



WFA SUFFOLK BRANCH

**Branch Briefing
November 2022**

**Our Website : www.suffolk-wfa.org
Our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/WFASuffolk>**



Tonight's talk

Philip Stevens : Gallipoli (part 2)



DECEMBER MEETING Dave Hedges

At the December meeting we will have our AGM, but please do not be put off attending by this.

We will hold the AGM after the three 'Cameos' ie three twenty minute talks from our own members

Julian Whippy : 'Annus Horribilis' (A romp through 1915).

Nigel Crisp : 'Small Town Duty'

Ed Erbes : 'The siege of Przemysl'

I hope most will stay for the AGM. If we use the time efficiently it should not take too long.

And, if you all cross your fingers and say you believe in Father Christmas, we might persuade our Treasurer, Brian (Scrooge) Davies to let us have a mince pie each in the buffet.

The December edition will include an agenda and a financial report

If you want any issues raised please let our Chairman Taff know beforehand.

GET TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW ATTENDEES

Julian Whippy



Julian Whippy is a recent addition to Suffolk WFA, but he is already proving the cherry on the top of our ice-cream sundae. Within weeks of joining, he gave us an informative lecture and he has since led members on a battlefield tour.

A former policeman with both the Herts and Met forces and a veteran of the Royal Anglian Territorials (where he says he rose to the "dizzy height" of lance corporal), Julian owes his interest in military history to his aunt. "She had a painting of the Bridge at Arnhem [from the World War Two battle] that I became fascinated with," he explains.

This eventually led him to research his family tree and he discovered three great-uncles from both his maternal and paternal lines who died in World War One.

There was a Sgt W Boiling on his mother's side who died on 19 April 1918, during the Germans' Spring Offensive. He became one of 894 Commonwealth fatalities from the 54th Casualty Clearing Station. Sgt Boiling was in the Royal Berkshire Regiment and is buried in Aire Communal Cemetery, south-east of St Omer.

Also on that side was Private Eric Boiling of The Buffs, who was lost in the Battle of Loos on 26 September 1915. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner, so called because of the large number of unexploded shells found in the neighbourhood after the Armistice.

Finally, on his father's side, there was Private Albert Whippy from the 1st Battalion, Northants Regiment, who died on the first day of the Battle of Aubers Ridge on 9 May 1915. He became one of 13,400 men with no known grave mentioned on the Le Touret Memorial on the Bethune to Armentieres Road.

"With names like Whippy and Boiling, it was easy to trace my family members," remarks Julian with a wry smile. *"There aren't that many of them around."*

After meeting another military history obsessive, Clive Harris, the pair set up a travel company called Battlefield Honours in 2005. *"We have a love of the men who fought in the Great War, as well as the fact that we both have family who were killed,"* Julian explains on their website. *"Our love of the subject runs deep. It's in the blood, if you like. And when we go to the battlefields with other people, we want them to go away with the same passion for the subject that we've got."*

Julian would dearly love to take us on a tour of Gallipoli. *"The weather's great, the people are friendly and the food's great. What's not to like?"* he comments.

I'm in. What about you? **Kim Smith**

MORE CONTRIBUTORS WANTED FOR THE FUTURE BRIEFINGS !!

LEST WE FORGET Kelvin Dakin

15073, Private Ebenezer John Meadows MM, 9th Battalion Suffolk Regiment
Killed in action 20th November 1917

Born in 1891, Ebenezer was the son of John and Alice Meadows of Red House Farm, Spexhall. In 1911 he was working for his father on the farm. He crossed to France with the Battalion on the 31st August 1915. The announcement of his death was published in the Halesworth Times on the 29th January 1918:

PTE E J MEADOWS

Information has just been received of the death of Pte Ebenezer Meadows of Red House Farm, Spexhall, who was killed in action in France on the 20th November. Pte Meadows, who was attached to the 9th Batt. Suffolk Regiment, had been serving in France just over two years. He had recently been awarded the Military Medal for gallant conduct on the 23rd July last, when in spite of heavy hostile bombardment, he kept his gun in action and when it was buried uncovered it and maintained the barrage fetching ammunition from another gun which had been put out of action. Much sympathy is felt and expressed for the parents and friends of the deceased, two elder brothers of whom are still serving in France.

On the 30th April 1918 the newspaper carried another report:

Mr and Mrs John Meadows, Spexhall, have received from the Infantry Record Office, Warley, the Military Medal awarded to their second son Pte Ebenezer Meadows 9th Suffolk, (who was killed in action on the 20th November last). It was given for bravery in the field, he having pluckily taken ammunition off a gun not in use whilst under fire. Mr and Mrs Meadows eldest son, J L Meadows is now in Southend Hospital suffering from Trench Fever and we are pleased to learn he is making satisfactory progress.

The *History of The Suffolk Regiment 1914-1927* relates the movements of the Battalion on the 19th and 20th November 1917:

“...On the 19th, moving after dark, they slipped noiselessly into their assembly positions preparatory to a surprise attack on a large scale, in conjunction with tanks, on the Hindenburg Line...”

“... The attack, kept secret until the last moment started at 6.20am on November 20th with 324 tanks and six divisions operating on a six-mile front...”

The Battalion suffered 70 casualties, captured 150 prisoners and 3 machine guns

Private Meadows is buried in Fifteen Ravine British Cemetery, Villers-Plouich and commemorated on the Spexhall village memorial.



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THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD

**Talk at the Norwich Branch
Tuesday 6th December
Kate Wills. ‘Christmas in Khaki 1914-18’**

**Our next month’s talk
Wednesday 14th December**

AGM and Cameos

Please send any contributions for the *Branch Briefing* to:
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Next Committee meeting: tba
Approach a committee member if you want any issue raised.