



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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November 2019

Welcome!

It's our Christmas meeting next month when we shall have an interesting array of short talks (we could possibly fit in one more if anyone wishes to volunteer) and there will of course be mince pies and treats. Also we'll be holding our usual Christmas Raffle so any suitable donations to help branch funds will all be gratefully received.

Our thanks once again to Andy for a varied and interesting programme for 2020. The list is on the Display Board and our website, and copies will be available at the next meeting.

1917, a film directed by Sam Mendes and co-written by Mendes and Krysty Wilson-Cairns, is based in part on an account told to Mendes by his paternal grandfather, Alfred Mendes, and will be released on 25 December. At the height of the First World War during Spring 1917 in northern France, two young British soldiers, Schofield and Blake, are given a seemingly impossible mission

to deliver a message which will warn of an ambush during one of the skirmishes soon after the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line during Operation Alberich. The two recruits race against time, crossing enemy territory to deliver the warning and keep a British battalion of 1,600 men, which includes Blake's own brother, from walking into a deadly trap. The pair must give their all to accomplish their mission by surviving the 'war to end all wars'.

The CWGC has an online exhibition entitled *Shaping our Sorrow*. Once the fighting ceased, the CWGC undertook the mammoth task of commemorating the Empire's dead across the globe. This exhibition explores how the CWGC provided a physical form and emotional outlet for a nation and world in mourning, combining the visionary talents of architectural, literary and cultural giants of the day.
www.shapingoursorrow.cwgc.org

Future branch events

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.

Tuesday, 10 December

Members' Evening

National Star College at 7.30pm

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.

Tuesday, 14 January 2020

The Fall of the Ottomans:

The Great War in the Middle East 1914 - 1920

Professor Eugene Rogan

National Star College at 7.30pm

Professor Rogan delivers a talk based on his latest book of the same title that covers the Ottoman perspective of this theatre of war considered largely a 'side show' by other powers.

He examines the geo-political landscape and draws on his research using little known Turkish and Arab sources, addresses the Armenian genocide, Arab statehood and the Balfour Declaration bringing into focus those issues that still resonate today.

Professor Rogan is the Director of Near Eastern studies at St Anthony's College, Oxford University where he teaches the modern history of the Middle East to both undergraduates and graduates and is well published on Middle Eastern affairs. Professor Rogan was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2017.

Private Charles Raymond Green (13710) 8th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Charles Raymond Green, known as Raymond, was born on 7 August 1896 in Sheepscombe. He had three brothers and a sister. His parents William and Sarah Jane lived on the Green in Sheepscombe. William was a stone mason and builder, and his four sons would later join him in the same company, Messrs Orchard and Peer at Woodchester Rectory.

Raymond attended Sheepscombe School from August 1899 to October 1909 when he left with a Labour Certificate.

Raymond volunteered in the first month of the war and entered France on 18 July 1915, the same as his brother Nelson.

Private Green was killed in action on 21 March 1916, aged 19. The War Diary for 20/21 March 1916 describes what happened. *A small mine was successfully exploded, a German mine gallery blown in. At 10pm five mines were fired at M30 central. Rapid fire was kept up for three minutes and then at intervals of five minutes for one minute till 11pm. In the meanwhile a bombing raid was made by the company of the 8 North Staffordshire Regiment on our left. At 12.45am the enemy retaliated by firing a mine just outside our wire opposite Colvin Street and opened machine gun and rifle fire on our parapet at the same time they shelled S Tilleloy CT and blocked it in three places. The bombardment did little damage and we only had*

five casualties, four of which were slight. Capt C M Childe was killed by a bullet through the head.



At 10.45am the enemy opened an intense bombardment of our front line with shrapnel and HE the shells appeared to come from directions of Bois de Biez enfilading our line near Moated Grange Street. Considerable damage was done. The parapet was breached in several places and the supervision trench was in parts destroyed. Many rifles and much equipment was buried. The bombardment lasted till noon. Retaliation was difficult to get and when obtained was weak and ineffective. At 12.15 Neuve Chapelle was bombarded. Many of

the shells were lachrymatory and painful to the eyes.

The battalion was relieved by the 8th North Staffordshire Regiment. The battalion marched back to billets at Riez Bailleul.

Private Charles Raymond Green is buried at La Gorgue Communal Cemetery. All four of the Green boys went to war; Nelson was also killed but Percy and Frederick survived.

Taken from The Wayside Cross published by the Sheepscombe History Society.

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