7th King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI) they made good progress but then came under enfilade fire from a strongpoint marked on trench maps as Au Bon Gite. This point was soon overcome by 11th Battalion Rifle Brigade and the advance continued. Further heavy fire came from a blockhouse to the west of Langemarck and from Langemarck station but this too was captured. By 7.20am the following day the final objective had been reached and the new line formed on the far side of Langemarck. The whole advance



by his battalion covered a front of 400 yards and moved forward by a mile and a half and it is in this area that Private White fell in action.

The family received a letter from a Lieutenant Hargreave of 7th Battalion KOYLI, dated 28 August 1917. It read:

*France, 28th August 1917, Mrs. F White
My Dear Madam,*

I expect that by now you will have had the bad news which it is my painful duty to repeat. The worst has happened to your husband. He was hit in an attack on 16th August. Today I had a party of men burying dead on the battlefield and was able to have your husband buried on the spot where he fell. The enclosed notes (value 15 francs) were found in his pocket. It may be a consolation to you to know that he earned a glorious epitaph 'killed in action'. Allow me to offer my sympathy.

*Yours sincerely,
Fred Hargreave
Lieutenant 7th KOYLI **

The Lechlade parish magazine had this to say about his death: *Much sympathy has been felt with Mr and Mrs White, especially under the circumstances of their failing health, in the loss of their son, Pte Fred White, Somerset LI, who was killed in action in Flanders on the 16th of August.*

Frederick White is one of the forty names from the Great War recorded on the Lechlade war memorial.

*Lieutenant Frederick Parker Hargreave was himself to earn the epitaph 'killed in action' on 20 November 1917. He too was denied an individual grave and his name can be found on the Cambrai Memorial at Louverval (Panel 8).

Paul Cobb

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"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today."