



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

After our talk tonight there will be a barbeque for all attending kindly run by branch member Trevor Hek. Everyone is entitled to a free burger or sausage (you should have been given a raffle ticket by Hilary when you signed in for you to exchange with Trevor for your complimentary snack) with additional items costing £3.50 each. On offer from Trevor is a quarter pound beef burger with cheese and onions, a jumbo sausage with onions or a halloumi burger with sweet pepper and onions in a bun. Please make sure that you have told Hilary what you would like before the commencement of the talk so that everything can be prepared in time.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend this evening or September's meeting so Bob Brunsdon is kindly taking on my responsibilities for tonight and Adrian Smith will be doing so for September. However, with the year progressing I am collating the talks for

the Christmas branch members' meeting. I am still a couple short, so if you feel you can offer a ten minute presentation for December please drop me an email at my usual address - petergill@live.co.uk.

Throughout the summer the CWGC is running tours of cemeteries throughout the country. To find out where they are taking place, please visit the CWGC website - www.cwgc.org - and click on the prompts *Open Days* and *Tours happening near you*.

The First World War in the Middle East: Aftermath and Legacy is a three day event taking place from 15 to 17 September at the Cultural Centre Het Perron and the In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres. It includes the exhibition *For Civilisation: The First World War in the Middle East 1914-1923*. The full programme can be found on the In Flanders Fields Museum website - inlandersfields.be.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 13 September
*The 10 decisions that decided the
Battle of the Marne*
Ross Beadle
The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

The First Battle of the Marne fought from 6 to 12 September 1914 resulted in an Allied victory against the German armies in the west.

By 9 September, the success of the Franco-British counteroffensive left the German 1st and 2nd Armies at risk of encirclement, and they were ordered to retreat to the Aisne River.

The German retreat brought to an end the Moltke-Schlieffen plan to crush the French Armies in the field and began the process of solidifying the Western Front. The decisions that brought about this turnaround in allied fortunes are examined in detail.

Tuesday, 11 October
The 'Spanish Flu' Pandemic 1917-1919
Dr Jane Orr
The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

An explanation of the epidemiology of the pandemic and a discussion of its effect on the progress of the war effort in 1918, especially from the German point of view.



Cadet Charles Clarence Frederick (2695)

5th Training Squadron, Australian Flying Corps

Charles Clarence Frederick was born in Spokane, Washington, USA on 7 February 1896 and was an American citizen at the time of enlistment.

Prior to enlistment Charles was working as a mechanic in Leongatha, Victoria, Australia. He enlisted at Melbourne on 11 February 1918, having just reached 22 years of age and was placed into the Special Draft No 3 for the Australian Flying Corps (AFC), with the rank of Air Mechanic Second Class.

He left Melbourne aboard the HMAT *Nestor* on 28 February 1918 arriving at Liverpool on 20 April and immediately travelled to the AFC Depot at Halton Camp, Wendover, Buckinghamshire.

On 5 July he was sent for training at the No 2 School of Aeronautics, Oxford, with a view to becoming a Flying Officer (Pilot) and was appointed as a Cadet.

A posting to No 5 Training Squadron at Minchinhampton Aerodrome (latterly known as Aston Down) came on 25 September. He then undertook flying training, which, up to 4 February 1919, had included almost three hours solo in a Sopwith Camel.

On that day he took off at about 10.20am, in fair weather, with good visibility, flying a Camel which had passed all pre-flight airworthiness checks. At about 11.15am an



eyewitness saw the aircraft go into a spin at a height of about 2,000 feet, whilst flying over the Sapperton area. After falling for about 500 feet it pulled out of the spin into a controlled dive before very quickly being pulled out of the dive. When this happened, the right wing crumpled up and the aircraft dived into an arable field at Rodmarton. Cadet Frederick was almost certainly killed on impact and was discovered in the wreckage with two fractured legs and bruising to the face. He was three days short of his 23rd birthday.

A Court of Inquiry was held later that day and heard from a number of witnesses. The conclusion was that in coming out of the dive excessive strain had suddenly been put on the wings which caused the right side flying wires to break, causing the aircraft to crash. An inquest confirmed the findings of the Court of Inquiry and concluded that the accident was the result of pilot error.

Cadet Charles Clarence Frederick was buried with military honours in Leighterton Church Cemetery on 8 February. His grave is now marked by a CWGC headstone.

Graham Adams

(from the Gloucestershire War Graves Project biographical archive)

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