



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Number 156

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Welcome!

You may recall that the branch made a donation to a new roll of honour board to be displayed in Lechlade Memorial Hall (GL7 3AY). The hall was rebuilt after a fire three years ago and on Sunday, 13 October at 15.00 the unveiling will take place. This new board lists all those from the village who died in the Great War 1914-18, WW2 and one from Kenya in 1955. Each entry shows army number, rank, name, unit and date of death. The list is more extensive than the war memorial in the local church as it includes other located from various records mainly when researched in 1997 but also more recently. All branch members are welcome to attend.

Details of next year's Branch Chairs' Conference have been announced. It will be held at the Union Jack Club in London on Saturday 29 February and Sunday 1 March. The event starts at 1pm on Saturday and closes at 12.30pm on Sunday. I unfortunately will be unable to

attend so there is an opportunity for a committee delegate to take up the place (if you would like to be considered in taking up the space but are not as yet a committee member, then this may be the perfect time to throw your hat into the ring!). The WFA will cover B&B accommodation, meals and reasonable travel expenses. Partners are welcome to attend, their expenses will be recharged at cost. Do let me know if you are interested.

There is a talk at the Oxstalls Campus of the University of Gloucestershire, Oxstalls Lane, Longlevens, Gloucester GL2 9HW on Monday 21 October entitled *Black British Soldiers in the First World War* by Dr Garry Stewart. The meeting starts at 7.30pm and is free for members of the Historical Association, and £3 for visitors. For further details please contact the secretary, Robert Sutton on 01242 574889.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 12 November

*The Learning Process in Practice:
Tactics and Training in the BEF 1916-1918*
Professor Peter Simkins
National Star College at 7.30pm

Our President, Peter Simkins examines the 'learning curve' or change in practices undertaken by the BEF as a result of the Somme experience and expressed in contemporary tactical and training documentation. He calls on his vast experience as a leading academic, testing the outcomes in battle as victory loomed in 1918, that support such influential works as his book *From the Somme to Victory*.



Monday, 25 November

AGM
at
22 Hatherley Court Road, Cheltenham GL51 3AG
at
7.30pm

As always, all our welcome but please do indicate to Peter or Hilary if you would like to attend.

10 December

Members' Evening
7.30pm
VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED

Please join us for our Christmas meeting when we draw on the expertise and knowledge of our members who will give a selection of ten-minute presentations during the evening. We are still looking for speakers, so please let Peter know if you would like to take part.

After the presentations we hope you will stay and enjoy a glass of wine and a mince pie.

We will have our usual Christmas raffle and any prizes you can donate will be very welcome.

Gunner Charles Edward Chainey (5968) 'A' Battery, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery Brigade

Charles Chainey was born at Blockley (then part of Worcestershire) in December 1886, one of fourteen children born to William Frederick Chainey (landlord of the Crown Hotel) and his wife Sarah.

He worked on the land and emigrated to Canada in March 1910. On 20 September 1914 he enlisted into the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery at Valcartier, Quebec and left Canada for Britain on the following 3 October.

After training in England he was posted to France on 20 July 1915 and served in the field until wounded on 1 December 1917, during the powerful German counter-attack at Cambrai. He suffered two gun shot wounds to his left thigh and superficial wounds to his face and right hand.

He was treated by 61st Field Ambulance and No 55 Casualty Clearing Station before being sent to 16th General Hospital at Le Treport.



Evacuation by hospital ship to England followed on 11 December 1917 and two days later he was admitted to Crag Head Hospital, Boscombe, near Bournemouth.

On 15 December he was reported as dangerously ill: he was suffering from infected wounds and tetanus. His condition progressively deteriorated and he died on the morning of 22 December 1917, aged 31.

He was brought home to Blockley for burial in a family grave. The headstone

also commemorates his brother, Private Lionel Wilson Chainey, who was killed in action twenty one days earlier, whilst serving with the 1st Otago Regiment, New Zealand Expeditionary Force and is commemorated on the Butts New British Cemetery (NZ Memorial), Polygon Wood.

(Graham Adams, for Gloucestershire War Graves Project)

Can you help?

Hugh Roberts has transcribed his father's Great War Diary which he recently self-published. On looking through his father's belongings after his death Hugh found various artefacts relating to the Great War and the diary perfectly preserved: it has been a long project to transcribe it verbatim. Hugh's father was in various battalions of the Durham Light Infantry (DLI). Throughout this project Hugh has been in touch with Fred Ashmore whose uncle was also in the DLI. They discovered that their relatives were in action in the same area at the Battle of the Aisne.

He has also been in contact with Sean Godfrey, who is writing a history of the DLI, who said that some of information contained in the diary was new to him. Also, a couple of the photographs taken inside a Prisoner of War camp are unique.

It has been suggested that Hugh's efforts deserved a wider circulation. With that in mind, Hugh would very much appreciate it if someone from the branch would read and review the book. If you would like to volunteer, please let Hilary know.

Contact details

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