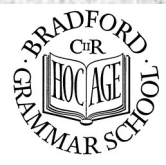


# JONATHAN EDWARD KNOWLES



23<sup>rd</sup> August 1914

1882-1914 Age 32

**Captain 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Middlesex Regiment. Knowles was the first Old Bradfordian to die in the Great War, and the second British officer to be killed.** Jonathan Edward Knowles was born in Queensland, Australia. His mother Frances was a New South Walian, his father Edward Sugden Knowles a Bradfordian. When the latter became ill the family moved to Bradford where his father Jonathan was a prosperous cloth merchant living at "Underwood", a mansion in leafy Rawdon. Jonathan Edward with his brother Edward Walter first attended Sedbergh School (1897-98), where Jonathan junior was a mobile rugby forward, then Bradford Grammar from September 1899 to December 1901. They lived with their widowed mother at "Woodcliffe" in Rawdon. Jonathan was destined for Oxford, but when he reached the age of nineteen the call of adventure led him to join the Army in time to serve at the end of the Boer War in South Africa with the Durham Light Infantry. He enjoyed the military life and became a career soldier, serving with the Middlesex Regiment in India, Burma and Aden, and rising to the rank of Captain by the outbreak of the First World War.

The 4th Middlesex (the "Diehards") was part of the British Expeditionary Force which landed at Boulogne on 14th August 1914 and advanced into Belgium, into the path of the vastly stronger German 1st Army. It fought its first battle of the war at Mons on 23rd August. The 4th Middlesex were entrenched along the Mons-Conde Canal. They were forced back when the French on their flank with-



draw and so they suffered a quarter of the British total of 1600 casualties. Among the dead was Knowles, killed with his Company commander as he urged his men forward to support the firing line. The BEF then began the long retreat to the Marne.

His body was subsequently moved and now lies in Cement House Cemetery, Langemark, near Ieper, Belgium. He is commemorated in Rawdon parish church and on the Green-gates war memorial.



Old Bradfordians—'We will remember them'



## Acknowledgements:

Knowles' photo is from the OBA Roll of Honour. Information about his life comes from Old Sedberghian Pilgrimage (<http://pilgrimage.sedberghschool.org/roll-of-honour>), The Bradfordian, DeRuvigny's Roll of Honour, and census information was used through Ancestry.com. Commonwealth War Graves Commission. I am grateful for the assistance given by Keith Roberts OB and Tricia Hart. *Compiled by Nicholas Hooper August 2014.*



Both BGS and Sedbergh commemorated Knowles' death with visits to his grave in 2014.