

Frederick Laurence Wilson
1894 - 1916
Student of the Society of the Sacred Mission

Family History

Frederick Laurence Wilson was born on 19 July 1894. His father was Frederick S Wilson, a Railway Agent and his mother was Ruth (née Dearle). He may have been known by his second name, as he is recorded in the 1901 census as simply Laurence. He had a younger brother, Norman, and they lived at 169 Edgware Road, London and later 1 College Road, Winchmore Hill, North London – an end of terrace 'cottage' in Palmers' Green.

Military history

Shortly after the outbreak of the Great War, he enlisted in the Sherwood Foresters on 14th September 1914.

He served with the British Expeditionary Force from June 1915. He obtained a commission into the West Yorkshire Regiment in May 1916. He died from wounds received whilst in active on 23rd November 1916 and is buried at Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery, Saulty, Pas de Calais, France. Plot 4. Row C. grave 11

He was probably injured in the Battle of Flers-Courcelette which took place on 15th September 1916. Location: Mouquet Farm. British victory. This battle saw the first use of massed tanks as an offensive weapon.

After the failure of the major Somme Offensive or 'Big Push' on 1st July, Haig wanted a breakthrough by mid-September and before the onset of winter. On 15th September an attack was planned to involve 11 Divisions of infantry and mounted cavalry, supported by tanks and artillery across a 12,000 yard front, from Courcelette in the north to Lesbœufs and Morval in the south.

49th (West Riding) Division in II Corps, Reserve Army, in positions east of Thiepval, during the evening of 17th September, 7th Duke of Wellington's Regiment, supported by 4th Duke of Wellington's Regiment, staged a successful attack on trenches around Mouquet Farm, leading to a strong point known as the Zollern Redoubt, south-east of Thiepval, receiving 220 casualties. On 19th September, 5th Duke of Wellington's Regiment took over the captured trenches, with 4th Duke of Wellington's Regiment relieving them on 21st September.

The British soldiers were able to make use of the deep German dug outs to shelter from the enemy bombardments while consolidating their positions, burying the dead both British and German from previous actions and digging assembly trenches for the 18th Division who would soon be making an assault against the ruins of Thiepval village. Relieved on 24th September, 49th Division retired to Lealvillers and Halloy.

De Ruvignys Roll of Honour 1914-1919

WILSON, FREDERICK LAWRENCE, 2nd Lieut., 6th (Territorial) Battn. The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regt.), eldest s. of Frederick Samuel Wilson, of 1, College Road, Winchmore Hill, London, N., by his wife, Ruth, dau. of the late William Dearle; b. Edgware Road, London, W., 19 July, 1894; educ. Holborn Estate Grammar School, London, matriculating at King's College, London, in June, 1911, and Kelham Theological College, Newark-on-Trent, where he was studying with a view to taking Holy Orders when war broke out; volunteered for foreign service, and enlisted in the Sherwood Foresters 14 Sept. 1914; served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from June, 1915; obtained a commission in the West Riding Regt. in May, 1916, and died 23 Nov. following, from wounds received in action. Buried at Saulty. Lieut.-Col. C. M. Bateman wrote: "I always found your son a very willing and hard-working young officer, and he was one in whom I placed the greatest trust and confidence. Although rather young, he always carried out his duties thoroughly and cheerfully, and we can ill afford to lose such fine young fellows. I can assure you his death is deeply felt in the battalion. I sent over and had a very nicely painted wooden cross placed on his grave, as a last token of respect from myself, his brother officers, and his non-commissioned officers and men," and Capt. S. H. Clough: "The battalion has lost one of its keenest and most efficient officers, one who put his heart into everything he did, and one that it could ill afford to lose. Such officers as he are very hard to replace. It is some little consolation to know that he gave his life for his country's cause, which is the biggest sacrifice that a man can make." *Unm.*

Transcription:

Wilson Frederick Lawrence, 2nd Lieut 6th (territorial) battalion The Duke of Wellingtons (West Riding Regiment, eldest son of Frederick Samuel Wilson, 1 College Road, Winchmore Hill, London, by his wife Ruth daughter of the late William Dearle. Born Edgware Road, London 19th July 1894, educated at Holborn Grammar School, London, matriculating at King's College London in June 1911 and Kelham Theological College, Newark upon Trent where he was studying with a view to taking Holy Orders, when war broke out he volunteered for foreign service, and enlisted in the Sherwood Foresters on 14th September 1914, he served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from June 1915, he obtained a commission in the West Riding Regiment in May 1916 and died 23 November following wounds received in action. Buried at Saulty.

Lieut- Colonel C M Bateman wrote " I always found your son a very wiling and hard working young officer, and he was one in whom I placed the greatest trust and confidence. Although rather young, he always carried out his duties thoroughly and cheerfully, and we can ill afford to lose such fine young fellows. I can assure you his death is deeply felt in the battalion. I sent over and had a very nicely painted wooden cross placed on his grave, as a last token of respect from myself, his brother officers, and his non commissioned officers and men. "

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Sources

FindMyPast <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>

Nottinghamshire Great War Roll of Honour:
<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/rollofhonour/>

Commonwealth War Graves Commission: <https://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/91919/>

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