

William Curtis Bolton
1890 – 1916, age at death 26
Student at the Society of the Sacred Mission

Family History

William was the oldest son of William Henry Bolton who was a Houseman for a Contractor, though he had previously worked as a Cigar Merchant. His mother, Emily, was Irish.

William was born in Norwich but the family clearly travelled because his sister Mabel was born in Leicester, his brother Robert in Hucknall Torkard and another sister Daisy in Farnsfield. He also had an older sister though she is not listed on the 1901 census.

By 1911, William was living in some kind of home or hostel in London, together with about 220 other young men (age 18-early 30s) all of whom worked for Messrs Cook, Sons and Co. St Paul's Churchyard



Cook's Warehouse, 1880, British Museum collection.

Illustration from the *Illustrated London News*, March 25 1854

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The company was a distribution and warehousing enterprise which exploited the railway network. It is possible the William worked as a commercial traveller though he is listed as a warehouseman.

He joined the Society of the Sacred Mission in September 1912 after, according to his Obituary in the quarterly Newsletter, 'some experience in a large business house in London.' He had, it seems, 'unbounded enthusiasm, keenness on sports and genuineness of Christian character'. He also sang in the choir of St Peter's church, Nottingham

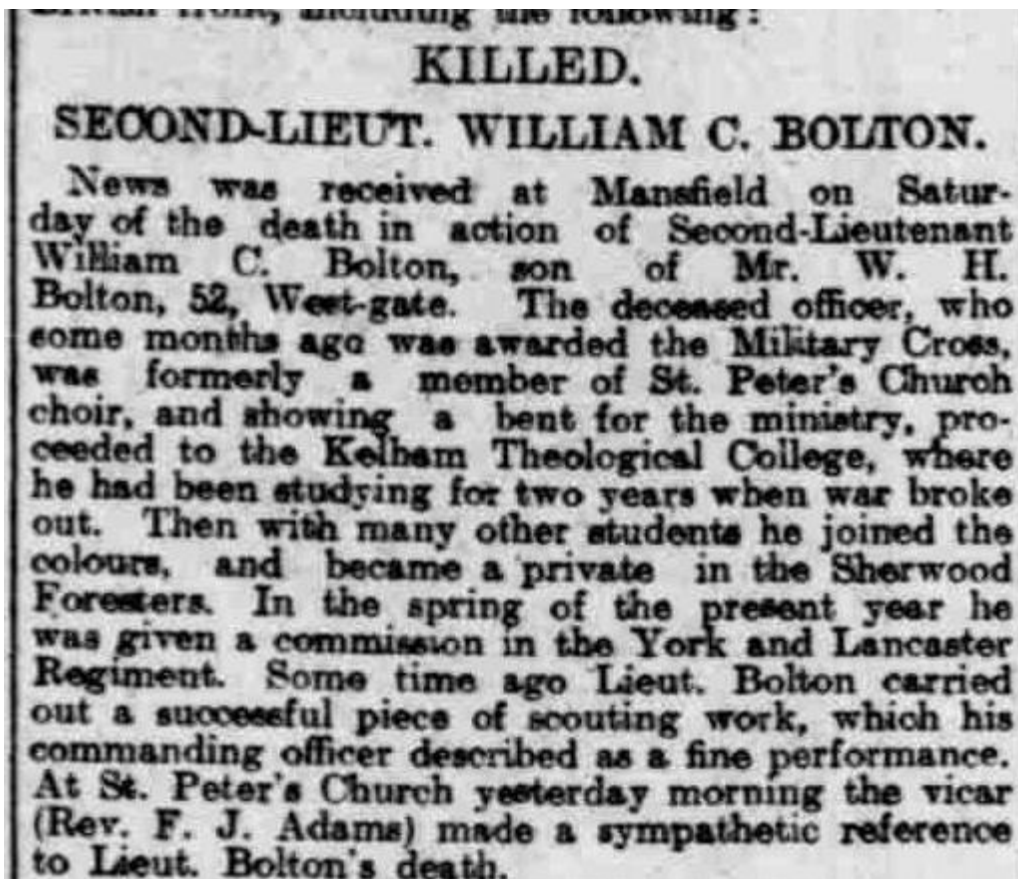
Military History

He enlisted with the 8th Sherwood Foresters in 1914, having previously served with them as a territorial (though not between 1912 and 1914 when he was at Kelham). He was rose through the ranks on merit, rising to second lieutenant of the 8th Bn York and Lancaster Regiment.



In 1916 he was awarded the Military Cross for 'conspicuous gallantry on several occasions, notably when he led a reconnoitring patrol under the enemy's wire to obtain information. He was subjected to machine gun fire and one of his men was wounded. With the assistance of two others, Stanley brought the wounded man back while under heavy fire.

He led his men into battle on 1st July 1916 and was shot by a machine-gun bullet and died immediately. His death was noted in the *Nottingham Evening Post* of 10 July 1916:



His death is commemorated at Theipval Memorial, Somme, Pier and Face 14 A and B. Individuals are commemorated in this way when their loss has been officially declared by their relevant service but there is no known burial for the individual.

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/>