



## Ralph FOWLER

Second Lieutenant. 6<sup>th</sup> Bn. Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

### At KES:

Ralph lived in Fulham and having father he came to KES in 1897. He was described as a good "tailor" and when he left in 1901 he became a clerk.

**Date of Death: 16<sup>th</sup> September 1916**

**Place: France**

**Buried: Thiepval Memorial, Somme**

Ralph has no known grave. The circumstances of Ralph's death are recorded in detail in the following obituary from the April 1917 School Magazine.

## Obituary

### Obituary KES Magazine

...lies buried near Delville Wood. After leaving School he joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn of Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and was soon made Lance-Corporal. He served three years with the Colours, half of which time was spent at Gibraltar. He then emigrated to Australia and was for 5 years with his brother Harry (also an old boy) in Kalgoorlie, pioneering in heavily timbered virgin country in Denmark, Western Australia. For three years he was battling with the forest, made good progress, and had a goodly part of a big apple orchard planted when this terrible war broke out. Being a reservist he was immediately called up, and sailed from Australia with the first contingent of Australians; the latter landed in Egypt and joined their respective regiments. Fowler was drafted to France in the latter part of January 1915, and fought on till September 16<sup>th</sup> 1916, in the front line practically all the time. On May 13<sup>th</sup> 1916, he was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant "for service in the field" when he was transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion which was subsequently in the thick of the fighting at Delville Wood. In the action he and two other officers, with a handful of men, made a great name for themselves by holding a portion of a trench for 30 hours against overwhelming odds. He then had a fortnight's rest in the rear, and then went back into the thick of it again. He was killed by a machine gun bullet through the head as he was gallantly leading his platoon in a charge at Guendecourt, south of Bapaume.

Those of his comrades who still survive have all written in the highest terms of him as a most gallant and brave officer, who was always conscientious and cheerful to the last.

At school he was a bright open faced lad, full of all kinds of mischief and keen about anything in the nature of sport. His brave deeds in the field come as no surprise to us. To his brother Harry and other relatives we tender our sincere sympathy.