



Seasons greetings to our users, volunteers, funders and partners, whether you are celebrating Chanukah, have recently marked Eid or are about to celebrate Christmas, or do not particularly mark any of them.

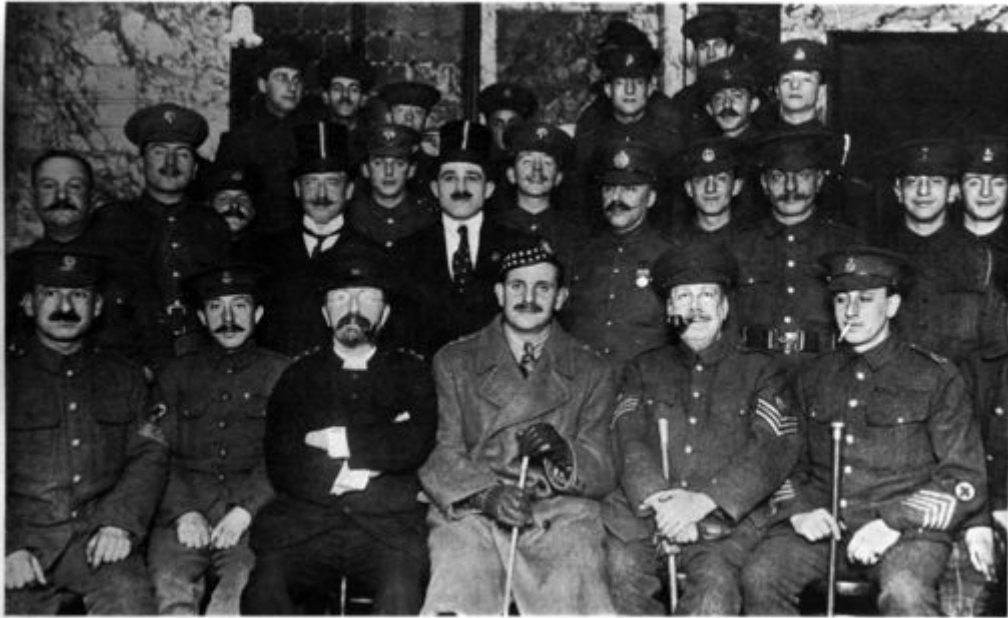
Festivities and Faith celebrations in numerous forms were very much part of life during the First World War, and this edition of our newsletter tells some of the events of this time.

I am sure most of us will not be sorry to see the end of 2020, 2021 is already looking more positive.

FAITH ON THE FRONTLINE

During this time of year we often hear the story of the Christmas Truce - where some soldiers put down their weapons, headed out into No Man's Land and shared their festive treats, and a game of football, with the enemy on 25th December 1914. Project Historian Paula Kitching has been reflecting on the portrayal of this story, and the realities of life in wartime during religious festivals in an article '[Faith on the Frontline at Chanukah](#)'.

To find out more about how soldiers kept their Jewish faith whilst serving in the trenches, you can visit our History Window on '[British Jewish Chaplaincy in the First World War](#)' written by Dr Jonathan Lewis, who has been awarded a doctorate by University College London on the history of Jewish Chaplaincy in the British Armed Forces.



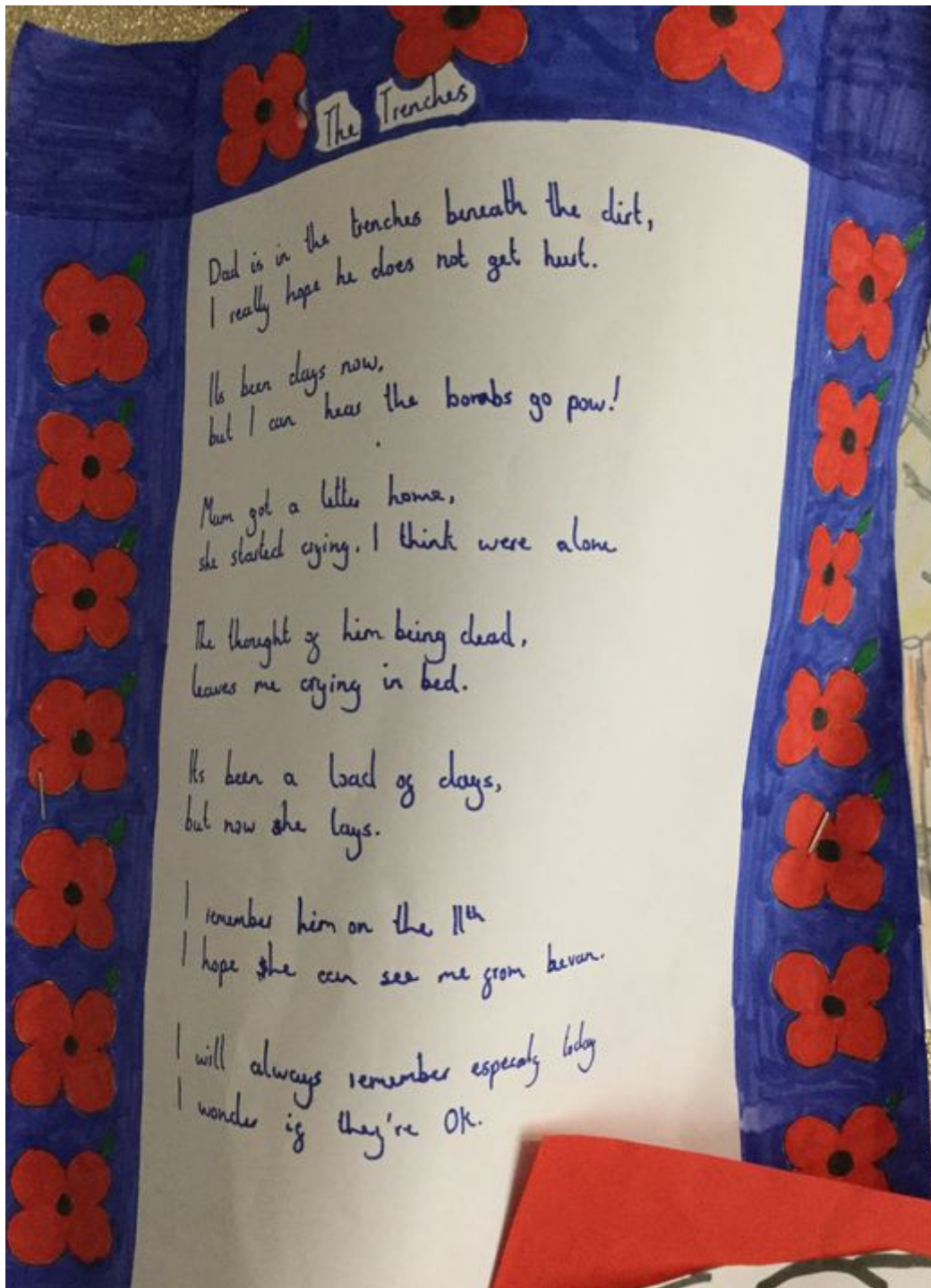
Group at feast of Chanukah with Rev. Michael Adler, 13th December 1914, printed in the Jewish World and Book of Honour

REMEMBRANCE RESPONSE

The end of hostilities of the First World War, and Remembrance more widely, has been marked in November each year since 1919.

In spite of the extreme circumstances of 2020, the desire to continue this tradition was undiminished. Working with Discovery Education, *We Were There Too* responded with a choice of three digital options: whether the audience was primary or secondary-age pupils or community groups. 20 schools participated and 10 community organisations the length and breadth of the country. We are very pleased with the uptake for the first year and we are confident this digital approach to marking the Armistice will grow for 2021. If you missed the presentation you can view it at www.jewsfww.uk/armisticeday. Our Project Historian Paula Kitching also gave a public lecture entitled "The Unknown Soldier – 100 years of being a part of something" which will be available to watch soon on the [AJEX Youtube channel](#), and Project Volunteers Lola and Ronnie Fraser gave several talks to different community organisations, one of which you can watch back here: [Lola Fraser - Jewish Women Nurses in WW1](#)

Using our Remembrance learning resources, Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School in Mill Hill, London asked their pupils in Key Stage 2 to produce a piece of creative writing inspired by the poppy, examples of which you can find on our Media Centre along with some highlights from our [Digital Remembrance Events 2020](#).



Poem written by a pupil at Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School

GIBRALTAR REFLECTIONS

Our piece on the [Jewish Community of Gibraltar in the First World War](#) which was featured in our last newsletter has had a great reaction, and was featured in an article for the Gibraltar Chronicle which you can read [here](#), and in the Gibraltar Magazine available [here](#).

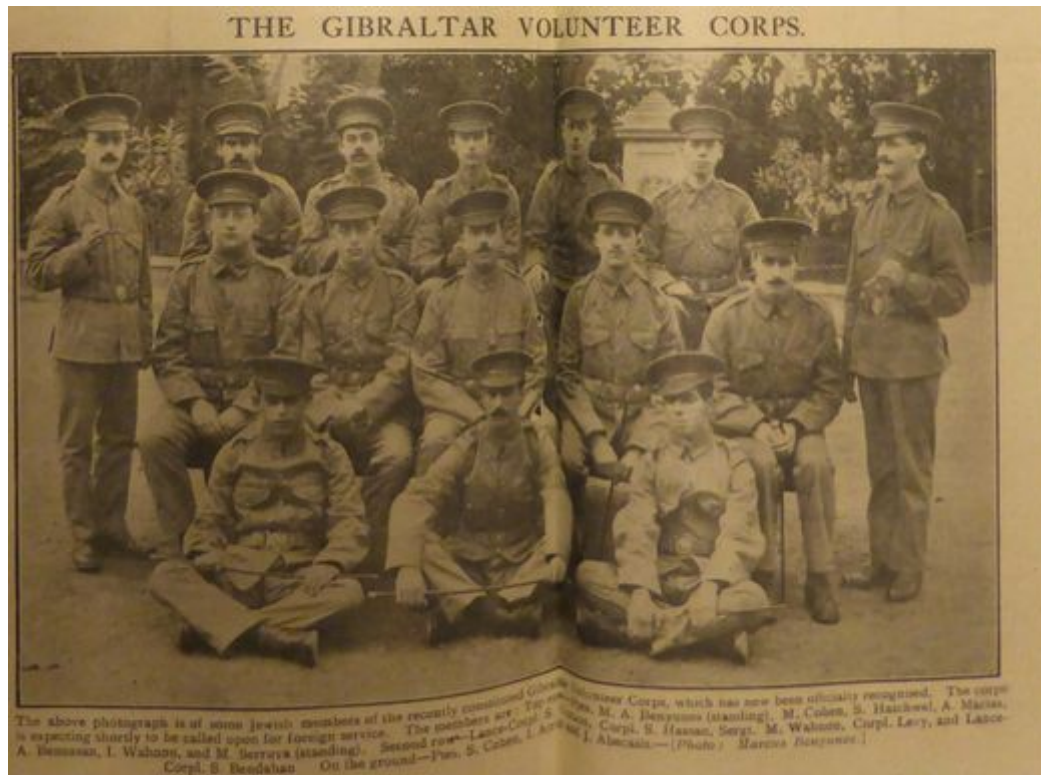
One of our volunteers, Belinda Black, who worked on researching individuals from Gibraltar has been reflecting on the experience:

"It was fortuitous when I was asked to research the Jews in the Gibraltar Volunteer Corps, as my son had moved to Gibraltar, the previous year. He put a note on a local WhatsApp group asking for help and within a few days was having coffee with the Gibraltar Registrar and local archivist.

The censuses were fascinating. The same family names and addresses, repeating and the same peoples' ages varying dramatically every ten years. I became a detective in trying to find out the true facts.

I was told when looking for one of the volunteers, Salvador, that the name in Spanish means "saviour", which in turn is "Jesus" and therefore the birth name would be "Joshua". I found my man!

When I next visit Gibraltar, I will look at it differently. I imagine that I will remember every street name and the name of the member of the GVC who lived there."



Members of the Gibraltar Volunteer Corps pictured in the Jewish World

A VERY POIGNANT CONCLUSION

Chanukah is the Jewish eight-day, wintertime "festival of lights," celebrated with a nightly menorah (the 8 branched candelabra) lighting, special prayers and fried foods. Chanukah is also a time for giving and receiving presents, with children eagerly looking forward to their gifts, typically given on each of the eight nights. So spare a thought for those soldiers who lost their lives around the time of Chanukah, and particularly one [Robert Barnett](#) who at the age of 15 years and 6 months died on the last night of Chanukah 1914. Instead of celebrating at home with his family he died serving his country.



Rifleman Robert Barnett

Thanks for reading, we hope you enjoyed! Make sure to visit the website jewsffw.uk to upload your family stories, and to learn more about our project.

To get in touch, email contactus@jewsffw.uk or you can find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @jewsffw

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