

Frederick Littlewood

1895 - 1916

Educated at Exeter College Oxford

Died probably south of Ypres, aged 20, on 5 March 1916

Family and Education

Frederick William Littlewood was born between July and September 1895 in Kearsley, Bolton, Lancashire. His father, Frederick Lincoln Littlewood, was Superintendent of Agents for a Friendly Collecting Society. His mother was Bertha Alice and he had three brothers and a sister. In 1911 he was at school aged 15, living with his family at 21 Park Rd, Walkden, near Barton-upon-Irwell. In 1914 he began studying at Exeter College Oxford. However, after little more than a term he enlisted on 23 February 1915.

War Service: 8th (Service) Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment

Frederick was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 8th Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment, while it was still in England. It landed in Boulogne on 27 August 1915, initially as part of the 23rd Division, which took responsibility for a front-line sector from 14 September, and subsequently held the front at Bois-Grenier. On 18 October the battalion was transferred to 8th Division to be trained by battle-hardened troops, who had recently been involved in a failed diversionary action at Bois-Grenier.

The battalion continued for many months without being involved in major action, and at some point Frederick was promoted to Lieutenant. As an officer he would have been particularly exposed to danger, and he seems to have been a casualty of day-to-day trench warfare when he died on 5 March 1916, aged 20. His body was recovered and he is buried at Rue-David Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix, which is about 20 miles south of Ypres. When he died his parents were apparently living in Ormskirk, Lancashire.

This is the story of one of the men who appear on a war memorial at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church in Oxford, UK. These stories were compiled in 2018-19 from a variety of family history and military sources. In particular, Chris Baker's site, 'The Long, Long Trail' has provided valuable details of the men's experience of battle: <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/>