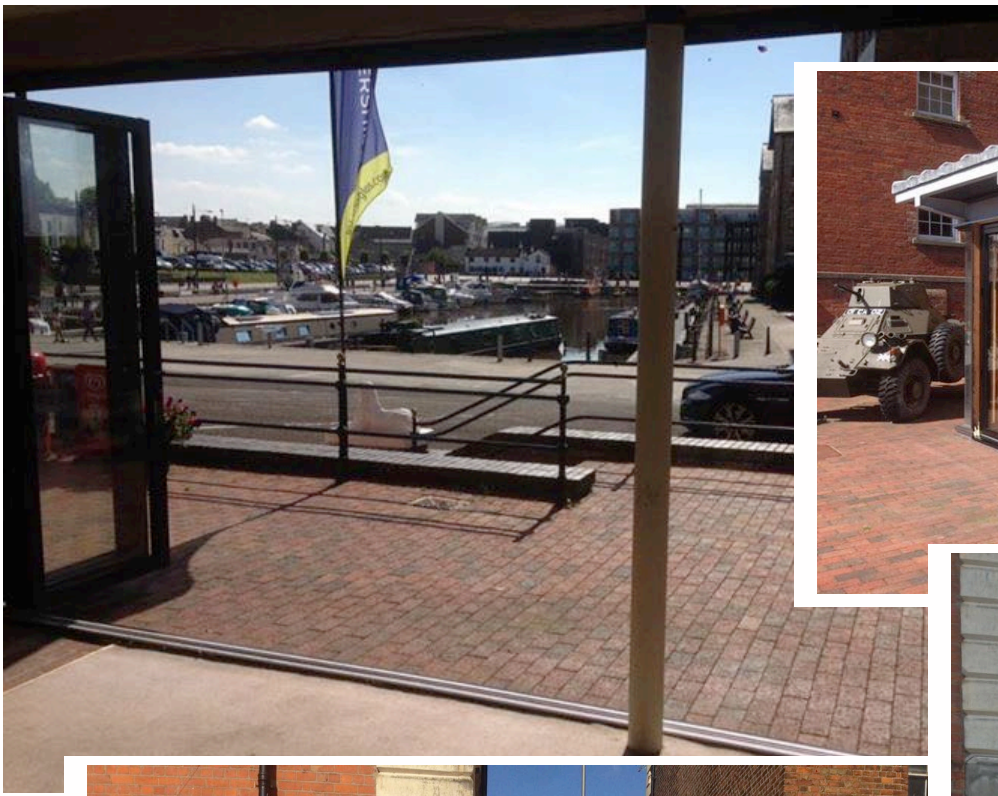


NEWSLETTER

THE FRIENDS OF
THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
MUSEUM



AUTUMN 2017



Major changes taking place to the café entrance, with new folding doors, and to the entrance to the Museum, in line with other areas of the Docks.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As the photo montage shows, there are significant changes happening both in and around the Museum this autumn. Internally a new boiler has been installed after the existing one had been condemned by the MOD, who then found that they were not in a position to pay for a new one, so it has been funded by the Museum. Folding doors have replaced the glass panels in front of the café area, after it was discovered that the timber frames had become rotten and were unsafe. It is hoped that the Friends can support the cost of this as the original café installations were funded by the Friends. Outside the City Council is working hard on upgrading the northern end of the Docks and improving the public realm area. A major benefit for the Museum is that the steps beside the Custom House have been widened and will now become the main thoroughfare to the City and Cathedral, directing a greater footfall past our doors. The Museum has also salvaged the magnificent VR post box from the steps, perhaps to create an imposing donation box!

It is intended to hold next summer's Reception on the dockside, so if you are unable to visit before then, be sure to visit next summer and see the changes! We hope to be temporarily housing some other surprises then.

This year's Summer Reception was held in the gardens at Stanway House, the home of the Earl of Wemyss and March; we are extremely grateful to him for his hospitality and kindness in allowing us to hold our event there. As well as organising a performance of the highest gravity-fed fountain in the world, Earl Wemyss spoke about his grandfather, who was killed at Qatia in 1916 whilst serving with the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, and the 'visitation' his grandmother received in the house around the time of her husband's death.

As we move into the autumn, may I remind the Friends that the fund-raising Autumn Lecture will be held again at Chavenage House, with many thanks to Col & Mrs. David Lowsley-Williams, on Friday 13th October. Moving away this year from the centenary of First World War to these unsettled times, we welcome Mr Edward Lucas, who is an expert and fierce critic of President Vladimir Putin and the modern Russia. He is a Senior Editor of *'The Economist'*, a sought after speaker and author. The first edition of his book, *'The New Cold War'* established him as an expert in the field and *'Deceptions – Spies, Lies and How Russia Dupes the West'*, published in 2012, added to his reputation and is an eye-opening read. He will talk on the *'Putin and the New Cold War'*; it should be of interest to those who served in the last one. You should have received your invitation card for this evening; if not contact the Hon. Secretary.*

Avid readers of this Newsletter may recall an article in 2007 about Lt. Anderson of the RGH, who was killed in Gaza in 1917 and how the anthem he had composed was sung at the Service of Dedication of the RGH Memorial on College Green in 1922. After a long search a copy of this anthem has been found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford and, with the support of the Cathedral's Director of Music, it will be sung again in the Cathedral at the Armistice Service at 3pm on Sunday November 12th, one hundred years to the day that he was killed. Do not miss this unique occasion.

As a final note let me repeat again that we are always looking for new Friends of the Museum, so bring your friends to our events and sign them up as supporters of our important

Lt. Col Ralph Stephenson TD

*Any queries about Friends events please contact the Hon Sec: simoncolbeck@msn.com

THE GLOUCESTERS AND THE BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE 1917



Photos by Peter Russell

Many Friends will have seen the remarkable sculpture in sand and mud by artist **Damian Van Der Velden**, of a **British soldier resting from the horrific conditions of the Passchendaele battlefield**, which was on display in **Trafalgar Square** in late July, one hundred years from the start date of the battle. The two photographs above were taken just a few hours apart and the deterioration caused by heavy rain reflected the human tragedy of the battle, which gained just five miles of mud and water-filled craters at a cost of almost half a million men, many of whom simply disappeared into the quagmire.



While the British were fighting the Battle of Arras, the French were engaged in the disastrous Second Battle of the Aisne, which led to the French Army mutiny and General Nivelle being replaced by General Petain. As a result, by the latter part of 1917, any significant action on the Western Front had to be initiated by the British. There appeared to be a 'window of opportunity'; until the Russian Mutiny led to the cessation of hostilities on the Eastern Front, the German Army was unable to undertake offensive operations but, if the Russians did give up the fight, then Germany would be able to move whole armies to France and Flanders. Meanwhile the German U-boat campaign had gathered momentum during 1917 and was causing a crisis at home.

Haig had wanted for many months to use the Ypres salient as the starting point for an offensive that would not only break the German line but also clear the coast and counter the U-boat threat. This is a brief background to the Third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele.



The problem with Haig's plan was that the Ypres Salient had been fought over since 1914 and was a ghastly place, particularly in bad weather. It is low lying, boggy and, by 1917, was covered in shell holes and craters without any real distinguishing features. Manning the trenches was bad enough; trying to advance and attack was a great deal worse. AF Barnes recounts the apocryphal story, which sums up the combination of horror and humour vital to maintaining morale;

"A British Tommy was: 'picking his way along a duckboard track when he espied an Australian hat lying in the mud. Stooping to pick it up, he was surprised to find it resisted his efforts: the reason, he soon discovered, was that it was held down by the strap, which went under the chin of its owner, whose eyes were just visible above the slush. Getting a firm foothold, he dived his arms into the mud and under the other's arm-pits and tried to drag him out. "Steady does it Tommy," spluttered the Australian, "I'm on a horse"."

To some extent the decision to launch the battle was based on the misapprehension that the morale of the German Army was close to collapse; it wasn't. Despite all these factors, the battle began on 31st July and lasted until the village of Passchendaele was captured on 6th November 1917.

The Allied Plan was a series of offensives on all fronts, so timed as to assist each other by depriving the enemy of the opportunity to reinforce any front, as this would mean weakening another. It was meticulously planned as an advance in stages, and this allowed tactics to be changed as events unfolded. Like other major battles on the Western Front, it consisted of a series of individual battles, namely: Pilkem and the subsequent capture of Westhoek; Langemarck; Menin Road; Polygon Wood; Broodseinde; Poelcappelle; and the First and Second Battles of Passchendaele.

Eleven Gloucester battalions took part in at least one of these actions. The 13th Gloucesters, the Pioneer Battalion of 39 Division, was the only Gloucester battalion involved in The Battle of Pilkem Ridge (31st July -2nd August). The Bn.War Diary records time spent working on assembly areas, communication trenches, tramways and dugouts.



The Battle of Langemarck was the second phase of the planned sequence and although the official dates of the battle are 16/18th August the actual fighting continued until virtually the end of the month. All the Territorial Force battalions of the Gloucesters were involved, 1/4th, 1/5th and 1/6th in 48th Division and 2/4th, 2/5th and 2/6th in 61st Division.

The attack by 48th Division was made at 4.45am on 16th August. By comparison with what was achieved elsewhere 48th Division was much more successful. 1/5th Gloucesters advanced in four waves and captured strong points in the advance. But the barrage, which moved at a pre-planned rate, had left the Battalion behind and it was taking increasing casualties, so dug in where it was. Altogether the Battalion suffered 217 casualties. It was a gallant action, particularly as nearly an inch of rain had fallen on 14th/15th August, which made the already sodden, low-lying ground, with drainage ditches destroyed by previous artillery shelling, a considerable obstacle to any movement.

Following the attack on 16th August, action continued for the rest of August and one of the divisions involved was 61st Division, both the 2/4th and 2/5th seeing considerable action in the appalling conditions, the 2/5th receiving its first Battle Honour.

After the Battle of Langemarck, 61st Division, with 2/4th, 2/5th and 2/6th Gloucesters, was in and out of the front line and occasionally took part in some minor actions until 18th September, when they left the mud of the Ypres Sector and moved to near Arras. Meanwhile, the British were preparing for the next sequence of battles that made up the Third Battle of Ypres - Menin Road, Polygon Wood and Broodseinde but were also planning a change of tactics. Developing new tactics was one thing but time was needed to disseminate the changes and practice them. There was therefore a lull in the fighting until 20th September.

The British plan depended upon giving priority to heavy and medium artillery to destroy the German concrete pillboxes and machine-gun nests and to engage in more counter-battery fire, i.e. engaging German artillery positions to reduce the fire on our own troops. There were also changes in how air observation was to be used to concentrate on identifying movement of German troops. For the infantry, the plan was to have a limited objective for each attack and then to dig in quickly, ready to repel the inevitable German counter attack. Then, once the new line had been established, another assault would be launched to do the same again. There was another important change, the weather was much better.



A British horse drawn water carrier comes off a temporary road in the mud – Ypres September 1917

During the Menin Road battle, the 8th Bn. attacked on 20th September and had, by mid-morning, taken most of their objectives. German counter-attacks in the afternoon all failed and minor actions went on for the next four days. No other Gloucester battalions were involved in the Menin Road battle and, although 1/5th, 8th and 12th Gloucesters were awarded the Battle Honour for Polygon Wood (26th September-3rd October), their involvement was limited.

Overall, both the battles of Menin Road and Polygon Wood had been successful. The third in this sequence of 'bite and hold' battles, Broodseinde, was slightly different because both sides were planning to attack on 4th October. As a result, the Allied preliminary bombardment caught a number of German units out in the open preparing to attack. 1/4th, 1/5th, 1/6th, 8th and 12th Gloucesters were all awarded the Battle Honour 'Broodseinde', but only 1/5th and 12th Gloucesters played a significant role. The 1/5th Gloucesters moved up on 3rd October in readiness for an attack on set objectives, with a company allocated to each. Conditions were beastly with heavy rain. The barrage was too far ahead of the advancing troops and the German machine-guns were free to fire on the companies as they struggled forward. All they could do was to consolidate after advancing about 300 yards; the Battalion Diary states: "*Casualties were light*", which in fact meant 131 all ranks, of whom 25 died.

The three victories, Menin Road, Polygon Wood and Broodsiende seem to have encouraged the Allies to believe that a breakthrough was possible but the return of the rain changed everything. Over an inch fell on the two days before the next attack, the battle of Poelcappelle, and as a result the outcome of the fighting was completely different.

Only in the north did the Allies achieve a substantial advance and the German counter-attacks were generally successful. 1/4th, 1/5th, 1/6th and 12th Gloucesters were all involved in some way. On 9th October, 144 Brigade of 48 Div. advanced up the Poelcappelle Spur towards Westroosebeke, with 1/6th Gloucesters in the centre and 1/4th Gloucesters on the left. 1/4th Gloucesters was supposed to be guided to the start line but 'lost' three companies for a

while and then the whole battalion fell behind the advancing barrage as the going was so difficult. The 1/6th encountered similar conditions but managed to take their objectives. Some 70 prisoners and 12 machine-guns had been taken but losses in this gallant battle amounted to 242 all ranks of whom 87 died. Four days later, one imagines to everyone's surprise and delight, 48th (South Midland) Division were ordered to Italy. As a result 1/4th, 1/5th and 1/6th Gloucesters withdrew to prepare for the move, which began on 21st November.



Laying duck-boards and evacuating a casualty in the Ypres Salient – October and November 1917.

In the interval between the first and second battles of Passchendaele, the 14th Gloucesters arrived from the Somme and, by 22nd October as part of 105 Brigade, launched an attack at 5.35am under a creeping barrage, which was completely successful. All objectives were taken and a counter attack in the afternoon repulsed. The second attempt to capture Passchendaele took place from 26th October-10th November, when The Canadian Corps finally took the village and the ridge, thus ending the Third Battle of Ypres

1st Division with 1st and 10th Gloucesters arrived to take part right at the end of the battle. On the night 7th/8th November, 1st Division took over the front held by 63rd Division and part of the Canadian Corps. 1st Gloucesters was in reserve. The troops, moving forward to assembly positions, had to walk on duck board tracks across a sea of mud and water. The attack began at 6.05am, the South Wales Borderers never reached their objective, the Munsters got to theirs but were unable to hold it. By 9.30am the attack had failed and there was a danger that the Germans might even occupy the Brigade front line; the 1st Gloucesters went forward and by the evening was holding the whole front. Colonel 'Patsy' Pagan, who had taken over command of 1st Gloucesters in May 1915 and, apart from the two months from September 1916 when he was recovering from being wounded, had commanded them ever since and was an inspiring CO. He was in temporary command of 3rd Brigade for this attack and on 10th November was wounded in the eye when he went forward to see what was holding up the advance. At the Casualty Clearing Station he learnt that he was destined to be evacuated to England for treatment but felt his Battalion needed him, so made some excuses and hatless, wearing a dressing gown and canvas shoes, hitched lifts back to 1st Gloucesters. The Battalion was delighted and although he had to have an interview with his divisional commander (the hospital had posted him as an absentee) everyone knew that the morale of

1st Gloucesters would be increased by his reappearance in such circumstances. A Regimental legend was born.

The Third Battle of Ypres was over but for those that had taken part on both sides it would remain in their memory for the rest of their lives. Most found it impossible to describe the conditions or, if they did, their audience was unable to comprehend what it had been like. It was only amongst themselves that there was an understanding of the courage, tenacity and humour that had enabled them to keep fighting.

Those who have no grave are remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial or the Menin Gate, Ypres.

This article is extracted and edited, with grateful thanks, from a new book by Maj. Gen. Robin Grist, 'A Gallant County' which covers the Great War Service of all the Battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment and the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. It will be published next year and will be available at the Museum Shop

The Editor.



Tyne Cot Memorial and Cemetery

‘LAWRENCE OF THE GLOUCESTERS’

It is not generally known amongst members of the Gloucestershire Regiment that one of the many junior officers of the Gloucesters killed in World War 1 was a younger brother of Col T. E. Lawrence – ‘Lawrence of Arabia’.

‘Lawrence of Arabia’ was a son of Thomas Chapman (1846-1919), who was born into an Anglo-Irish landowning family, the Chapman baronets of Killua Castle, County Westmeath. As the second son, Thomas Chapman attended the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, in the expectation that he would run the estate at Delvin for his elder brother William, who was serving as an officer in the 15th Kings Hussars. In May 1870 Thomas unexpectedly inherited the estate when William died at the age of 26 and in July 1873 he married Edith Hamilton, also of County Westmeath. Living the life of a country gentleman he had, between 1874 and 1881, four daughters. Sometime in the late 1870s the Chapmans employed a jovial and capable young governess, known as Sarah Lawrence, some fifteen years younger than Thomas. At birth Sarah had been registered under the name of her unmarried mother, Elizabeth Junner, who was working as a servant in the household of Thomas Lawrence, a Lloyd’s surveyor in Sunderland. It is assumed that his son, John Lawrence, was the father of Sarah.



Sarah Lawrence and the family about 1895



The Lawrence brothers in 1910: from left to right T E (Ned), Frank, Arnold, Bob and Will.

Whilst his wife became overtly and zealously religious, holding frequent prayer meetings for the household staff, Thomas fell in love with Sarah. One of Chapman's daughters later recalled that her father, usually a heavy drinker and of a dour manner, became "all gay" whenever Sarah Lawrence entered the room. She became his mistress and in 1885 Sarah became pregnant with the first of her nine children (three died young, two at birth and one after a few hours, leaving five sons and a daughter) and Thomas moved her to rooms in Dublin where Montagu Robert (Bob) was born. A short time later Mrs. Chapman discovered what had happened (her butler, whilst in a shop in Dublin, heard a young lady give her name as Mrs. Thomas Chapman and recognised her as Sarah Lawrence) and Chapman left his wife to live with Sarah as Mr and Mrs. Lawrence, a considerable step in that Victorian period,

leaving behind his estate, his wealth, aristocratic life-style, and reputation. Edith Chapman refused a divorce on religious grounds so they embarked on an eleven year odyssey of 'wandering' and in permanent fear of being discovered and their story exposed.



Sarah Lawrence

The first move was to Tremadoc, in North Wales, where Thomas Edward (later Lawrence of Arabia) was born in 1888, followed by a period in Kirkcudbright and the birth of William George in 1889. They spent a short time in Dinard, in Brittany and on the Isle of Wight, choosing places where their neighbours were not of Chapman's class and they would pass as a married couple. Their next move was to St. Helier, Jersey for the birth of their fourth son, Frank Helier, in 1893, and then to the New Forest, near Beaulieu. Their final move was to 2 Polstead Road, Oxford in 1896 for the education of their children, where Arnold Walter was born in 1900.

In 1914 Chapman succeeded to the baronetcy, becoming the 7th Baronet on the death of his cousin Sir Benjamin Chapman. He continued to live off his private income, albeit now somewhat limited and he spent much of his time with his sons. In March 1919, after a three or four day illness he died of influenza and, as he left no legitimate heirs, the title became extinct.

Frank Helier Lawrence attended the City of Oxford High School for Boys and, after gaining the King Charles Exhibition in Mathematics, he went up to Jesus College, Oxford. In October 1913 joined the Oxford University Officers Training Corps and when war was declared August 1914 he volunteered for service. His OTC experience put him in a good position for a commission;

'On 6 August 1914 he completed and signed an application form titled 'Appointment to a Commission in the Special Reserve of Officers'. This, together with supporting documents, survives in the National Archives. He volunteered to serve in the Infantry, stating that he could ride 'a very little, no certificate, learned privately'. On 7 August the Adjutant of the Oxford University OTC provided a report of good moral character and on 12 August Frank underwent a medical examination at the Military Hospital in Oxford.'

- from The T.E. Lawrence Studies Website. Ed. Jeremy Wilson

He was granted a commission and gazetted as a 2/Lieut in the 3rd Bn. of the Gloucestershire Regiment, soon joining them for training at Abbey Wood, near Woolwich: *'We are, as you know, stationed in Woolwich Arsenal, at present the most important place in England. Work never stops for a single instant in the Arsenal from one month to another. There are 25,000 men employed by day, and about the same by night. There are enough magazines within three hundred yards of our camp to wipe all our lot right out, should one of them only go off.'*

- Letter to his brother Will. Oct 30 1914.

A telegram from Frank Lawrence to his parents marked his rapid departure from England:

To: Lawrence: 2 Polstead Road Oxford

From: Abbey Wood 9.10 p.m. 8 February 1915.

Leave with Draft 7.15 tomorrow morning. Cross from Southampton probably almost at once.

On arrival in Flanders along with 206 NCO's and men, they were attached to the 1st Bn., filling the ranks after the losses sustained to the regular battalion on the Aisne and at Ypres. His frequent letters home described his life in the trenches, to which he had adapted well and was said to be 'a very promising officer - very keen on his work and most painstaking'.

As part of the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Division, the 1st Bn. Gloucesters took part in the Battle for Aubers Ridge on 9 May 1915. The Germans on the ridge, a mere 15m high, dominated the flat plain held by the British and shielded the British view of the German supply depots and transport points to the east. The battle was part of the British component of the combined Anglo-French offensive known as the Second Battle of Artois. The immediate French objectives were to capture the heights of the ridge, south to Vimy Ridge, and it was decided that the British forces would attack in the southern half of their front on 8 May.



2nd Lt. Frank Helier Lawrence, attached 1st Bn The Gloucestershire Regt. 1893–1915

In the initial assault, shortly after a barrage which was to be ‘intense’ at 5.30am, the men of 2nd Bn. Royal Munster Fusiliers and 2nd Bn. Welch Regiment were cut down practically as they left their trenches by rifle and heavy machine gun fire. Behind them the 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers reached the front line, ready for the ‘mopping up’ of residual opposition, but could get no further. Following the Fusiliers, the Gloucesters and the 1st South Wales Borderers moved over open ground to the front line, loosing casualties on the way, to support the attack but found the trenches a mix of fresh and wounded troops, mainly of Welsh Fusiliers.

A poorly coordinated attack, probably due to the over-crowding of the trenches, was rapidly ordered for 7am. to be undertaken by the Gloucesters and the Borderers. This failed as badly, leaving many dead and wounded in 'no-man's land' after an advance of only 50yds. The Gloucesters were ordered back to the third line trench.

At 11am. orders for a further attack at 2.40pm. were received but this was later altered to 4pm. A limited barrage preceded the postponed attack undertaken by A and D companies of the Gloucesters. This time *'the hostile troops facing the Gloucesters did not even take shelter, but lined the parapet and greeted the new attack with intense small-arm and machine gun fire, many German machine guns being actually on the parapet.'* D company got about 120yds while some men were killed on the German wire, but got no further. At this stage Div. Headquarters ordered a retirement and, after dark, parties went out to reach the many wounded. The 1st Bn. lost 264 casualties, including 11 officers. D Coy. lost all its officers and most of its NCOs and men in the final abortive attack.

2nd Lt. Frank Lawrence was killed by shrapnel, possibly early in the day when the battalion was bringing up troops over open ground, or before the 4pm. attack moving forward with A or D Coys. as a letter from the 3rd Bn. suggests:

3/Glostershire Regt. [sic] Gravesend

Dear Mr. Lawrence,

29 May. 15

.....Will you please accept my deep sympathy and allow me to express to you how very sorry I was to see your son had been killed. Though he has lost his life in a great cause, the loss can be none the less sad to you. I only heard the day before yesterday from our late adjutant, who is now at the front, that your boy was doing very well, and I mention it, as being all I know about what happened, and in case you have not heard more directly, that he was coming up with some reinforcements to the help of the front line, when he was killed by the base of a shell which burst and blew back. I understand he was killed at once.

Believe me, Yours very truly,

George H. Burges, Lt.-Col

He was buried 'in the cemetery at S.9.a.' as stated in a letter to his father but by the end of the war this burial ground had been lost to the destructive power of further battles. His name is one of the 13,479 soldiers remembered on the Le Touret Memorial, near Festubert, who died in that sector between October 1914 and September 1915 and have no known grave.



Le Touret Memorial and Military Cemetery

Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT

As at 1st September 2017 the Friends have 357 members in all categories: 247 Life and 98 annual members including 12 overseas.

Our finances remain healthy and we are well placed to continue our support to the Museum. We continue to receive one off donations from members and would like to say many thanks, all donations are most welcome. Profit this year from the Badminton lunch was £158 and the Summer reception at Stanway House was a great success and netted just under £1000; we are very grateful to those Friends who attended this event,

Subscriptions.

Thanks to the frugal nature of your committee I am happy to announce that there is no increase in subscription for the year 2017/2018. For those of you who pay for your membership annually may I remind you that membership was due in June and can be paid as follows:

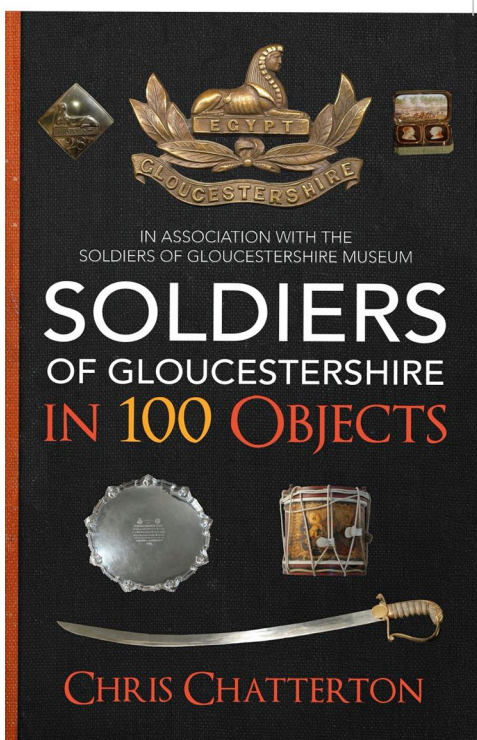
By cheque made payable to 'The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum' forwarded to the 'Friends' at the Museum address 'Custom House, 31, Commercial Road, Gloucester, GL1 2HE'.

Over the internet through the Museum website at 'www.glost.org.uk' – follow the link to the Friends' page on the Museum's Home page.

By Banker's Standing Order. To save having to write cheques, pay for postage, or remember that you need to renew your subscription annually, why not complete a Banker's Standing Order Mandate? Please contact me should you require a blank mandate.

Annual rates are £20 single, £30 couples and £10 for juniors. Conversion to Life Membership is for a single payment of £200, do take advantage of this one-off payment.

Patrick Smart



'The Museum in One Hundred Objects'

In conjunction with the Amberley Press, the Museum's Director has selected some of the many artifacts in the Museum to tell the story of both the Gloucestershire Regiment and the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. It will be published in October and, with Christmas approaching, you may find this a very attractive present. From October it will be on sale in the shop and on the internet site at £9.99

You may pre-order the book by purchasing through the online shop in the usual way. It will be posted out when the shop receives the first copies around 15th October.

It has been a very busy few months in the Museum. Since the Tall Ships Festival in late May, which saw over 3000 people visit the Museum in three days, we have been working hard in many areas to improve the Museum both for visitors and staff.

We have seen significant building works, including a new boiler system and air conditioning in the shop, and a new set of fully opening doors in the cafe, which will allow us to serve more customers and for them to take full advantage of the fantastic views over the Docks. This has coincided with a major redevelopment of the public realm immediately in front of the Museum. As I write, the builders are hard at work to create a new public space that will transform our section of the Dock Basin. Whilst the works are fairly extensive, we have worked hard to ensure that the Museum will remain open throughout the construction, which is due to finish just before Christmas.

Within the Museum itself, we are finalising a new exhibition on the campaigns of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars from Qatia to Aleppo, which will be opening soon. We are finalising plans for a major exhibition next year to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. We are also working with a wide range of different organisations to help them organise commemorations throughout the year.

I have been continuing with a monthly radio broadcast on BBC Gloucestershire, looking at what the Gloucestershire Regiment and RGH were doing exactly 100 years ago that month. This has now developed into a very comprehensive record of the first three years of the War and the final year will be well worth a listen. I am also continuing to give talks across the County, from Rotary to WI, Lodges to schools. If you are a member of a group or organisation that would like a talk at one of your meetings, please let me know.

We are also excited about the publication of a new book: *'The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum in 100 Objects'*, which will be available from mid-October. It should make for an excellent Christmas present! Over the next few months there are a number of things happening that will continue to improve the Museum. I look forward to providing more information in the next newsletter.

Finally, please come and pay us a visit. The changes in the Docks will be significant and the new exhibition will be very interesting. And don't forget to look in the shop as we approach Christmas. Vicki and Jade have been working hard to select exciting new stock lines that are well worth looking at. We hope to see you soon!

Christopher Chatterton

Gloucestershire Yeomanry Association.

One of the events in the Association calendar is a talk in the Museum Long Room on Wednesday 22nd November at 7.30pm entitled

"The Battle for Tumbledown Mountain - The Experience of 2nd Bn. Scots Guards"

The talk will be given by Capt Dominic Rossi.

He is a former member of the RGH and a regular with the Light Infantry. He is the director of a property recruitment group and this topic forms the basis of an MA in Military History that he is undertaking at the University of Buckingham. Friends of the Museum are cordially invited to attend for £5 entry fee.

INTRODUCING THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR



Imagine being lucky enough to do a job that doesn't fill your stomach with dread on a Sunday evening, but that makes you want to race into work and be the last to leave.

I've been working in Museums for the past 7 years and have recently started my new job as Deputy Director of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. Making the move from a City Museum (where I previously worked) to the niche that is a Military Museum is quite a change, but most definitely a positive one. When I started the job (about 2 months ago) I knew VERY little about the history of the Glosters or indeed anything about the RGH, and to be quite honest, wasn't sure how I'd find it, as Military history had never really appealed to me. I was about to find out and what an experience it has been.

Learning about the sacrifices that Soldiers from the County have made throughout the last 300 years and the bravery and selflessness of these individuals, fills me with awe every day.

My Great-Grandfather served with the Glosters during WWI, so I feel a personal connection to the Regiment and the stories the Museum stands to tell. I know that as a descendant of his I'm deeply proud of his contribution to the Regiment, and the more I learn, the more fascinated I become.

It's a difficult time for all Museums across the Country as funding streams are being cut and sustainability is difficult to achieve. But the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum is bucking the trend and has a fantastic offer and a bright future. I'm very much looking forward to being a part of that story.

Vicki Hopson

Dates for your diary 2017



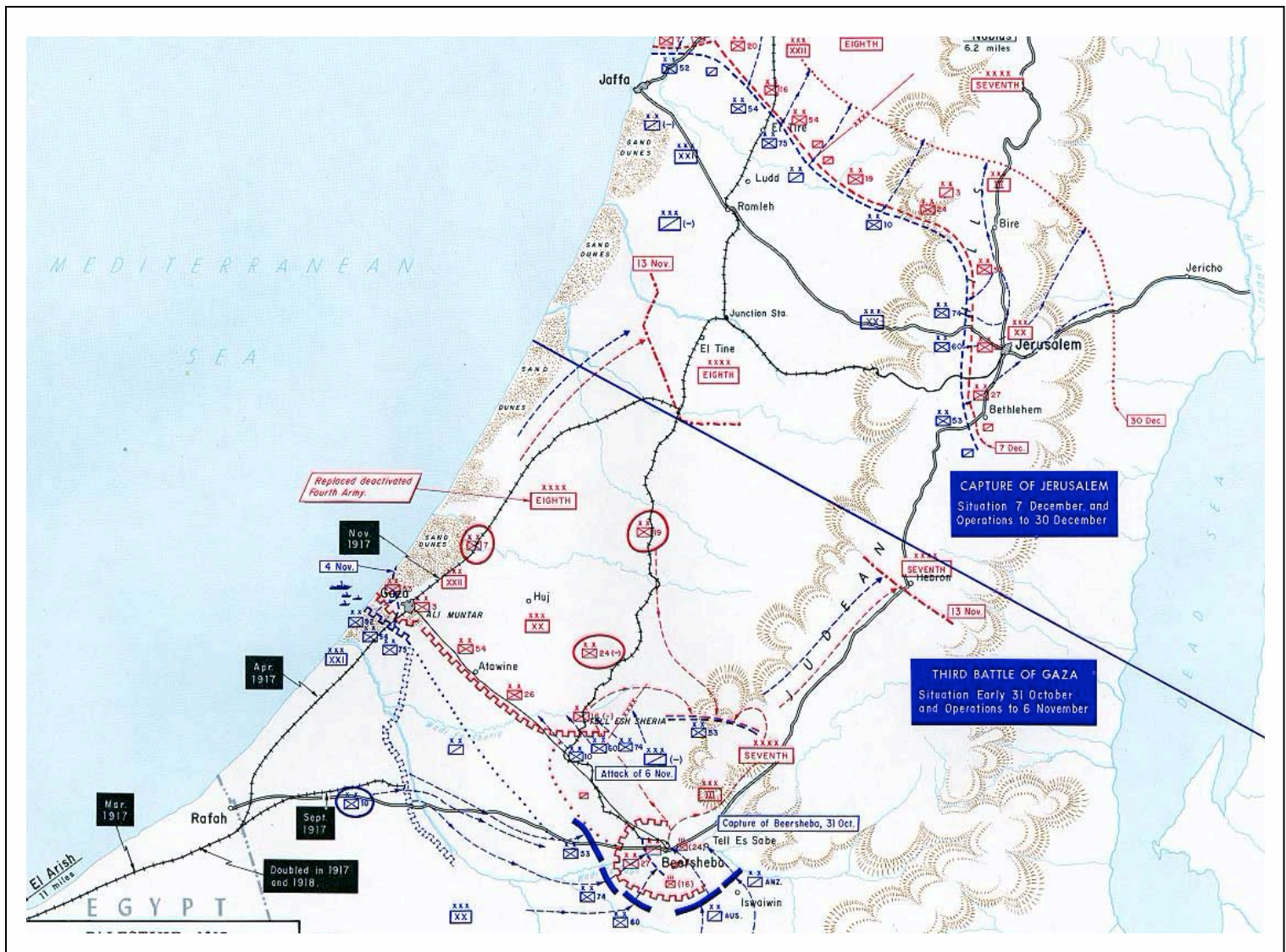
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|---------------------------|--|
| October 13 th | The Friends Autumn Lecture at Chavenage House 6.45 for 7.30pm.
Edward Lucas on <i>"Putin and the New Cold War"</i> |
| November 12 th | Armistice Service – Gloucester Cathedral 3pm.
The Anthem <i>'Oh Sing unto the Lord'</i> was composed by
Lt R G Anderson RGH who was killed on 12 November 1917. It was sung
at the Dedication Service for the RGH War Memorial – April 1922 |
| November 22 nd | Glos. Yeo. Ass. Talk, by Capt Dominic Rossi – Long Room, The Museum at 7.30pm.
<i>"The Battle for Tumbledown Mountain - The Experience of 2nd Bn. Scots Guards"</i>
Friends are invited to this Yeo Ass. Event. |

2018

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| May 3 rd | Friends Lunch in the Yeomanry Marquee – The Badminton Horse Trials. |
| June tbc | Friends Summer Reception at the Museum to see the new Dock refurbishment
and the exhibits marking the end of WW1. |

THE RGH IN PALESTINE 1917

Following the retreat of Turkish forces from northern Sinai after the battle of Romani, in August 1916, the next town to be captured on the line of advance northwards was Gaza. The first two attempts to take the town, in March and April 1917, ended in failure. In June 1917 Gen Archibald Murray was replaced as Commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force by Gen Edmund Allenby and a period of reorganization took place. Allenby quickly moved his headquarters from Cairo to Rafah, nearer to the area of operations. He was ruthless in getting rid of any officer whom he considered too old or unfit and, at the same time, demanded and got three more squadrons of Bristol Fighter aircraft, two more infantry divisions with their artillery, a further 5,000 men to bring his existing force up to strength and anti-aircraft guns. He also visited his troops to boost morale; *"It meant a lot of spit and polish... We sat on our horses for three hours without moving an eyelash with drawn swords that ultimately weighed five tons..... a battle is a picnic compared to a show of this sort"*. Delaying any attack until the end of October, he maintained secrecy about his intentions and deceived the Turks into believing an attack would take place along the coast line. His battle plan, however, was based on first capturing Beersheba to the south east of Gaza.



In late October Gaza was bombarded by air and by naval gunfire, in what was the heaviest bombardment carried out by the British outside the Western Front throughout the war. This convinced the Turks that the attack on Beersheba on 31st October, which was taken at the

charge by the Australian Light Horse, was merely a reconnaissance action when, in fact, its capture was essential for a water supply to extend the area of battle further northeast into the desert. *"RGH was under the Anzac Mounted Division who were protecting the British right flank. On 4th November, having just handed over their section of the outpost line to the Worcestershire Yeomanry, the Turks counter attacked and the RGH returned at the gallop and relieved the situation but there was some bitter fighting until darkness, when the enemy withdrew. Two officers and 12 ORs were wounded, two of whom died"*.

Although only six of the Desert Mounted Corps eleven brigades were present and were tired after a week of fighting, a pursuit northwards of the retreating Turks now began. The first action was at Huj, where the RGH was in reserve. While two squadrons of the Warwicks and one of the Worcesters took the Turkish position in an unstoppable charge, the Turks tried to mount a counter attack, This was stopped by a section of RGH machine guns under Captain Herbert, who would be killed four days later.

Early on 12th November, 5th Mounted Brigade assembled at Arak Station and the RGH formed the advance guard with orders to march on Balin. They occupied a hill to the north of Balin from where they could see a very large number of Turks advancing. More enemy were detraining from El Time station and the Worcestershire Yeomanry, less a squadron, came up in support. The enemy were engaged by the HAC guns attached to the Regiment and by the machine guns and some fierce fighting developed. The RGH had 7 killed and 13 wounded in the action, including Lt R G Anderson, who composed the anthem which will be sung during the Armistice Service this year, one hundred years to the day of his death.

By 13th November, the Action at El Mughar, meant that the British were now only 5 miles from Junction Station, which they took the next day. Allenby writes: *"If Qatia was the nadir of the yeomanry's performance in the campaign, El Mughar nearly reached the zenith, with Huj, perhaps half way between. El Mughar was a model of what could be achieved by cavalry charging in extended formation....."*. Having taken The Junction, Allenby's next objective was Jerusalem; Ramleh and Ludd quickly surrendered, followed by Jaffa. The mounted troops had been marching and fighting continuously since 31st October and had advanced about 75 miles. Despite the constant struggle for water, two major actions had been fought. They continued to advance further north, the RGH fighting dismounted at El Burj, on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. The Turks were desperately trying to drive the British off the high ground and on 1st December the Turks attacked the 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade and the RGH found themselves in some fierce fighting. An infantry company arrived as reinforcements but the Turkish attacks continued unsuccessfully until dawn, when they found it impossible to retreat; over 100 were taken prisoner. On the evening of 8th December the Turks withdrew from Jerusalem and the city surrendered the next day. Out of respect for its status as the Holy City, important to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Gen. Allenby entered Jerusalem on foot on 11th December.

Extracts from the draft of Maj. Gen. Robin Grist's book, "A Gallant County" have been used for this article. The Editor is grateful for this assistance.

A SOLDIER FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE – WITH GENERAL CUSTER 1876

Herod Thomas Liddiard was born in late 1851 or early 1852 (neither his birth nor baptism appear to have been registered) to parents who worked in one of the many cloth mills in the ‘Five Valleys’ of Stroud. Married in 1849, they lived in Butterow, above Bowbridge, in the parish of Rodborough. His only recorded sibling, Mary Elizabeth Julia was born in 1857.

The 1861 Census reveals that, by then, the family had moved to Dudbridge, a village near Stroud, on the Severn and Thames Canal. Both Herod and Mary were attending school, but she died at the age of nine; both parents’ are still listed as woollen cloth workers.

In February 1870 the *Western Daily Press* reports that he was found guilty in the Stroud Petty Sessions on one charge of stealing a whip and was sentenced to one month’s hard labour in Gloucester County Prison. On another charge of stealing two pulley blocks he received another three months, the second term of punishment to run following the first. Later in the year he was back in the same prison serving a further twelve months, to be followed by seven years ‘Police Supervision’, for stealing £4 from James Hyde, a provisions dealer, of Stroud. He was released from prison on 18 October 1871. The following day his mother died in Thrupp, near Stroud, and by 27 October he was listed as a passenger on the *SS Virginia* at Gravesend, en route to the United States via Le Havre, arriving in New York on 15 November.

Nothing is heard of him until he enlisted in the United States Army at Troy, upstate New York, on 4 December 1872 and soon after assigned to the 7th Cavalry, Company E (Grey Horse Troop), before being posted to South Carolina. By June 1874 he was a driver of artillery in the Black Hills Expedition to Dakota Territory, led by [Brevet Maj. Gen.] Lt Col. George A. Custer, but in April 1875 he was back to his old ways, sentenced to one month’s hard labour and a loss of \$5 for receiving a stolen army blanket and selling it to a civilian.

The 1876 campaign in the ongoing war against the ‘hostile Sioux’ (1854 -1890) was a three-column attack, with all 12 companies of the 7th Cavalry, led by Custer, in the column which set out from Fort Abraham Lincoln, (present-day) North Dakota, under the overall command of Brig. Gen. Alfred Terry, on the 17 May.

The Seventh was ordered to scout up Rosebud Creek and the upper Little Bighorn Valley, Montana Territory, for Indian activity and on 25 June they discovered a large village on the banks of the Little Bighorn River. Custer’s plan was for Maj. Marcus Reno’s three companies to attack the village from the south whilst he and his five-company column would press on to the north of the village and cut off the path of an Indian retreat. However, when Reno was confronted by a large number of warriors before he reached the village he decided to dismount his troops, thereby reducing his rifle



Looking down from ‘Last Stand Hill’.

strength by 25% as one man in four became a horse-holder. He then had to fall back. As Reno withdrew, leaving his dead and wounded behind, his movement quickly became a rout and his remaining men grouped on high ground, to be joined by three other companies under the command of Capt. Frederick Benteen, as well as troops from the rear escorting support elements, including Liddiard. He had been assigned to the pack train escort and it was on 'Reno Hill' that he was killed. One source suggests that he was shot in the abdomen whilst unpacking supplies from a mule on 25 June but didn't die until two days later.

Custer's command was rapidly overwhelmed on 'Last Stand Hill' and, having split his forces prior to the battle, his companies were 'out-gunned, massively out-numbered and finally out-maneuvered' and effectively annihilated: 268 men were killed or later died of their wounds. Custer traditionally has taken the blame as the 'architect of his own defeat', but Reno and Benteen, who both survived the battle, have also been heavily criticised for their part in the failure of command.

Liddiard was buried where he fell on 'Reno Hill' but in 1881 his remains were re-interred in the vault near the base of battle monument on which he is named.

"Whatever his chequered past Private Herod Liddiard, Company E, 7th United States Cavalry, will long be remembered on both sides of the Atlantic as a brave Cotswold lad who paid the ultimate price while in the service of his adopted country in arguably the most iconic battle in the history of the American West.

May he rest in peace." - **Peter Russell**

Although it has not been authenticated, there is a real possibility that another Gloucestershire man died on the Little Bighorn battlefield. It is thought that an Edward William Lloyd, killed on the ill-fated expedition, was the young man born in 1854 in Mitcheldean, Gloucestershire.

- This article is edited from the original website presentation by Peter Russell and thanks are given to him for his kind permission to publish this. See www.menwithcuster.com
- Another detailed source about the battle is: 'Red Sabbath – The Battle of Little Bighorn' by Col. Robert Kershaw (last year's Autumn Lecturer).

The Editor.



The Cavalry Memorial, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

2017 CHAVENAGE AUTMNN LECTURE

The Autumn Lecture this year will be held on Friday October 13th at Chavenage House when the speaker will be Mr. Edward Lucas, Senior Editor of 'The Economist'. "Putin and the New Cold War"



Edward Lucas published his book 'The New Cold War' in 2008 to great critical acclaim. Since then Russia has become more authoritarian and corrupt and its institutions weaker. He revised the book in 2014 with a sobering look at Russia's current aggression in the Crimea and Ukraine