

2ND LIEUTENANT FREDERICK JOHN BROTHERIDGE

No.3 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Died aged 19 on 19 May 1918

Remembered with honour on the *Arras Flying Services Memorial, France*

Commemorated in Tewkesbury only on the Grammar School Memorial at the Town Hall



Arras Flying Services Memorial



Squadron badge 1912



No.3 Squadron RAF

FREDERICK JOHN BROTHERIDGE was born in 1899 in Ashleworth to Thomas Brotheridge and Clara Ann (formerly Jones). Thomas was a Farmer, originally from Tirley, and Clara was born in Tuffley. In 1901 Frederick was living at Colways Farm, Ashleworth, with his parents, widowed grandmother Ann Jones and an older brother, George Hawkins. In 1911 he was still living in the same household with the addition of another brother and two sisters. Both Frederick and George were educated in part at Tewkesbury Grammar School, which their father (who died in 1919) also attended, and in part at Kings School, Gloucester.

Frederick joined the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), as it was at the time, in 1917. He was passed fit to serve as a Pilot on 16 August 1917 and was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant on 25 October. He spent the next few months with a variety of units, including Training squadrons, before being posted on 27 March 1918 to No.3 Squadron in France. A few days later (1 April) the RFC was renamed the Royal Air Force.

No.3 Squadron, one of the three founder squadrons of the RFC, had been formed in May 1912 and posted to France in August 1914. The squadron is unique in the Royal Air Force for having two official badges. The squadron also had the dubious distinction of providing Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron, with his final two kills (79th and 80th) on 20 April 1918 – the day before he was himself shot down and killed.

When Frederick joined No.3 Squadron they were flying Sopwith Camels in a fighter/scout role. On 19 May 1918 he was flying Sopwith Camel Serial No. D6433 on a 'Wireless Interruption Patrol' (destroying enemy wireless communications) and was involved in combat with an enemy patrol. He was flying in the company of Captain John Aldred who was in Camel Serial No. C1655, and together they shot down a two-seater German aircraft. However, in the ensuing dogfight Frederick was himself shot down (claimed by German Ace, Offizierstellvertreter Robert Heibert of Jasta 46) and his aircraft was seen 'going down in flames and out of control'.

2nd Lieutenant Frederick John Brotheridge died on 19 May 1918. His body was neither recovered nor identified, and his name is commemorated on the *Arras Flying Services Memorial* in *Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery*, Arras. He is not recorded as a Tewkesbury volunteer although both he and his older brother, **Private George Hawkins Brotheridge** [†] of the 1st/5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, who was killed on 21 October 1918, are commemorated on the *Tewkesbury Grammar School Memorial*, displayed at the Town Hall.

Neither brother is included on the Ashleworth War Memorial but they are commemorated on the Roll of Honour at King's School, Gloucester, and honoured during the annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the school as one of 'The King's Fallen WWI'.