



Alfred Stephen RAWLINGS

Corporal 1st King's Dragoon Guards

At KES:

Born in Cricklewood, Alfred came to KES in 1900. He was fatherless. His occupation was in the Band and although described as only "fair with a sulky temper" he was able enough to go straight into the Dragoon Guards as a bandsman when he left in 1905; here he flourished and by the time of his death he had been promoted to Corporal.

Date of Death: 2nd June 1915

Place: Belgium

Buried: Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres

The King's Dragoon Guards had spent much time in India and on the 7th November 1914 they landed at Marseilles to join the War fighting on the Western Front. An Officer reports:

On 31st May 1915 1/KDG received orders at 5.15pm to take over the trenches in the Hooze area, east of the Belgian town of Ypres, from where they were to attack and hold Hooze Chateau. It was discovered that the Chateau was not held by the Germans, and the regiment moved into the buildings and grounds unopposed. The Dragoons then proceeded to improve the position.

On 2nd June the Germans began a heavy artillery bombardment of the chateau area, which was followed at 5pm from attacks from the north and the east. The Germans succeeded in pushing 1/KDG out of the shattered remains of the Chateau buildings. On relief, they withdrew to Zouave Wood, and then returned via Ypres to billets in Vlamertinghe.

In the period 31st May to 3rd June the regiment suffered 86 casualties: 1 officer and 23 men killed in action, 6 officers and 44 men wounded in action, 4 men died of wounds and 6 men missing believed killed.

Obituary

Obituary KES Magazine

Corporal 1st King's Dragoon Guards, was killed in action on June 2nd. His officer wrote, "He died gallantly at his post and the regiment mourn with you the loss of a good N.C.O. and a good comrade." Rawlings had a quiet winning way with him and made many friends wherever he went. We quote from the Dunbar Notes in the "Haddingtonshire Advertiser", which closes an article on Rawlings with "an accomplished musician, and the best of fellows, his loss is deeply deplored in the town." To his mother and family we extend our sincere sympathy.