

2ND LIEUTENANT FRANK ERNEST HALE

13th King's Royal Rifle Corps
Died aged 25 on 25 August 1918

Remembered with honour in *Bucquoy Communal Cemetery Extension, France*; B 35
Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey and
on the Congregational Chapel Memorial (now located in the Methodist Church)



Bucquoy Communal Cemetery Extension



2nd Lt. F. E. Hale



King's Royal Rifle Corps

FRANK ERNEST HALE was born in Tewkesbury in 1893 to James Hale, a Foreman at a corn mill and Mary Ann (formerly Morris). Both came from Tewkesbury and they had a total of 10 children, six of whom were still alive in 1911. At that time, Frank was living with his parents and younger sister at 11 Cotteswolde Place. He was educated firstly at Frosts Private School at 27 High Street and then at Barton Road School before he won a County Scholarship to Tewkesbury Grammar School. The headmaster was Joseph Edward Priestley, one of whose sons, Raymond Priestley, was an early Antarctic explorer. Frank won a place at Bristol University and, after three years, graduated as a 'trained certificated assistant', winning a position in 1913 as a schoolmaster at the County Council Schools, Chance Street. He was one of the first patrol leaders in the Boy Scouts in Tewkesbury.

After Frank had been teaching for a year, war broke out and he returned to Bristol to volunteer, enlisting in the Gloucestershire Regiment on 19 September 1914. He joined the 1st/6th Battalion, a pre-war Territorial Force unit, part of the 48th (South Midland) Division. Frank landed in Boulogne with the battalion at the end of March 1915 and was therefore entitled to the '1914-15 Star' medal.

Frank quickly rose to the rank of Sergeant and, after two years, was granted a commission in the 5th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps, confirmed in the *London Gazette* of 20 June 1917. After training, he returned to France in the autumn of 1917. As an officer he was 'Men-

tioned in Despatches' by his Divisional Commander: *'to commend the good reconnaissance carried out by 2nd Lt. Hale by daylight on 2nd August which resulted in valuable information being obtained.. I have noticed several good patrols done by ... Lt. Hale'*.

At some stage, Frank was transferred to the 13th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps, a Kitchener's Army unit which was originally raised in Winchester in October 1914 and landed at Boulogne on 31 July 1915. In 1918 the battalion was part of the 111th Infantry Brigade in 37th Division. In August of that year, the Division was part of the Third Army in the Somme sector, in the forefront of the campaign known as *'The Last Hundred Days'*, which saw the Allies inflict a series of crushing defeats on the German Army, culminating in the Armistice. The Division took part in the *Second Battles of the Somme 1918*.

2nd Lieutenant Frank Ernest Hale died on 25 August 1918, killed instantaneously by a machine gun bullet in the head. The Officer who reported his death to his parents, stated that he had participated in three battalion attacks in four days *'in each of which your boy played a prominent and brilliant part. He had done splendid work and deserved the honour which he would have had if he had lived'*. He was said to possess a *'genial manner'* and to have been *'engaged to a young lady teacher'*. His body was recovered and he is buried in the *Bucquoy Communal Cemetery Extension*, near Arras in France.