



Oliver Henry Cecil Odell



Oliver Henry Cecil Odell was born in Uppingham on 27th December 1894. His father, Thomas Henry Odell was originally from Leicester. His mother, Annie Adelaide Odell was born in Gawber, South Australia.

Family History

In 1901, Thomas Odell, a bank manager, and his family were living in Adderley Street, Uppingham. With Thomas & Annie were their children Daisy, Oliver and Kathleen. The family had two servants Charlotte Cunnington a cook, Frances Brown a housemaid.

Oliver Odell attended Oakham School between 1907-1911.

The family relocated to Preston, Rutland by 1911.

Thomas Odell died in 1913.

Oliver Odell emigrated to Canada after completing his education, with the intention of becoming a farmer but ended up working in insurance. He was in Canada when war broke out.

Military History



Oliver Odell enlisted for the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force in Valcartier, Quebec on 22nd September 1914. He served as a Private (25985) in the 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment).

Oliver Odell entered the theatre of war in February 1915.

In November 1915 he was commissioned into the 1st/3rd (City of London Battalion), Royal Fusiliers.

2nd Lieutenant Oliver Odell was killed in action on 10th September 1916 during the Battle of Ginchy. He was killed by shellfire. He was 21 years old.

Oliver Odell is buried at Flatiron Copse Cemetery.

2nd Lieutenant Oliver Odell is commemorated on the Gretton War Memorial, Preston War Memorial and at Oakham School and King's College, Cambridge.

Flatiron Copse was the name given by the army to a small plantation a little to the east of Mametz Wood.

The ground was taken by the 3rd and 7th Divisions on 14 July 1916 and an advanced dressing station was established at the copse. The cemetery was begun later that month and it remained in use until April 1917. Two further burials were made in August 1918 and after the Armistice, more than 1,100 graves were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields and □ from smaller cemeteries, including:- □

CATERPILLAR CEMETERY, MONTAUBAN, in "Caterpillar Wood". It contained the graves of 21 soldiers from the United Kingdom who fell in July 1916, and of whom 12 belonged to the 6th and 7th Gordons.

CROSS ROADS CEMETERY, BAZENTIN, near the cross-roads at the North end of Bazentin-le-Grand. Here were buried 15 soldiers from the United Kingdom and four from New Zealand, who fell in 1916-1917. □

MAMETZ WOOD CEMETERY, outside the Western edge of Mametz Wood, in which 18 soldiers from the United Kingdom were buried in 1916.

QUADRANGLE CEMETERY, BAZENTIN, between Bottom Wood and Mametz Wood, named from a small rectangular copse. Here were buried, in 1916, 32 soldiers from the United Kingdom and three from Australia, of whom 22 were artillerymen.



VALLEY CEMETERY, MONTAUBAN, between the Briqueterie and Maltzhorn Farm, in which 72 soldiers from the United Kingdom were buried in August and September, 1916.

VILLA WOOD CEMETERIES No.1 and No.2, CONTALMAISON, near a small copse North of Mametz Wood. They contained the graves of 62 soldiers from the United Kingdom who fell in 1916.

Almost all the concentrated graves are those of men who died in the summer and autumn of 1916. □□There are now 1,572 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 420 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 36 casualties known or believed to be buried among them, and nine buried in Mametz Wood Cemetery whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Gretton History Society

Illustrated London News

Lest We Forget

Oliver Henry Cecil Odell
of the 1st/3rd (City of London Battalion), Royal Fusiliers.

d. 10th September 1916

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