



## CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Number 159

January 2020

### Welcome!

May I take this opportunity on behalf of the whole branch in wishing you a very happy 2020. We have another great calendar planned for you - it's all online on our website [www.cgwfa.org.uk](http://www.cgwfa.org.uk) and available as a handout. Feel free to grab one for yourself and if you can pass some on to friends and family or leave them at local libraries, tourist information centres or even pubs then please take a handful.

Details of our branch trip to the Western Front in September will also be released soon - this year in particular we will need to gauge level of interest early in order to put a budget together, so please register any interest (without commitment) as soon as possible.

Between 1985 and 2004 a magazine was regularly produced by Dr Alf Peacock, who was the Chairman of Northern Area (subsequently the Yorkshire and Humberside Branch) of The Western Front Association. The magazine,

entitled *Gun Fire*, examined a wide range of aspects of the First World War. It was very well received and produced to the highest standards. However, it is now difficult to obtain back copies of the publication and some early editions are very rare indeed and these magazines are now available for members on the WFA website.

The WFA's AGM and Spring Conference will be held on 25 April at Weetwood Hall, Otley Road, Leeds LS16 5PS. Further details will be available when the speakers have been decided.

And finally, the much awaited film *1917* was released on January 10 - directed by Sam Mendes and with Andy Robertshaw acting as an adviser this comes highly recommended. *1917* has been described as a masterpiece and praised by critics. It is currently showing at Cineworld in Cheltenham and at the Sherborne Cinema in Gloucester from 31 January.

*Peter*

### Future branch events

**Tuesday, 11 February**

Nobody of Any Importance:  
A Foot Soldier's Memoir of World War 1  
*Phil Sutcliffe*

**National Star College at 7.30pm**



celebrations of July, 1919.

Phil worked as a journalist until semi-retirement when his father asked him to edit his writings which he did in time to publish the memoir in July 2014. It needed only a light touch and Phil can say all the words are Sam's - though not necessarily in his original order.

**Tuesday, 10 March**

The Work of the  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
*Rebecca Smith*

**National Star College at 7.30pm**

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) honours the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in the First and Second World Wars, and ensures they will never be forgotten.

Their work commemorates the war dead, from building and maintaining their cemeteries and memorials at 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries and territories to preservation of their extensive records and archives. Their values and aims, laid out in 1917, are as relevant now as they were 100 years ago. Since their establishment by Royal Charter they have constructed 2,500 war cemeteries and plots, erected headstones over graves and, where the remains are missing, inscribed the names of the dead on permanent memorials. More than a million burials are now commemorated.

## Lieutenant Cyril Cazalet Harrison 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment

Cyril Cazalet Harrison was born on 13 July 1891 in Colombo, Ceylon to Hilda Beaumont and Harry Cazalet Harrison. He was baptised at St Michael and All Angels, Colombo on 10 August. The couple had three other children - Maurice Cazalet, Alan George Cazalet and Lettice Cazalet. Cyril's parents married at Christ Church, Cheltenham on 2 September 1890 before their move to Colombo; his father was a tea planter.

Cyril was educated at Suffolk Hall, Cheltenham between September 1898 and December 1899. He then moved to Dunchurch Hall and School near Rugby, Warwickshire then Uppingham School. Further education took him to Wm Cobbold's near Cambridge, and W Trevor's in Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire from April 1909. In that year he applied to join the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was accepted and admitted on 2 February 1910; he was then a Corporal in the Cadet Corps. He left Sandhurst on 20 December 1910 and was commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Worcestershire Regiment on 4 March 1911.

By the time of the census of 1911 his father had died and he was living with his mother and sister, Lettice at Elstone, St Mark's, Cheltenham. His occupation was recorded as 'a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Army'.



Cyril was promoted to Lieutenant in August 1914 in time for his battalion's posting to France on the 16<sup>th</sup> of that month.

During August and September the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was involved in the Battle of Mons and the subsequent retreat, the Battle of Le Cateau, the Battle of the Marne and the Battle of the Aisne including participation in the Actions on the Aisne heights. The advance of the British Expeditionary Force northwards from the Marne was halted as the Germans dug in along the heights above the River Aisne. British attacks were repelled and both sides dug in.

In September, during the Battle of the Aisne, Cyril had, with his platoon, reinforced the Irish Rifles, and, while observing and directing his men's fire from a trench, was shot through the head on 20 September; he was 23 years of age.

Cyril is remembered on La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre Memorial. He is also remembered on the Christ Church Roll of Honour; Cheltenham Borough Cemetery on the grave of his parents and sister Lettice; Cheltenham War Memorial; St Stephen's Church Book of Remembrance and St Luke's Church.

Cyril's brother Maurice Cazalet Harrison, who was killed in action on 12 October 1916, also appears on the Christ Church Roll of Honour.

### Contact details

#### Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch President

Professor Peter Simkins MBE FRHistS

#### Branch Chairman

Peter Gill

Lansdown House, Pittville Circus Road,  
Cheltenham GL52 2QE

07702 253 638 • [chairman@cgwfa.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cgwfa.org.uk)

#### Branch Treasurer & Newsletter Editor

Hilary Jennings

4 St Stephen's Road, Cheltenham GL51 3AA  
01242 243 927 • [newsletter@cgwfa.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@cgwfa.org.uk)

Website [www.cgwfa.org.uk](http://www.cgwfa.org.uk)

Facebook [Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch of the Western Front Association](#)

Twitter [@CGWFA](#)

#### The Western Front Association

BM Box 1914,  
London WC1N 3XX  
0207 118 1914

[office@westernfrontassociation.com](mailto:office@westernfrontassociation.com)

[www.westernfrontassociation.com](http://www.westernfrontassociation.com)



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