



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Number 167

January 2022

Welcome!

A very Happy New Year to you and wishes and hopes that 2022 is more settled than our last two years have been. All things being equal we shall be holding our meetings at the Ed Shed throughout 2022 but should things change you will be duly notified by email and the website will be updated. As I wrote last month, Andy Hinks has put together a fabulous mix of speakers and subjects as usual and we have organised a summer barbecue in June and shall also be planning a couple of other branch events, so the year bodes well.

We have a strong and vibrant branch for which we are wholly indebted to the enthusiasm and hard work of our small number of committee members, however, we are always seeking more volunteers to join the committee and perhaps take on a small role or other. There is nothing ever too onerous and we tend to meet only at

our AGM outside of usual meetings, but input from more voices and more hands to help would be most gratefully received. If you feel that perhaps you can offer some small assistance to the branch, please drop me an email or have a chat.

There are a couple of WFA online virtual tours in January and further details can be found on their website:

13 January at 7.30pm - *The Bitter End: The Highland Division at Beaumont Hamel* which follows the 51st (Highland) Division during their operations in and around Beaumont Hamel during the November of 1916.

27 January at 7.30pm - *Fighting Sailors: The Royal Naval Division at Gavrelle, April 1917* follows the Royal Naval Division when they were tasked with the capture of Gavrelle on 23 April 1917.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 8 February

Gloucester and the City's Reaction to the Armistice in 1918

Tony Conder

The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

Tony's talk covers the immediate days after the Armistice and then the next couple of years to look at how civilian life and the returning troops inter-related. He looks at homes fit for heroes, how the immediate Armistice was celebrated and the lack of harmony between the civil authority and those who had fought.



Tuesday, 8 March

London Omnibuses on the Western Front

Roy Larkin

The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

Roy's talk looks at the pre-war relationship between the omnibus companies and the War Office, the mobilisation of the buses and general work of the buses on the Western Front, and at each of the individual bus companies. He tells the most complete story of London's omnibuses during the Great War based on extensive research using the archives of the War Office, the Army Service Corps and the London General Omnibus Company.



Second Lieutenant Edward William Hammond 1st Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment

Edward Hammond was born at Gloucester in 1892. Originally a labourer, he enlisted into the Worcestershire Regiment (number 12153) on 15 June 1910, at Worcester.

Between October 1911 and January 1915, he was located in India, with the 2nd Worcesters and had risen to Corporal in December 1913.

The battalion returned to the UK on 5 January 1915 and on 21 March embarked from Avonmouth for the Dardanelles. Whilst there Edward, on 28 April, received a gunshot wound to his chest and was invalided to Malta. He was promoted to Serjeant on 7 May 1915.

On 8 June 1915 he had returned to England and was posted to the 6th Worcesters as a physical training instructor. On 2 July he married Mabel Beech and they had a daughter, Nina, just under a year later.

He returned to France on 23 December 1916, re-joining the 2nd Worcesters in the field on 6 March 1917. He had been recommended for a commission and returned to the UK for Officer training on 8 September 1917. A posting as a Second Lieutenant to the 1st Worcesters followed on 28 November 1917.

The 1st Worcesters were deployed in the Oppy Wood sector when, on 23/24 August 1918, they were subjected to a concentrated mustard gas attack. Second Lieutenant Hammond suffered burns to his arm, back and buttocks and was evacuated to the UK. On 10 September a medical board granted him a further three weeks' sick leave and on 21 September he arrived at his mother's house in Worcester, where he spent four days before returning to join his wife at



35 Marlborough Road, Gloucester. He was suffering from bouts of depression, which were seen as a reaction to his gas poisoning.

On 2 October 1918 he told his wife he was going out to post some letters. She heard a shot and discovered her husband dead in the bathroom, from a gunshot wound to the heart. A six chamber revolver was found at his side. An inquest jury returned a verdict of suicide 'whilst temporarily insane'.

Second Lieutenant Edward William Hammond was buried in Gloucester Old cemetery, where a standard CWGC headstone now marks his grave.

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."