

Frederick Beale

1886 - 1916

Born and married in Oxford

Carter

Died at Bois-Grenier, aged 29, on 9 February 1916

Family

Frederick Joseph Beale was born at 37 Jericho Street, Oxford, on 22 November 1886, and was his parents' first child. His father was Frederick George Beale, also born in Oxford, and his mother was Sarah Fanny Painton of Tubney, which was then in Berkshire.

In 1891 Frederick's father was working as a printer's labourer. In the 1901 census he was described as a general labourer, and Frederick had six younger sisters and brothers. That year his mother died, aged 38. In 1903 his father married Sarah Kate Nash, and they eventually had seven more children. Although the older children had been baptised at St Paul's Church, from 1910 onwards the baptisms took place at Walton Street Methodist Church.

In 1911 Frederick, now aged 24 and described as a carter, married Alice Frances Bull of 13A Gloucester Street. They seem to have moved to Stapleford in Nottinghamshire.

War Service: 11th (Service) Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers

Frederick enlisted in Nottingham, and he is recorded as living at Castle Bytham in Lincolnshire. He joined the 11th Service Battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers and served as a Private. This battalion spent the winter of 1914 in Aldershot and by Feb 1915 were in Shorncliffe Kent. Frederick arrived with them in France in the third week of August 1915. There they underwent battlefield training and took over trenches on 14 September.

The unit soon experienced action during the Battle of Loos, the first major British offensive of the war. From 25 September to 8 October they held the front at Bois-Grenier, and were not finally relieved until the end of January 1916. Then they were established for a rest around Bruay, but Frederick was killed on 9 February before they moved back into the front line. He was probably struck by shrapnel from a random shell.

He was aged 29 and was buried at Bois-Grenier. He is also remembered on the war memorial at St Helen's Church in Stapleford, Nottingham. In the early 1920s his widow was living at Castle Bytham.

This is the story of one of the men who appear on the war memorial of Walton Street Methodist Church, which can now be seen at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church in Oxford, UK. These stories were compiled in 2019 based on detailed research by Stephanie Jenkins

(http://www.oxfordhistory.org.uk/war/walton_street_chapel/index.html), supplemented by information from a variety of military sources.