



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

Although work commitments didn't allow me to attend, on behalf of the branch I would like to thank all of those who volunteered their time on Saturday at Gloucester Cathedral. By all accounts the World War One History Research Day was a fantastic event and included a concert of original material composed and performed by Gloucestershire saxophonist Patsy Gamble. Our team of Hilary Jennings, Graham Adams, Malcolm Waldron, Andy Hinks, Brian Ward and Andrew Leigh were kept busy for the full day fielding requests and assisting with personal research projects. The feedback on their efforts has been excellent and they were invaluable in publicising our branch and meetings.

There will be a similar event held at the Cheltenham Racecourse on November 18 - which will also be a race day. So if you fancy mixing some research and racing do let me know.

There is a new exhibition at The Wilson in Cheltenham about the end of the Great War. Entitled *At Last fighting is Over* it features rarely seen items from the museum's collection as well

as items on loan from Cheltenham Ladies' College and The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. Entry is free and full details are on their website: www.cheltenhammuseum.org.uk.

An interactive day entitled *The Quick and the Dead: Fallen Soldiers and their Families* will be held on Saturday 22 September from 10am to 5pm at Oxford Brookes University, John Henry Brookes Building, Oxford OX3 0BP. The day will draw on the extensive experience of Richard van Emden. It will cover many aspects of non-fiction writing from clarifying what sort of book you want to write, how to build a narrative and getting published. It's suitable for anyone who's writing or wanting to write about the First World War. Also taking part will be Stephen Barker, author of *Lancashire's Forgotten Heroes*. The cost is £65 - with a special rate of £60 (including tea/coffee and lunch) for WFA members. For further details please visit their website: www.brookes.ac.uk/hss/events/the-quick-and-the-dead/.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 11 September

Sir John Monash
Paul Cobb

National Star College at 7.30pm

Sir John Monash was one of Australia's most celebrated military figures. Paul's talk covers a number of aspects of the life of Monash - family, education, militia, business career - then his service in the Great War and ending with his life in Victoria until his death.



A short study of the Battle of Le Hamel 1918 is given to demonstrate his approach to offensive operations as Corps Commander. The talk is well illustrated with photos and maps.

Tuesday, 9 October

Royal Garrison Artillery 1899-1923
Part 1: Port Defence
Geoff Spring

National Star College at 7.30pm

Geoff's talk describes one of the Royal Garrison Artillery's roles defending the British Empire's Naval Bases and commercial ports. The talk includes a brief history of the Royal Artillery; why the Royal Artillery, in 1899, split into two Corps, the Royal Field Artillery and the Royal Garrison Artillery, and the impact of technology on the threats from enemy navies attacking the Royal Navy in ports; the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War; the British State's Policy for defending the British Empire's ports; assets used to defend the British Empire's ports and the German Navy's raid on Hartlepool on 16 December 1914.

RGAA

Private Alfred Maurice Savage Underwood (6641)

1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Alfred Maurice Savage Underwood was born in Eastington to John Underwood and Rosetta Wherrett on 17 December 1883. He was the eldest of five children. Rosetta died as a result of his birth and he was brought up by his father and step-mother Lydia Kezia Wherrett, Rosetta's younger sister. The 1901 Census records his occupation as 'working on a saw bench'.

It is not known when Alfred joined the Army but he was sent to South Africa with the Gloucestershire Regiment in March 1903, a year after the Boer War ended. He learnt to ride a horse and joined the Mounted Infantry. On 16 May 1904 he left South Africa to return to England but on the 22nd he was diagnosed with typhoid. On arriving back in England on 7 June he was transferred to Netley Military Hospital in Southampton where he remained until 6 September.



In September 1909 he married Mary Louisa Hinder and in February 1910 a son, Frederick Albert, was born. Dorothy Gwendoline followed in October 1911. In civilian life he was putting his military skills to use and the 1911 census records his occupation as 'Groom Domestic' and by now he was living at 12 Parsonage Street, Dursley.

The 1st Gloucesters went into action on 26 August 1914. Unfortunately Alfred was an early casualty with his death recorded as 23 October, shortly after the start of the First Battle of Ypres. He was 30 years of age. Alfred has no known grave but his name is recorded on the Menin Gate memorial. He is commemorated on both the Slimbridge and Eastington War Memorials.

(Taken from *Slimbridge Remembers* produced by the Slimbridge Local History Society)

WFA events

A reminder about a couple of WFA conferences later in the year. The Centenary Conference *The End of the War and the Reshaping of a Century* will be held at the University of Wolverhampton from 6 to 8 September. Keynote Speakers are Professors Alison Fell, Peter Frankopan, John Horne, Gary Sheffield, Sir Hew Strachan, Laura Ugolini and Jay Winter. There will be over 60 historians speaking in parallel sessions throughout the conference. The fee is £65 per day (concession £50), or £165 (concession £130) for the three days.

The British Commission for Military History and the WFA are organizing a two day conference on the final campaigns of the First World War to be held at the offices of Norton Rose Fullbright in London on 27 and 28 October. Keynote Speakers will include: Professor Gary Sheffield: *British and Dominion Conscripts – Forgotten Soldiers in a Forgotten Victory*; Dr Jonathan Boff: *Why did Germany Lose?* and Dr Chris Pugsley: *New Zealanders at Le Quesnoy*. Details of both these conferences can be found 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."