

Transcript of EF Berry's Handwritten War Record

Capt. Edward Fleetwood Berry in 1906 passed from Abingdon School into Sandhurst and the following year received his Commission in the Wiltshire Regiment and was stationed at Jhansi in India. Two years later he was transferred to the 2/9th Ghurka Rifles at Dehra Dun. In 1913 he became ADC to Lord Carmichael, Governor of Bengal. At the outbreak of the war he was at home on leave, and was for a time attached to the 9th Kings Royal Rifles in the New Army and at once received the temporary rank of captain. Three months later when the 9th Gurkhas came over from India he rejoined his own Regiment in France and with that gallant Battalion saw much strenuous service, notably at Neuve Chapelle where the Dehra Dun Brigade greatly distinguished itself, capturing a portion of the wood known as the Bois de Biez – the most advanced position taken on that momentous day. “As a Company Officer he showed brilliant dash and leadership in the advances on the Bois de Biez”. For this he received the Military Cross, and a day or two later was appointed Adjutant.

At the end of 1915 he went with his Regiment to Mesopotamia. From the day he landed from the River Boat on the Tigris he saw some very hard fighting during the first few months of 1916, near Kut, under exceedingly trying conditions. Special reference was made to “his gallant behaviour on the 8th of March” at the storming of the Dujailar (sic) Redoubt, and also to the stand he made on the memorable 15th April “when with only about half the Battalion he consolidated some trenches, taken from the Turks, and held them all day until the Colonel was able to bring up the rest of the Battalion in the evening”. Two nights later (Ap 17th 18th 1916) at the Battle of Bait Aiesa (sic), when the Turks had been strongly reinforced, “when leading a glorious counter-attack he rallied his men under the most difficult circumstances, in a very masterful manner as very few men would be able to do under the conditions existing,” and then “personally firing a machine gun” until his glorious career was cut short and he died as he had always lived doing his duty bravely and well. Though Mentioned in Despatches and several time recommended for the DSO he received no recognition for his work in Mesopotamia.

He sleeps beside the ancient Tigris, and his lonely resting place was consecrated some months after his death by his uncle the Bishop of Nagpur in the presence of General Campbell and his staff and Colonel Porteous and Major Pike of the 9th Gurkhas who rode over from the camp some four miles away.