

Harold Andrew Smith
1893 – 1918: age at death 25
Student at the Society of the Sacred Mission

Family History

Harold Andrew – known as Andrew – was born on 18 September 1893, in Birmingham. His father was Andrew Smith and his mother's name was Eva. His father was a Hatter and had his own shop. Harold was the second of three boys: Aiden who was two years older than him and Howard M who was three years younger. In 1901 they lived at 188 Charles Road, Aston, near Birmingham, not far from what is now the Aston Villa Football Ground and the historic Aston Hall.

According to his Obituary in the Society's Newsletter, his family moved to New Zealand because of his father's poor health. Harold, however, staying in England and attended Lancing College (on the south coast between Brighton and Worthing). He is listed in the 1911 census as a schoolboy there, age 17.

He joined the Sacred Mission in 1913 then enlisted in the Sherwood Foresters in late 1915.

Military History

After joining the Sherwood Foresters, Harold became a Signaller. His 'nervous health' was poor and it is reported that at first it was thought he would not survive – he found he could not eat or sleep and consequently fainted on parade. However, 'gradual strength of will and the advantages of physical training and open air prevailed'.

His death is recorded as 21 March 1918 which was the first day of the German Spring Offensive. His body was never found. He is commemorated at the Arras Memorial, Bay 7.

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/>

Forces War Records website: <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/>

Society of the Sacred Mission Quarterly Newsletter, Borthwick Institute:
<https://www.york.ac.uk/borthwick/>