



CHELtenham & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Number 204

February 2025

Welcome!

Those of you that were able to join us for January's meeting will understand fully that I am still settling into the role of Chairman! They say that experience is the sum total of your mistakes – well I certainly became more experienced last month. Hopefully if you are reading this at this month's meeting you will see an improvement in my performance.

As some of you will know Hilary was, until about a year or so ago, also covering the responsibility of Membership Secretary. Since then, Joe Devereux, despite not really having the capacity to do so, has been very kindly holding the fort since Hilary stepped down – for which I am very grateful.

It would though be of great benefit to both Paul, as Treasure, and myself if we could relieve Joe of this task. So, if there is someone who could spare perhaps a couple of hours a month to work with Paul and I on membership matters we would very much welcome your support. Please feel free to have a chat with me if you think you might be able to help.

Following a think piece that I put out across the

committee and some brain storming by email we have come up with what appears to be a workable solution to adjusting our subscriptions in year. In future to simplify branch administration we intend to run our subscription year from 1st January to 31st December annually.

To enable us to achieve that change in year, and ensure the Branch has a strong financial footing for our activities, we would ask anyone who has not yet paid their subscription to adjust their standing order to the new rate £10 for an individual or £15 for a joint membership for this year and to re-align the payment date for the 1st of January in future years.

If you have already paid for this year at the old rates, please could I ask you to either pay the additional monies direct to Paul at one of our Branch meetings or to make a one-off bank transfer. Again, if you could then adjust your Standing Orders for next year that would be fantastic!

I will more formally promulgate these changes to subscriptions payments by a letter to all Branch members.

Simon

Future Branch Events

Tuesday 11 March

**Lieutenant Bill Haine VC MC & the 1st Battalion
Honourable Artillery Company in the Great War**

Michael Orr

7.30pm Ed Shed



Lieutenant Hayne VC MC deployed with No 3 (C) Company, 1st Battalion, HAC to France on 18th September 1914. Hayne was awarded the VC for his actions at Gavrelle on 28/29th April 1917 during the Battle of Arras. He later served with the 35th Sikhs and was awarded an MC for his actions on the North West Frontier of India on 17th May 1919.

Tuesday 8 April

**Musical Box
1918 and 2024**

Andy Moody

7.30pm Ed Shed



On 8 August 1918, the Medium A Whippet tank called Musical Box took part in the opening phase of the Battle of Amiens. The tank, commanded by Lieutenant Clem Arnold went on a ten-hour rampage behind German lines, completely unsupported, causing mayhem until it was finally knocked out in the late afternoon.

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

Lance Corporal James Henry Hattersley-Smith (3/10122)
9th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment

James Henry Hattersley-Smith was born in Cheltenham in 1876. He was one of three sons and five daughters born to the Reverend Percy Hattersley-Smith and his wife Eleanor Mary. The Reverend Percy was for many years a master at Cheltenham College.

James was educated at Winchester College and Lincoln College, Oxford and upon completion of his education went into teaching and private tutoring. When war broke out, he refused the offer of a commission and enlisted into the ranks of the 9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment.

He said of the almost a year of training, mostly in Sussex, 'as next to my Oxford days it has been one of my happiest periods of my life. My lot has been thrown in with a class of men who have shown themselves cheery and kindhearted in all sorts of conditions.' The battalion went to France on 30th August 1915, as part of 71st Brigade, 24th Division.

The 24th Division, along with the 21st, was a New Army division in General Reserve for the Battle of Loos, which commenced on 25th September. Controversially both divisions had been held back five miles behind the front and when the order came to advance, to support what appeared to be a successful breaking of the German line: weather conditions and heavy traffic prevented these re-enforcements arriving at the support lines until late evening.

At 3.30am on the 26th the 9th Norfolks, located in the former German front line, near to Lone Tree, were ordered to assist the 20th Infantry Brigade in an assault on The Quarries, situated west of the village of Cite St Elie and about 2000 yards from the Lens to La Bassee road. They attacked at 6.45am but made no progress due heavy machine gun and sniper fire and were forced to take cover in trenches, where they remained until after 7pm, the Germans subjecting them to heavy rifle fire by the light of flares. The battalion lost 18 killed, 62 wounded and 329 missing in the action. Lance Corporal Hattersley-Smith was struck in the face and had his thigh shattered. He was passed down the casualty line and ended up at No 8 Stationery Hospital, Wimereux, where he died of his wounds on 7th October 1915, aged 38. He is buried at Wimereux Communal Cemetery.

His brother, Geoffrey Alban, who had escaped from the sinking of HMS *Pegasus* by the SMS *Konigsberg* at Zanzibar on 20th September 1914, died of illness at Devonport on 1 November 1915.



Graham Adams

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch Contact Details

President: Professor Peter Simkins MBE FRHistS

Chairman:

Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Simon Shephard MA

Email: chairman@cgwfa.co.uk

Mobile: 07818 720156

Address: Awre House, Awre Road, BLAKENEY,
GL15 4AA

Newsletter Editor: Adrian Smith

Email: newsletter@cgwfa.co.uk

Mobile: 07557 325656

Website: www.cgwfa.co.uk

X (Twitter): @CGWFA

Facebook: Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch of
the Western Front Association

The Western Front Association

BM Box 1914,
London WC1N 3XX

0207 118 1914

membership@westernfrontassociation.com

www.westernfrontassociation.com



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