



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

On behalf of the branch I would like to offer my congratulations to Andy Hinks for winning the Derek and Esther Smith WFA prize for the highest scoring dissertation of 2018 from Wolverhampton University as a 'Britain and the First World War' MA student.

Andy's dissertation analysed the respective effectiveness of sound ranging and flash spotting for the location of enemy artillery in the war. He studied three particular areas: The advantages and operational limitations of the 'Tucker' low frequency microphone and 'Hemming' flash-buzzer control board, the growth of a multifaceted weapons system controlled at Corps level by the Counter-Battery Staff Officer, and the development of field expertise in sound ranging that provided a transition from academically driven battlefield experimentation to a well understood standardised methodology.

Unfortunately our speaker for next month, Bill Fulton, is unable to be with us due to ill health.

He hopes to be with us in October and we send him our best wishes for a speedy recovery. We are very grateful to Graham Adams who will step in to give his talk *Prime Ministers at the Front*.

If you are a member of the WFA you can now find *Stand To!* issues 1 to 108 online. The issues, from 1981 to 2017, contain 1,249 articles, 1,910 book reviews and some 1,000 or more photographs, images and other sundry items. Use your Member Login to read these online or to download.

The Imperial War Museum has recently updated their website - www.iwm.org.uk. *IWM Film* has been upgraded to make their film collection more accessible, with keywords and extra filters. Registered users can save collections, create clips and request notifications when newly-digitised IWM films are uploaded that fit their search criteria.

Peter

Future events

Tuesday, 8 May

Prime Ministers at the Front
Graham Adams

National Star College at 7.30pm

The story of Winston Churchill's Great War service in the trenches is well known: less so is that of three others who went on to become Britain's Prime Minister. In his talk, Graham takes a look at their individual war service.



Anthony Eden

Tuesday, 12 June

*War is the only school of the surgeon -
medical developments during the Great War*
Pete Starling

National Star College at 7.30pm

The First World War was a great learning curve for medical care of the wounded soldier.

Pete's talk will examine the various improvements that took place as the war progressed.



On the wards

Private Arthur Henry Smith (41305) 6th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment

Arthur Henry Smith was born on 13 April 1899 to Peter and Lucine Smith in Sheepscombe where his father worked as a cattleman. They lived near the The Green in 1901. Arthur had seven siblings and he went to school in Sheepscombe from 1904 to 1913.

Arthur enlisted in the Essex Regiment Reserve Battalion as number 46075 but later moved to the Northamptonshire Regiment as number 41305.

Arthur was reported missing in May 1918 and a wounded man on return to England reported that Arthur had been killed on 24 April 1918: *We went over the top at Hangard Wood and of course being strange we all got mixed up together and Smith was by my side when we were going over. All went well until they opened their machine guns on us and it was then that he got hit. I couldn't say where but I looked at him and saw that he was dead although I hadn't any time to get his disc because the firing got too stiff and it was everybody for himself so I had to make a run for it.*

The Red Cross advised the family to keep hope since these reports were not always reliable.

On 24/25 April Arthur's battalion was at Cagny and not engaged in action, but on 5 April the battalion was in the line north of Hangard. It is possible Arthur went missing and was killed on that day.



Arthur was buried at Hangard Communal Cemetery Extension and official records state that he was killed in action on the Somme on 25 April 1918, aged 19.

Taken from The Wayside Cross published by the Sheepscombe History Society

WFA President's Conference

The 7th WFA President's Conference is on 2 June at 9.30am at the Tally Ho! Club, Pershore Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7RN. The speakers are Dr Jonathan Boff - *Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria and the German Spring Offensive 1918*; Dr Jim Beach - *British Intelligence and the German Spring Offensive*; Dr Alison Hine -

Manpower Issues in early 1918 and Chris Baker - *The Battle for Flanders: German Defeat on the Lys 1918*. The panel discussion will include Professors Gary Sheffield and John Bourne. The cost is £30 which includes a buffet lunch plus tea/coffee, and full booking details are on the WFA website.

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