

Charles Benjamin Wilson

Hermitage, Holmes Chapel

Returned

Members of the Royal Flying Corps WW1



His Story

Charles, son of Hubert Malcolm and Frances Wilson, was born in February 1886 in Prestwich near Manchester. By the age of five he was living at the Hermitage near Holmes Chapel. He was educated at Eton College, where he was a member of Cotton Hall House.

He was a professional soldier serving in Lucknow, India in 1911, before being posted to Australia as Aide de Camp to the Governor later in the same year. He was promoted to Lieutenant in September 1912 and had a distinguished military career. He married Mrs. Janet Orr-Ewing, the widow of another war hero, in 1919.

They had a son, John Malcolm Hamersley Wilson, who was born in July 1921 and who was killed in action during the Second World War.

He died on 9th August 1957 aged 71.

His War Record

On the outbreak of war, Charles rejoined his regiment the 10th Hussars and by October 1914 was on his way with the British Expeditionary Force to Belgium and the defence of the town of Ypres. He was mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in February 1915. He also received the 1914/15 Star, the Victory Medal and the British War Medal at the end of the conflict.

By September 1915, however, he had become a Flying Officer attached to the newly established Royal Flying Corps, posted to 15 Squadron. In January 1916 he was shot down and reported missing until March, when it was reported in the Parish Magazine that, though wounded, he was a prisoner of war.

He remained a prisoner, at one time in Holland, until he was repatriated in July 1918. His first wife's brother-in-law was another pilot who was taken prisoner when his FE2b "A856" of 101 Squadron came down behind German lines in France.