



Lieutenant Eric Nye Chart



1st Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment

Died 25 September 1916

Age 19

Eric Nye Chart was born in Harrow in 1897. He came from a family steeped in theatre as both his parents (Harry and Violet) were actors and his Grandmother (Ellen Nye Chart) was instrumental in putting Brighton's Theatre Royal on the map – Ellen has a portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, demonstrating her importance as an influential women of her time.

Eric was one of 6 children (one of which had already died by the 1911 Census) and the family lived in a large house on Carlton Road, Putney, with at least 3 servants.

Considering his extreme youth, Eric must have volunteered as soon as he turned 18. It is not clear when he joined his Battalion in France, but the West Yorkshire's were fully involved in the key battles of 1916: The Battle of Flers-Courcelette, The Battle of Morval and The Battle of Le Transloy. It was on the first day of the Battle of Morval (one of the Battles of the Somme) that Eric lost his life. The attack he was involved in was considered a successful advance, in that the twin objectives of regaining the ruined villages of Morval and Lesboeufs were achieved. However the troops met with fierce German resistance and the ground over which they moved was hazardous and extremely muddy.

In the chaos of battle, Eric must have been buried where he fell (recorded as Les Boeuifs), and also in extreme haste.

His body was later found and exhumed in 1935, along with the discovery of his officer's revolver, holster, field glasses, compass, visiting cards, pocket book and an engraved cigarette case. Some of these items would naturally have been retrieved, either for Army use or to return to his family if his fellow soldiers had been able to remove his body from the battlefield at the time of his death - battlefield clearance, as it was known.

Eric's record was changed from 'unknown British soldier' to record his full name and rank (although his service number remains a mystery), and he was finally laid to rest in the London Cemetery Extension, High Wood, Longueval in 1935.

SERVICE NUMBER: unknown