



## CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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### Welcome

It is extraordinary for me to think that it is almost ten years ago that Hilary and I waited anxiously at our first branch meeting of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Branch of The Western Front Association to see if anyone would turn up to hear our very first speaker. The anniversary of that event will coincide with next month's meeting and so we shall be holding a special birthday celebration. This will not be at the National Star College but at The Aviator Inn, Gloucestershire Airport, Staverton GL51 6SR. We will have our speaker as advertised - Dr David Rogers speaking on *Bullets, Bombs and Poison Gas* - and there will also be an auction, an optional buffet at £5 (please reserve tickets with Hilary by **4 October**) and there will be cake! We really hope you can join us on this special evening!

Malcolm Whiteley, the librarian from the Yorkshire Branch of the WFA, has been in touch to offer branch members a book that is in their possession - the Gloucestershire Regiment edition of *Soldiers Died*. He has offered it to me

at £8.50 to include postage and packing. If you are interested please have a word with me or drop me an email at [petergill@live.co.uk](mailto:petergill@live.co.uk) - it will be on a first come, first served basis.

There are a couple of talks on the Great War at the Cheltenham Literature Festival. On Tuesday 11 October at 1.45pm *Rethinking the Somme: 100 Years On* with Hugh Sebag-Montefiore, Lyn MacDonald and Allan Mallinson, and on Thursday 13 October at 11am *The Great War with Allan Mallinson*. Tickets for each event are £9.

If you're visiting London you might like to see an exhibition entitled *Wounded: Conflict, Casualties and Care* which is at the Science Museum, Exhibition Road, South Kensington until January 2018. This new exhibition commemorates the centenary of the Battle of the Somme and the huge medical and human impact of wounding during and beyond the First World War. Further details are on their website: [www.sciencemuseum.org.uk](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk)

**Peter**

### Future meetings

**Tuesday, 11 October 2016**

*Bullets, Bombs and Poison Gas*

Dr David Rogers

**The Aviator Inn, Gloucestershire Airport  
7pm - 10pm**

If you issue four bullets per day to each soldier he will have been issued 28 bullets in a full week. So therefore a million soldiers will need 28 million in any given week - that is a lot of bullets and that is just for a million soldiers. Add to that ordnance for the many field guns, howitzers etc, food for men and animals, aviation fuel for the aircraft etc, and all of a sudden there is a lot needing transportation to the Front. *Bullets, Bombs and Poison Gas* explores this supply chain.



**Tuesday, 8 November 2016**

*Digging the Trenches:*

*The Archaeology of the Western Front*

Dr David Kenyon

**National Star College at 7:30pm**

An account of over ten years of battlefield archaeology in France and Flanders, including material on identifying excavated casualties, and on producing archaeological TV programmes.

David is one of the UK's leading experts on the archaeology of the First World War. He is an archaeologist, historian and television presenter, and has been consultant for a number of television productions, as well as feature films, and radio. His work has seen him excavating sites in the UK and as far afield as Syria and Libya. Over the last 10 years David has directed excavations on more Great War battlefields than anyone else in the UK. He has lectured both at home and abroad, and his book *Digging the Trenches* was published in 2008.

# Acting Captain Theodore John Bennett

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment

### attached to 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry (The Loyal Regiment)

Theodore John Bennett was born at Cairncross, Stroud on 1 November 1893, the youngest son of Mr and Mrs Charles Bennett of Frome Park Road, Stroud.

He was educated at Marling School and took up employment with Messrs Randell & Payne, Chartered Accountants at Stroud. A keen sportsman, he played football for Woodchester and Stroud and cricket for his school and Stroud. He was also a musician, playing both the violin and cello.

After enlisting on 7 December 1914 he was posted to the 18<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers but was soon awarded an Army Cadetship, prior to commissioning into the Worcestershire Regiment on 19 May 1915. He was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and joined them in the field on 6 October. On 13 December he was attached to



the recently formed 5 Company Machine Gun Corps (MGC) and saw action on the Somme. In July 1916 he was promoted to Lieutenant and on 23 March 1917 was posted to the MGC Training Centre at Grantham.

Later in 1917 he was posted to 162 Company MGC, based in Egypt and in October went on attachment to the 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry (The Loyal Regiment) - 53 Division (XX Corps), which played a significant role fighting the Turks in Palestine. As an Acting Captain he was killed in action on 7 September 1918 fighting in the Judean Hills, 20 miles south east of Nablus. He now lies in

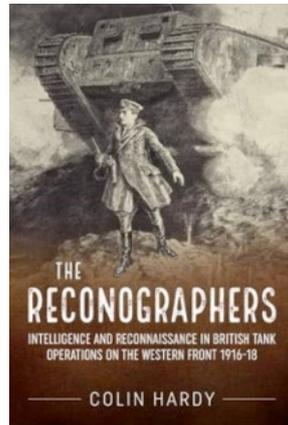
Jerusalem War Cemetery.

Theodore's brother Captain Eugene Paul Bennett was awarded the VC and MC and two other brothers died during the war, one from illness and another in a motor cycle accident.

**Graham Adams**

## The Reconographers

*The Reconographers* by our own Colin Hardy will be published soon. This is the first book devoted to the subject of Reconnaissance in the nascent Tank Corps in the Great War. It is a neglected field in spite of passing references to reconnaissance in a number of early books on the history of the Tank Corps. This is also the first attempt to provide a conceptual framework in which to consider Intelligence and



Reconnaissance work and to see it in the broader context of military reconnaissance.

Colin was awarded the WFA-Helion Holmes Prize, the judges having concluded that his work reflects deep research, a high standard of writing and a notable originality.

Colin has said that signed copies should be available at the October meeting at a reduced price.

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