



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Number 149

March 2019

Welcome!

Our tour this year is *Mines, Medals & Muddles*, led by Dave Gargett, from Thursday 12 to Sunday 15 September. It will be centered at the Flanders Lodge Hotel, Ypres, and will examine the development of mine warfare primarily between 1915 and 1917 in and around the area of the Ypres Salient. We will look at some of the important characters involved in the development and execution of the war underground, some of the units involved as well as some of the actions and medals won in the resulting battles above ground. A few muddles will also be included along the way.

The cost (based on sufficient places being taken up) is £460 per person for a double room and £545 for a single. Allocation of places will be strictly on a **first come, first served** basis. There are application forms available tonight.

Do remember that the WFA AGM is being held on April 27 at RAF Cosford in Shropshire - details overleaf. This is free to WFA members, but places need to be booked by contacting the secretary Steve Oram. This can be done by dropping him an email at secretary@westernfrontassociation.com.

Unfortunately I won't personally be able to attend but I am sure that this year's AGM in particular will be a most interesting day, with a great deal of enthusiastic discussion which will affect all branches. I shall certainly be waiting with bated breath to hear of the outcomes and of any conclusions made in the debates.

Please remember that our May Meeting (on the 14th) shall be starting slightly earlier - at 7.15pm. This is to accommodate two pupils of an old branch member of ours, Gareth Williams, who will each be making a five minute presentation on one of the fallen from their school war memorial.

The CWGC is to open a new visitor centre in June at the HQ in Beaurains, at Arras. This will give a real insight into the work of the Commission - www.cwgc.org/visit-us/visitor-centres/cwgc-experience.

Also, the Commission often posts appeals to locate the next of kin for soldiers who fell in war. You can find lists of the casualties concerned on the CWGC website: www.cwgc.org.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 9 April

Tiger Hunting

Professor John Bourne

National Star College at 7.30pm

Tuesday, 14 May

British Army Signals Intelligence 1914-1918

Jock Bruce

National Star College at **7.15pm**

John's informative, thought-provoking and often amusing talk *Tiger Hunting* explores the evolution of commander and senior officer selection for duty on the Western Front. The process of identification, promotion and rejection is examined as the British Army sought ever more effective qualities for front line leadership.



7.15pm: Two short presentations from two pupils of Kingham Hill School.

7.30pm: The British army started the war with no capability to intercept and analyse enemy communications - by the armistice it was producing Sigint on all operational fronts, at home in support of the air defence of Great Britain, and was reading the diplomatic ciphers of many enemy and neutral countries. But this has been largely overshadowed by the work of the Admiralty's 'Room 40'. Jock's talk describes the who, what and where of army 'Sigint'; what value it was; and suggests some reasons why it has been overlooked.

Private Arthur William Lewis (9376) B Company, 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment

Born in Bristol, Arthur was the son of Robert Lewis (a railway coach builder by trade) and Elizabeth Lewis (who died when he was about 12) - he had a sister Florence who was about three years older than him. His father subsequently moved the family to Gloucester and remarried in 1907, giving his address as 16 Thomas Villas, Tudor Street, Bristol Road, Gloucester. Arthur attended Linden Road School in the city and was a keen participant in the school's football league.

When he enlisted, in Gloucester, as a regular soldier in the last week of August 1910, Arthur was barely 17 years old. He was posted to the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment as Private 9376.

His father and step-mother were still living at the Tudor Street address at the outbreak of the war. Prior to embarking for France, Arthur served with his Battalion at Cambridge Barracks, Portsmouth and at Bordon, Hampshire.



Arthur crossed to France with the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment on 13 August 1914, most probably the first time that he had been abroad - just over two months later he was killed in action whilst serving with B Company of his Battalion. Arthur lost his life during the Battle of Langemarck [21-24 October 1914, 1st Battle of Ypres], one of the 32 officers and men of the Battalion who lost their lives during the battle. Of the 32 who were killed, 25, including Arthur, have no known grave and are commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial.

Arthur William Lewis is also remembered on the Gloucester City war memorial and on the war memorial which once stood in St Stephen's Church, Linden Road, Gloucester and which is now preserved in St Paul and St Stephen's Church, Stroud Road, Gloucester.

*Joe Devereux
on behalf of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire*

WFA events

A reminder about a couple of WFA events coming up.

Saturday, 30 March: The 8th WFA President's Conference entitled *Reflections of the Great War* at the Tally Ho! Sports and Social Club, Birmingham B5 7RN. The cost is £35 and can be booked via the WFA website.

Saturday, 27 April: WFA 2019 Spring Conference and AGM at RAF Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8UP. There will be two talks in the morning by Dr Oliver Wilkinson and Dr Fiona Read, and the AGM starts at 1.20pm.

Full programmes for both events and booking details 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."