

	CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION	
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Welcome!

Well, what another tremendous presentation we had last month. It was really great to hear all about the development of the 'War Book' plans for the deployment of a British force to the Continent in the event of war and to learn something of the men who developed them.

We deployed a small team to St Michael's Tower in support of Gloucester's History Month on Saturday 30 May. Michael, Joe and Graham did sterling work helping a dozen or so individuals learn more about their family history whilst Len and Paul were excellent delivering 'front of house' support and selling books. As well as showcasing the Branch we raised £28 through book sales and donations. An excellent effort all round!

Although there will be no event at Gloucester a special Armed Forces Day celebration is being planned at Stratford Park in Stroud this summer, organised by local veterans with the support of Stroud District Council. The free event will take place on Saturday 27 June, from 10am to 4.30pm with more information available at: <https://www.armedforcesday>



Simon

Tuesday 14 July

**Most of the Work, Most of the Blame, None of the Credit
– Platoon Commandares in the Great War
Fraser Skirrow**



Great War subalterns were mocked and satirised, then and now, as enthusiastic and patriotic but naïve and ignorant public-school boys. They led gallantly from the front, looking after their men, but had few tactical responsibilities and little autonomy. Later, the platoon became the key tactical attack unit, a flexible group of specialists with battlefield autonomy and decision-making. So how did the junior officers of 1914/15 change into the pivotal battlefield managers of 1917/18?

7.30pm Ed Shed

Tuesday 11 August

**Winning the Vote in Wartime
Dr Anna Muggeridge**



People Act' 1918 and

Anna provides an insight into the journey and sometimes the struggles towards a true democracy in Britain during the Great War.

The efforts of these politically active women would eventually result in key amendments to the 'Representation of the 1928 that incorporated the enfranchisement of women.

7.30pm Ed Shed

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

135291 PETTY OFFICER FREDERICK EDGEWORTH ROYAL NAVY – HMS *VANGUARD*

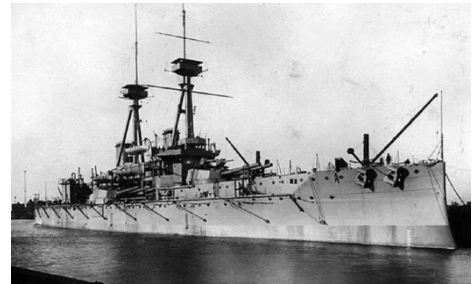


Frederick Edgeworth was born at Awre on 25 October 1869, the son of William and Jane Edgeworth. Before joining the Royal Navy at Devonport on 25 October 1887, he was a farm labourer. He enlisted for an initial term of twelve years and by the time of his death had served almost thirty.

After serving on several ships and seeing much of the world, he had risen to the rank of Leading Seaman. In October 1899 he transferred to HM Coast Guard Service, still as a serving member of the RN, with the rank of Petty Officer. His initial posting was to Norfolk, then to Northumberland and in September 1910 to

Porthallow, on the Lizard Peninsula, Cornwall. The 1911 Census shows him living at St. Keverne with his wife, Sarah; the couple had eight children living at the time.

At the end of July 1914, with war seemingly imminent, Frederick was recalled to the Fleet and joined the ship's company of HMS *Vanguard*, a battleship completed in February 1910, mounting ten 12-inch guns. Prior to the Battle of Jutland in May 1916 *Vanguard* was based at Scapa Flow, Orkney and Lough Swilly, Ireland. 1915 was spent conducting sweeps of the North Sea and in April 1916 she joined the 4th Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet. At Jutland she fired over forty shells and helped sink the light cruiser SMS *Wiesbaden*.



On 9 July 1917, at about 1830, *Vanguard* dropped anchor in Scapa Flow after a day of routine exercises. All was quiet on board when at 2320 there was a tremendous explosion in the central part of the ship and she sank almost immediately, taking with her Petty Officer Edgeworth and 842 others: only four survived (one died later). A Court of Inquiry concluded that the explosion was probably triggered by the ignition of some stale cordite in the 4-inch gun magazine, where heat from a nearby boiler room had raised the temperature, and the ensuing fire spread to the main magazines.

Frederick Edgeworth's body was one of 22 recovered and he is buried in Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery, on the Island of Hoy, Orkney, near to *Vanguard's* final resting place.

(Photo of Frederick taken from an Ancestry Public Members' Tree)

Graham Adams

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