

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch  
of  
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Lieutenant Colonel Richard Annesley West VC, DSO & Bar, MC  
North Irish Horse (attached to 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Tank Corps)

**Richard Annesley West** was born in the Oxford Street area of Cheltenham on 26 September 1878. He served as a trooper with the Imperial Yeomanry during the Boer War. He remained in South Africa until 1914 when he returned home and was commissioned into the North Irish Horse.

He won his VC for actions in August and September 1918. During an attack on 21 August 1918, at Courcelles, the infantry lost their bearings in dense fog and Lieutenant Colonel West at once collected any men he could find and led them to capture their objective, in the face of heavy machine-gun fire.

Then on 2 September at Vaulx-Vraucourt he arrived at the front line when the enemy was delivering a local counter-attack. The infantry battalion had suffered

heavy officer casualties and realising the danger if they gave way, and despite the enemy being almost upon them, Lieutenant Colonel West rode up and down in face of certain death, encouraging the men. He fell riddled with bullets and subsequently died of his wounds. His magnificent bravery at a critical moment so inspired the infantry that the hostile attack was defeated.

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Annesley West is buried at Mory Abbey Military Cemetery and is not commemorated on any memorial in Cheltenham. His Victoria Cross has been acquired for Lord Ashcroft's VC Collection which is on display at the Imperial War Museum, London.