

Dunstable Grammar School Old Boys



Died in The Great War
1914 - 1918



“Those who are interested, and hundreds of thousands must be most deeply and poignantly interested, in the treatment of our dead in France and Belgium, may rest assured that no labour is spared, and nothing that careful thought can provide is wanting to pay the tribute of reverence and honour which is due to those that have fallen for their country”.

Sir Frederic Kenyon

Imperial War Graves Commission 1918



Ernest Charles Bailey M M

Private

6th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment

Killed in Action

4 April 1918

Aged 22

Ernest was born in 1895 at Old Palace Road, Norwich, Norfolk, the son of Ernest Charles Bailey a Shoe Laster and Sarah Jane Bailey (nee Holmes).

After attending Dunstable Grammar School Ernest became a worker in the shoe industry before enlisting as Private 13570 with the 6th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment.

His Battalion landed in France on 26 July 1915 as part of the 18th Division and were subsequently involved in most phases of the First Battle of The Somme in 1916 and the major actions in 1917. Ernest won a Military Medal "For Bravery in The Field" most likely during the operations on The Ancre in early 1917, actions that were designed to distract the Germans as plans were made for a much larger operation once the ground had improved later in the Spring. Ernest's MM was Gazetted on 26 May 1917.

On 4 April, the Germans launched what was to become their final attack. Just after 5am in drenching rain, an intense German bombardment pounded allied positions. In dank mist German infantry attacked across sodden ground at 6.30am. In the British sector, the 18th and 14th Divisions, with 9th Australian Brigade, repelled three serious German assaults, but around 10am an enemy break-in on 14th Division's front, forced anxious withdrawals to positions barely a mile east of Villers-Bretonneux. North of the Roman Road the British defence held all day, but serious problems unfolded to the south during the afternoon.

In the wake of a strong attack around 4pm against the 18th Division the enemy penetrated Lancer Wood pressing defenders back; a gap was punched in the line and the way to Villers-Bretonneux lay open. Crucially, at 5.45pm, a determined counter-attack by 36th Australian Battalion stopped the German onrush; the line north of the railway was consolidated and the defensive perimeter east of Villers-Bretonneux re-established. The German drive towards Amiens had been stopped far short of its objectives; attacks would be renewed the following day. Ernest was killed in this battle.

Final resting place unknown

Remembered with Honour

Poziers Memorial

Picardie

France



Clifford Horace Banks

Private

17th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers

Killed in Action

10 September 1918

Aged 19

Clifford was born in 1899 at The Pound Farm, Astley, Worcestershire, the son of Thomas Banks a Farmer and Georgina Banks (nee Cookson).

He attended Dunstable Grammar School and in 1911 aged 12, was living with his family at The Castle Hotel, Bangor where his father was the hotel manager.

He enlisted at Luton as Private 56685 with the 17th Lancashire Fusiliers, a Bantam "Pals" Battalion, most likely in 1917 or early 1918 and was posted to France where the Battalion was located around Ypres as part of the 35th Division.

From the Autumn of 1917 through to April 1918 Clifford's Battalion was engaged in serious action, the fighting in Houthulst Forest, the Second Battle of Passchendaele, the First Battle of Bapaume and the Battle of Ypres after which they experienced a "quiet" period prior to the final 'Advance to Victory'.

However, the daily dangers of sniper fire and artillery bombardment was ever present and Clifford was killed as the Battalion was preparing for the final push.

Remembered with Honour

White House Cemetery

St. Jean-Les-Ypres

Belgium



Murray Stuart Benning

Lieutenant

3rd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment, attached to 1st Battalion

Died of wounds

1 November 1914

Aged 20

Murray was born on 23 August 1894 at 6, Priory Road, Dunstable, the son of Charles Crichton Stuart Benning, a Solicitor, and Ellen Benning (nee Goldring).

He attended Dunstable Grammar School and in 1911, aged 16, was boarding at the exclusive Uppingham School in Rutland where he was also a member of the O.T.C.

Before enlisting with the East Surrey Regiment in 1912 Murray was employed as a representative by Wright and Co., Rubber Brokers.

Murray was Gazetted to 2nd Lieutenant on 21 December 2012 and immediately following the declaration of war with Germany on 4 August 1914, he was promoted to full Lieutenant.

Murray, with the 1st Battalion, embarked to France, landing at Le Havre on 15 August 1914 and within days he was in action at The Battle of Mons. The Battle of Le Cateau, The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne and The Battle of La Bassée where he was mortally wounded.

The Surreys were in action at Richebourg L'Avoue, a village to the south of Neuve-Chappelle and had been subjected to tremendous shell and rifle fire for three days by greatly superior numbers of the enemy.

A brother officer wrote to Murray's parents: *"On this particular day, the Germans poured shot and shell at them in a perfect storm, and men who have been at the front all the time say that it was the hottest fire they ever saw. Lieutenant Benning was on the right of the trench, and was very cool, but a bullet caught him in the head. It was too hot to remove him from the trench, as by that time the Germans had got within about 150 yards and were actually shelling them with siege guns they used at Antwerp. Another officer knelt beside him to protect him from injury by shrapnel, and it was lucky he did, as a piece of quite six inches in length fell and caught him instead of striking the wounded Lieutenant in the face. At last we got under cover until a stretcher arrived to take him out of the line. He was operated on at Boulogne and seemed to be doing well until a relapse occurred."*

Remembered with Honour

Boulogne Eastern Cemetery

Boulogne-sur-Mer

France



Edward Neville Bewley

2nd Lieutenant,
2nd/6th Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment)
Killed in Action
26 June 1917
Aged 32

Edward was born on 2 February 1885, in Liverpool, son of Frank Bewley an Accountant, and Sarah Ann Bewley (nee Davies). He was educated at Birkenhead School before moving to Dunstable to live with an Aunt where he attended Dunstable Grammar School. In 1903 he went up to Caius College, Cambridge to study law.

In 1911 he was a solicitor's clerk and back in Dunstable again living with his aunt at Priory Gate, where his wife-to-be Doris Stuart Benning, sister of Murray Stuart Benning (see above), was visiting. They married on 28 December 1911.

In June 1915 Edward, by now a fully fledged solicitor, enlisted from the Inns of Court Officers' Training Corps as Private 4357. He was commissioned to join the 2nd/6th Battalion Sherwood Foresters on 8 October 1915 at Watford.

The Battalion left Watford and embarked for Ireland on 26th April 1916, two days after the start of the 'Easter Uprising'. They suffered significant casualties in Ireland where they remained until 12 January 1917 before returning to Fovant on the Salisbury Plain.

On 25 Feb 1917 the battalion embarked for France and Flanders, landing at Boulogne before marching on to Metz.

During March and April the Battalion was involved in the pursuit of the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line after which they had a period of rest.

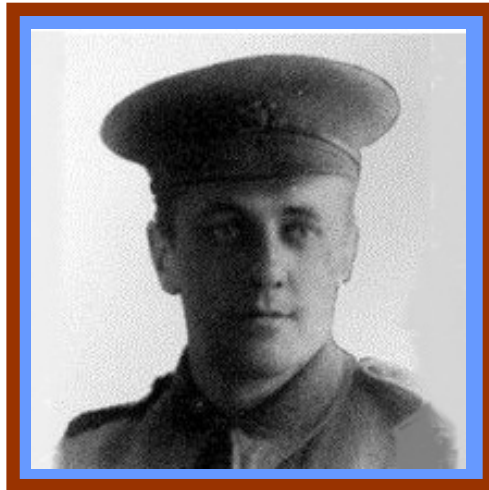
During this time Edward was attached to Battalion Headquarters and was killed by a sniper's bullet. In a letter to his widow, Edward's commanding officer wrote *"I personally feel his loss dreadfully and am writing on behalf of all ranks to offer you our deepest sympathy in your sad loss. Latterly your husband was attached to Battalion Headquarters and I then realised more than ever his splendid qualities and he will be sadly missed both as a good officer and a gallant gentleman."*

Remembered with Honour

Metz-En-Couture Communal Cemetery

Nord Pas-de-Calais

France



William Harper Brantom D C M

2nd Lieutenant

15th Battalion, London Regiment, Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles

Killed in Action

4 July 1916

Aged 27

William was born in 1889 at Southcourt Avenue, Lindslade, the son of William Brantom a Merchant and Furniture Dealer and Emily Florence Brantom (nee Harper).

After leaving Dunstable Grammar School, William worked as a clerk with the Civil Service.

He enlisted in September 1914 as Private 2658 and following a period of training around Watford, embarked to France on 17 March 1915.

His battalion was involved in the Battle of Festubert where he won the Distinguished Conduct Medal, Gazetted on 5 August 1915: *"For conspicuous gallantry on the 24th and 25th May 1915, at Festubert, when assisting as bomber in an assault on a hostile trench by another Regiment, which was short of bombers through casualties. Out of eight men supplied, four were killed and two wounded"*.

William was badly wounded in the fight and returned to England. While convalescing, on 12 October 1915, he received a commission to 2nd Lieutenant.

He returned to France in January 1916 and was involved in the failed attack on Vimy Ridge in March. He was fighting again in the first Battle of The Somme where he was killed in action on 4 July.

Remembered with Honour

Bois-De-Noulette British Cemetery

Aix-Noulette
France



William Henry Brown

Pioneer
Base Signal Depot, Royal Engineers
Died at sea
4 May 1917
Aged 38

William was born at 6 High Street South, Dunstable in 1880, the son of Walter Henry Brown, a Grocer and Helen Annette Brown (nee Hall).

William attended Dunstable Grammar School before becoming a Commercial Traveller in the drapery trade.

He enlisted as Pioneer 127433 in the Royal Engineers at Hampstead and was soon on his way to Egypt.

On 4 May 1917, 2,860 British troops, 200 officers and 60 Red Cross nurses were travelling on board the Transylvania, heading towards Alexandria in Egypt from Marseille.

Little did the crew, or their Japanese escorts - the Matsu and Sakaki - know, that on this sunny, blustery May day, the Commander of the German submarine U-63 was executing a carefully planned war strategy - to sink all British ships at sea.

At 10am, near the Island of Bergeggi in front of Savona, a torpedo struck the engine room of the Transylvania. The Matsu came alongside and began to take troops on board, while the Sakaki circled to force the submarine to remain submerged.

Twenty minutes later, a second torpedo was seen heading straight for the Matsu, but it managed to manoeuvre out of harms way. Instead, the torpedo struck the Transylvania, a second blow that sank the ship immediately. Ten crew members, 29 army officers and 373 soldiers, including William Henry Brown, perished.

Remembered with Honour

Savona Town Cemetery
Provincia di Savona
Italy



Charles Frederick Burley

2nd Lieutenant
10th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment
Killed in Action
18 November 1916
Aged 18

Charles was born in 1898, at 10, Old Bedford Road, Luton, the second son of Richard Burley, a Straw Hat Manufacturer and Clara Annie Burley (nee Harris).

Charles enlisted with the Middlesex Regiment as Private 1209 in 1915 and entered the war in France on 17 November of that year. After seeing action with the Middlesex Regiment he was commissioned into the Royal Warwickshire Regiment as a 2nd Lieutenant on 5 September 1916 and shortly after, on 13 October 1916, joined his Battalion at Bois du Warnimont, south west of Arras.

For the next five weeks he experienced front line action and numerous days of drilling and training when in the reserve and support lines.

On 17 November, during The Battle of The Ancre, the last significant British attack of the Battle of the Somme before the winter weather forced a pause in British attacks, the battalion moved up to the front line close to Grandcourt to prepare for the attack the following morning.

At 6.10am Charles and the rest of 'C' Company moved forward and took cover in shell holes and as soon as the artillery barrage commenced they advanced.

It was still dark and the heavy snowfall reduced visibility considerably. At 6.30am the officer commanding 'A' Company re-appeared saying that everyone had lost their way due to the poor visibility and were taking heavy casualties.

Men from 'C' Company began to arrive back saying that they had been unable to get through the German wire and had been forced to withdraw.

Charles was reported missing believed killed at 7am. Four officers and 82 other ranks also lost their lives in the failed attack.

Final resting place unknown

Remembered with Honour

Thiepval Memorial

Picardie
France



Stanley Burnet

Lieutenant

5th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment, Royal Flying Corps

Died

31 May 1918

Aged 19

Stanley was born on 27 July 1898 at 84 Dunstable Road, Luton, the son of Arthur Abraham Burnet, a Hat Materials Merchant and Gertrude Kate Burnet (nee Heath). Stanley was privately educated and attended Dunstable Grammar School for two terms in 1908 before going on to board at King William's College in the Isle of Man.

In 1915 Stanley joined the Inns of Court OTC and on 9 December that year he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant into the Bedfordshire Regiment. Promotion to full Lieutenant followed in July 1917. Keen to fly, he attended the Ruffy-Baumann School of Flying at Acton, graduating on 4 March 1918 and soon after, on 19 April 1918, he transferred to the RFC 3 Training Depot Squadron.

Continuing his training, on 27 May 1918 he transferred to the fledgling Royal Air Force 17 Training Squadron based at Yatesbury Aerodrome in Wiltshire. A few days later he was practicing flying manoeuvres with a fellow pilot Ernest Tracey when their machines collided and crashed to the ground. While Lieutenant Tracey was killed instantly, Stanley was taken to hospital where he died two hours later "from shock caused by multiple injuries and burns suffered in the accident."

Remembered with Honour

Luton General Cemetery

Luton

Bedfordshire



Roden Latham Chatterton

Captain

1st Battalion, Leinster Regiment attached to The Royal Flying Corps

Died of injuries received in a flying accident

29 March 1918

Aged 22

Roden was born in India in on 13 July 1895, the only son of Colonel George Davenport Latham Chatterton, Indian Army and Ella Maud Chatterton. As a young child he came to England with his Mother, living at various addresses and from 1905 to 1908 attended Dunstable Grammar School. In 1911 he was lodging at 25 Albany Road, Bedford, attending Bedford School.

He enlisted with 1st Battalion Leinster Regiment soon after war was declared and was posted to France on 18 January 1915.

He saw fighting with the Leinsters during the action of St Eloi and the Second Battle of Ypres and when his Battalion moved on to Salonika in November 1915, Roden gained an attachment to The Royal Flying Corps.

He was training in England when he was killed in a flying accident.

Remembered with Honour

Faversham Borough Cemetery

Whitstable Road

Kent



Donald Chessum Cockerell

2nd Lieutenant

5th Battalion, London Regiment, London Rifle Brigade

Killed in Action

6 November 1918

Aged 22

Donald was born on 8 February 1896 at Stoke Newington, London, the son of Charles Cockerell, a mineral water manufacturer and Edith Mary Cockerell (nee Chessum).

Donald's early years were spent in Southend-on-Sea and in 1911 he was boarding at Dunstable Grammar School. In 1912 he went on to further education in Germany.

He joined the 5th Battalion, London Regiment in 1916 and embarked to France on 24 January 1917. Assigned to 'A' Company, he saw action throughout 1917 at The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, The First Battle of the Scarpe, The Third Battle of the Scarpe, The Battle of Langemarck, The capture of Tadpole Copse and The capture of Bourslon Wood.

The action for Donald continued into 1918 with The First Battle of Arras during March. A short break in the action followed when, on 31 July 1918 he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant.

From August the German retreat was in full flow when in early November the battle "The passage of the Grand Honelle" began.

Donald's regiment, as part of the 169th Brigade in the 56th Division, on the 5 November attacked the high ground to the east of the River Aunelle. His regiment led the attack at 5.30am and by 7.30am had captured the village of Angreau. Here they were checked by the enemy, who occupied the Woods on both banks of the Honnelle River.

The Germans had determined to defend the crossing of the river and had an excellent position on the eastern bank where they held the Bois de Beaufort in strength.

The advance was to be resumed at 5.30am on 6 November but just before that hour the German artillery put down a heavy barrage of gas shells. Undaunted, the 2nd Londons on the right and the London Rifle Brigade on the left attacked in gas masks and successfully crossed the river. During the night of 6/7 November the London Rifle Brigade was relieved but by this time Donald was already dead, just 5 days before The Armistice.

Remembered with Honour

Angreau Communal Cemetery

Mons
Belgium



Ernest Frederick Collins

Private

19th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment

Killed in Action

2 June 1918

Aged 18

Ernest, born at 22 West Bridge Cottages, Tavistock, Devon on 28 August 1899, was one of thirteen children born to Daniel Collins, a general labourer and Mary Jane Collins (nee Kingdon).

Ernest attended school Plymouth Road School and Dunstable Grammar School. In September 1917 he enlisted in the Hampshire Regiment and later transferred as Private G/44651 to the 19th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.

His Battalion was involved in many of the early 1918 actions that made up the Final Advance in Flanders and on 2 June a fierce contest was going on some way to the south of the Middlesex's position as efforts were made to check the German advance from the Aisne. Ernest's company were in the support trenches behind the front line, not involved in a battle but experiencing sporadic shell and sniper fire when he was killed by a shell.

Remembered with Honour

Montigny Communal Cemetery

Picardie

France



Brian Clarke Cumberland

Captain
1/5th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment
Killed in Action
15 August 1915
Aged 26

Brian was born on 11 March 1889 at Crawley Green Road, Luton, the son of Hugh Cumberland, J.P., C.A., a Land Agent/Auctioneer/Surveyor and Jeanie Cumberland (nee Clarke). After his Mother died in 1897 Brian went to boarding school in Harpenden before attending Dunstable Grammar School.

On leaving school Brian trained as a surveyor and auctioneer in High Wycombe before joining his Father's business in 1911.

Brian was a keen sportsman and a member of South Beds Golf Club. He was also a member of the St. John The Baptist Lodge of Freemasons.

In 1911 he obtained a 2nd Lieutenancy with the Bedfordshire Territorials based in Park Street, Luton and was promoted to Lieutenant on 2 May 1913. Soon after war was declared in August 1914 he was promoted to Captain.

On 6 August 1915 the British and Commonwealth forces opened up a new front on the Gallipoli peninsular with the intention of breaking the deadlock. New landings were made in the Suvla Bay area with the intention of taking the surrounding hills and attacking the Turkish Army from the rear and forcing their way to victory.

Brian arrived on 12 August 1915 and three days later on the afternoon of 15 August, they went into action. Described in the War Diaries: *"The first objective was very strongly held by the Turks and 'A' Company, superbly led by Brian Cumberland had borne the brunt of the first bayonet charge, but casualties were described as "fairly light". Kidney Hill was to prove different as his company were all but shattered during the attack that followed."*

He was described by his Battalion CO as a *"superb leader. He called on his company for the last charge up the crest (towards Kidney Hill itself) and in the act of waving them on, he was shot through the head."*

Remembered with Honour

Azmak Cemetery, Suvla
Gallipoli
Turkey



Basil Pryce Cuxson

2nd Lieutenant
2nd Battalion, Royal Scots Lothian Regiment
Killed in Action
14 July 1915
Aged 23

Basil was born at 11 Edith Grove, Chelsea in 1890, the son of George Austin Pryce Cuxson, a Quantity Surveyor, and Blanche Cuxson (nee De Michele).

In 1901 Basil was boarding at Dunstable Grammar School and by 1911 had become a bank clerk, living in Chislehurst, Kent.

Basil enlisted as Private 2360 with the 28th Battalion, London Regiment that was established as an Officers Training Corps. He arrived at St Omer in April 1915 before being commissioned 2nd Lieutenant to the 2nd Battalion, Royal Scots Lothian Regiment on 10 June 1915. The following week his Battalion was in action in the First Attack on Bellewaarde in which Basil survived.

The general situation on the Western Front at this time was that it was a period of static warfare, where no great territorial gains were made but even so, it was a dangerous place where the army suffered average losses of 300 men a day from sniping and shellfire, while they continued to gradually improve and consolidate the trenches.

The 2nd Battalion, Royal Scots Lothian Regiment were situated in the Ypres area throughout this period during which time Basil lost his life.

Remembered with Honour

Bedford House Cemetery

Ypres
Belgium



Percy Francis Darby

Private

1st/24th Battalion, London Regiment

Killed in Action

26 May 1915

Aged 19

Percy, born in 1895 at 6 Dallow Road, Luton, was the eldest son of George Francis Darby, a Departmental Manager at a straw hat factory and Emily Darby (nee Bartlett).

He attended Dunstable Grammar School and in 1911 was working in a straw hat factory as a warehouse boy.

Percy enlisted as Private 2676 in the 1st/24th Battalion, London Regiment at St. Albans, early in 1915. He arrived in France on 16 March that year and shortly after, his battalion was allocated to the 142nd Brigade in 47th (2nd London) Division.

Within weeks of arriving in France, in May 1915, the Battle of Festubert began and the following account of the action on 25 May has been taken from the War Diaries:

"6.30pm: 47th Division's attack, using the 142nd Brigade, achieves success in advancing 400 yards towards Chapelle St Roch, on a thousand yard front. However, the advance takes them into an area that can be covered by heavy German artillery south of the canal near Auchy-les-la-Bassée. This enemy artillery is beyond the range of British guns, and it does great damage to the troops who have advanced. The Brigade lost some 980 casualties in this shelling, but held on to its position. During the evening, it repulsed at least one German counter-attack, using crude grenades that more often than not failed to explode or did so prematurely".

Percy was killed in the action and his body was never recovered.

Final resting place unknown

Remembered with Honour

Le Touret Memorial

Richebourg-l'Avoue

France



Raymond Eric Deacon

2nd Lieutenant

10th North Staffordshire Regiment, attached to 8th Lancashire Fusiliers

Killed in Action

7 August 1915

Aged 23

Raymond, born in 1891 at 11 Dunstable Road, Luton, was the youngest son of Edwin Deacon, a Jeweller and Annie Deacon (nee Trott).

Raymond was a pupil at Dunstable Grammar School and on leaving school he took an up apprenticeship as an Hydraulic Engineer.

He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in to the 10th Battalion, North Staffordshire Regiment later to be attached to the 8th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers. He landed at Cape Helles, Gallipoli on 16 June 1915.

The Division engaged in various actions including, on 6 August, the Battle of Krithia Vineyard, a battle that was originally intended as a minor British action at Helles on the Gallipoli peninsula to divert attention from the imminent launch of the August Offensive, but instead, the British commander, Brigadier General H.E. Street, mounted a futile and bloody series of attacks that in the end gained a small patch of ground known as "The Vineyard".

At around 9:40 am on the morning of 7 August Raymond's Division attacked and though they managed to break through the line held by the Ottoman 13th Division, they were forced back by a counter-attack. The Ottomans counter-attacked repeatedly from 7 August to 9 August and fighting in the area continued until 13 August. When it finally subsided more than 4,000 British troops had been killed, wounded or were missing, one being Raymond.

Final resting place unknown

Remembered with Honour

Helles Memorial

Gallipoli

Turkey



Harold Ernest Dewar M C

Lieutenant

11th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment.

Died of wounds

11 July 1916

Aged 27

Harold was born in 1888, at 16 Spring Street, Paddington, the son of Thomas Dewar and Constance Jane Dewar (nee Henderson).

He enlisted as a Private with the Royal Fusiliers and was later commissioned to 2nd Lieutenant with the 11th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment that landed in France on the 26 September 1915, the division concentrating in the area of Nieppe in the Lys Valley. On the 26 October they transferred to 7th Brigade with the 25th Division.

Their first action was in defence of the German attack on Vimy Ridge in May 1916. It was during this action that Harold won his Military Cross, Gazetted on 5 June 1916.

The Battalion then moved to The Somme, joining the Battle of Albert after the main attack. The 11th Cheshires fought almost continually from 3 July and then, on 10 July Harold's battalion tried to get forward from the Albert–Bapaume road, along a trench which led behind the village. Several German counter-attacks were repulsed but unfortunately Harold was wounded in this action and died the next day at the casualty clearing station.

According to the Division's history, the 11th Cheshires had 321 casualties in the attack, including 14 officers and all of the company commanders.

Remembered with Honour

Heilly Station Cemetery

Mericourt-L'Abbe

France



Maurice Wilfred Dickens

Lieutenant
25th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps.
Killed in Action
27 February 1918
Aged 22

Maurice, the son of Frederick Dickens and Elizabeth Anne Dickens (nee Holbrow), both School Teachers at Kensworth School, was born on 9 June 1895 at The School House, Kensworth. He attended the village school and then in 1906, with a Chew's Scholarship, Dunstable Grammar School. He went on to London University in 1912 where he graduated with a BSc.

He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant into The 25th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps on 12 June 1916.

The Squadron went to St Omer in France on 20 February 1916 as a long-range reconnaissance and fighter unit. Initially the Squadron was tasked with flying into the routes adopted by the German aircraft on their way to raid England and intercepting them. But this never really worked and soon the squadron was transferred to the Western Front to protect GHQ and Audruicq, where a considerable ammunition dump was situated.

On 11 October 1917 the Squadron moved to Boisinghem where it came under the orders of the 9th Wing. From this date the Squadron activities increased dramatically. Instead of operating over an area limited to the extent on one army front, its duties involved the fronts covered by all the British Armies. Its work now consisted of long-range reconnaissance, photography and bombing of distant targets outside the Army area.

During the first 2 months of 1918 the Squadron did less bombing and made an increasing number of photographic reconnaissance sorties. It was during this period that Maurice was killed.

Remembered with Honour

Etaples Military Cemetery

Nord-Pas-de-Calais

France



Boyd Burnett Geake

2nd Lieutenant
9th Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment
Killed in Action
1 July 1916
Aged 28

Boyd was born in 1888 at Westminster, London, the son of John Burnett Geake a Draper and Emily Geake (nee Morgan). He attended Dunstable Grammar School and University College, London.

After finishing his education Boyd became a Motor Car Agent and soon after war was declared in 1914 he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant into the 9th Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment, a unit of the 70th Brigade in the 23rd Division.

His battalion spent most of the next 12 months at home and in the Spring of 1915 Boyd married Dorothy May Cutforth at Dorking, Surrey.

On 25 August that year the Battalion left for France, landing at Boulogne before moving to the front where they went into the reserve.

As a result of huge casualties during the Battle of Loos, Boyd's Battalion was transferred into the 8th Division in October 1915 and began to prepare for what is now known as the First Battle of The Somme.

On the first day of the battle, 1 July, the 9th Battalion York and Lancasters were ordered to attack uphill eastward from the eastern edge of Authuille Wood, along a line just to the south of The Nab crossroads. The German front line was well entrenched and, a short distance to the north of the Battalion's line of advance, the German line turned westwards to form the Leipzig Salient, known to the British as the Thiepval Spur. Consequently, the battalion was exposed to devastating fire from high ground ahead of them and on their left and almost half of the attacking force were killed in No Man's Land by machine gun fire.

A survivor later wrote "*We went forward yesterday against a storm of death against which no man born of woman could stand. One day the history of what our Brigade did will be written; at present I know little. I know that we charged again and again I never want to see it again, these weary shattered men stumbling out.*"

Remembered with Honour

Blighty Valley Cemetery, Authuille Wood
Picardie
France