

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch  
of  
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Captain Eric Howard Harvey MC and Bar  
2/5 Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment

**Eric Howard Harvey** was born at Murrellsend, Hartpury and baptised at the local church on 25 April 1890, the second of four sons of Howard and Tillie Harvey. His older brother Frederick William (Will) had been born there on 26 March 1888. The family moved in 1891 to Parlours Farm, later called The Redlands at Minsterworth where two further sons, Roy and Bernard, and a daughter Gladys were born.

Will received his secondary education at Rossall School in Lancashire, while Eric and his younger brothers were at St Helen's School in Abingdon. By August 1914, Will was working in a solicitors' practice in Chesterfield, Eric was studying Theology at Brasenose College, Oxford, and Roy

was a Railway Engineer at Swindon. Bernard looked after the farm at Redlands, with his mother.

All the three older brothers enlisted back at home on 14 August 1914, Will and Eric in the 1/5 Gloucesters, Roy in the Royal Engineers. Bernard was to remain at home to manage the farm.

The following month tragedy struck the family when Bernard died as a result of an accident on his motor bike on 20 September. Eric was temporarily released from the army to manage the farm until a permanent manager could be found.

## Captain Eric Howard Harvey MC and Bar 2/5 Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment

Eric returned to his unit and was commissioned 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on 14 October 1915; they left for France on 30 July 1916. In September, Eric was awarded the Military Cross for leading a bombing attack on a trench held by 40 of the enemy, driving them out and consolidating the captured trench. He was promoted Lieutenant on 1 July 1917. On the 27 August he was acting Captain of A Company 2/5 Battalion.

While returning in daylight to his company HQ, after a successful attack on Junction Post on 30 September 1918, Eric was killed by a single machine gun bullet; his son, Michael Bernard Harvey, was born a few weeks later.

His colleague, A F Barnes MC, writing later said:  
*"The best of Company Commanders and the*

*cheeriest of comrades, he displayed the utmost gallantry on every occasion. His disregard of danger inspired his men, who would go anywhere under his command."*

Captain Harvey was awarded a bar to his Military Cross for an action on the night of 2 September 1918 when, almost surrounded by enemy forces, he rushed through heavy fire to warn an advancing battalion of the position of his company, averting what might have been an unfortunate incident.

Eric is buried in the Estaires Communal Cemetery, France. He is commemorated on the Minsterworth War Memorial and the Roll of Honour inside the church.



*The original wooden cross marking Eric Harvey's grave in Estaires Communal Cemetery*