



Bromley A Basford

1879 - 1917

118 Kedleston Road



Bromley was the oldest of ten children born to Bromley Basford, senior proprietor of the Derby Daily Telegraph, and his wife Louisa. While Brom was a child the family moved around, living in houses on Uttoxeter New Road, Gerard Street, and then Burton Road where they settled for many years.

He attended Whitworth School, Green Hill, Derby and worked for his father's company after his education was complete. For a number of years he worked in the editorial department of the newspaper, later moving to the commercial department where he became Business Manager. In April 1908 he married Constance Annie Buckley whose family lived on North Street, and the couple settled in nearby Arthur Street. They probably moved to 118 Kedleston Road in the early years of the war. He an active member of Victoria Street Congregational Church where the couple married. He also served on the committee of Derby Liberal Club. Constance and Bromley shared a love of poetry. He also had a great sense of humour and family members recall that:

“ Brom was remembered as a great joker - whoopee cushions, etc - which rather disconcerted the sober Buckleys”

When war broke out Bromley was keen to volunteer, although already aged 36, and joined the Officer Training Corps (Inns of

Court unit nicknamed “the Devil’s Own”) in November 1915. After completing his training he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant with the 5th Notts & Derby Regiment and posted to serve in France and Flanders in September 1916.

By this time three of his brothers were in the services; one had been serving for two years in East Africa and another was in Salonika, Greece with the Derbyshire Yeomanry, while another was serving with the Royal Fusiliers in Edinburgh.



Photograph by kind permission of Constance's family

By autumn 1917 he was attached to the 6th Leicestershire Regiment which was fighting near Polygon Wood, between Ypres and Zonnebeke, (West Flanders, Belgium).

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On 4 October 1917 an offensive was launched with the aim of capturing German positions on the Broodseinde Ridge. Unbeknown to the Allies, the Germans had also planned an attack for the same day but the allied attack started at 6 am – 10 minutes before the German attack was timed to start.

It was while returning to the trenches to join the attack following a period of rest that “Brom”, as he was known to both his family and comrades, was killed on the first day of the offensive.

His commanding officer wrote the following:

“It has really been a most awful blow to myself and to my company officers, and to all the men... He was most popular with all the officers and men, and by his own platoon and men was almost idolized. His cheery disposition under very trying conditions was wonderful. His death was instantaneous. He was marching up to the line with the company when an odd shell fell at the head of his platoon, killing him, another officer, a corporal and five men. His death was caused by the shock of the explosion”.

During the battle, part of the Battle of Passchendaele (3rd Battle of Ypres), British Empire casualties (many from New Zealand and Australia) amounted to about 20,000 wounded, missing and dead, with German losses believed to be 35,000 which included 5,000 men taken prisoner.



Bedford House Cemetery : Wernercv (Wikimedia Commons)

Bromley is buried at Bedford House Cemetery, Ypres, West Flanders. He was 38 years old.

(There is an information sheet on his wife Constance who served as a nurse).