



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

Rebecca Smith was due to be our speaker at the next meeting on 10 March. She will now be replaced with Sarah Moody who does a similar job at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission so the talk subject remains the same.

This month I would like to make a strong request. We are desperate for articles for our branch magazine *The Sentinel*. Every few months Hilary does a wonderful job of collating, editing and typesetting the articles that are submitted to her, but unfortunately she is finding it increasingly difficult to get new offerings. It doesn't matter how long or short it may be, if you have anything to offer please get in touch with Hilary (newsletter@cgwfa.org.uk). Articles could be on family research, WW1 based holiday accounts, academic studies or personal studies. In fact anything Great War related that you could share. Some remembrances of Gloucestershire's

fallen for this newsletter would also be most welcome.

From 31 March the National Archives are making changes to same-day document ordering. Readers will be able to order a maximum of 12 documents for the same day, plus up to 12 documents ordered in advance (a maximum of 24 documents per reader per day). There will be five document ordering slots available each day and you can order as many of your 12 same-day documents as you require in any of the slots. For further information and to see the new document ordering and delivery times, please visit their website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

A useful website has been brought to our attention which details British & Empire Accoutrements and Personal Equipment of the Twentieth Century - www.karkeeweb.com

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 10 March

The Work of the
Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Sarah Moody

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.

Tuesday, 14 April

The Omnibus on the Western Front
Roy Larkin

National Star College at 7.30pm



Roy will talk about how the London omnibus found its way on to the Western Front and its role when it arrived there.

Trooper William Gilleece Dutton (3549) 2nd Life Guards

William Gilleece Dutton was born in Forthampton in 1889, one of five children of Henry and Mary Dutton. Henry had also been born in Forthampton whilst Mary came from King's County (now Offaly), Ireland; Mary's maiden name is unknown but may well have been Gilleece as that has Irish roots. Henry was a baker and flour dealer and the family lived at Brewer's Cottage, Forthampton. William was educated at Tewkesbury Grammar School and, in 1911, was assisting Henry in the business as well as being Scoutmaster of Forthampton Troop.

William enlisted in Tewkesbury on 26 November 1914. He served as a Trooper in the Household Cavalry, specifically the 2nd Life Guards, for a Short Service engagement. His army service record includes a character reference in the form of a letter from Arnold H Wells, at Forthampton Vicarage: *'I have known William Dutton for four years and have every reason to consider him a highly respectable and honourable man in every way. His character is as free from stain as it is full of good qualities'*.

The 2nd Life Guards were part of the 7th Cavalry Brigade in the 3rd Cavalry Division and crossed to Belgium on 8 October 1914, landing at Zeebrugge. The regiment was engaged in much of the fighting from the autumn of 1914 onwards and fought most of the war as a dismounted force.



William sailed for France on 12 August 1915 to join his regiment at which point he was probably assigned to the Cyclists Company. The regiment as a whole was not involved in the Battle of Loos in September 1915 although the regimental diary refers to the detachment of B Squadron on 5 September and its deployment to the First Army at Loos. This suggests that William's Cyclist Company was part of B Squadron and was involved in 3rd Cavalry Division's relief of infantry units at Loos that started on 26 September.

Trooper William Gilleece Dutton was killed in action on 29 September 1915, probably as a result of artillery fire as he was said to have been *'guarding the bicycles'*. William's body was never recovered or identified and he is commemorated instead on the Loos Memorial at Loos en Gohelle. William was awarded the 1914-15 Star Medal.

As William was not a citizen of Tewkesbury he is only commemorated in the town on the Tewkesbury Grammar School Memorial although he is also remembered on the War Memorial at Forthampton.

Two of William's brothers, Alfred and Gilbert, also volunteered in 1914 and both survived the war.

Extracted from a biography in 'A Noble Band of Heroes' published by the Tewkesbury Historical Society.

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