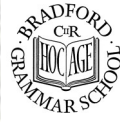


BRIAN FARROW



1st July 1916

1892-1916 Age 24

Second Lieutenant attached 2nd Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers Regiment.

Brian Farrow was born on 5th January 1892 in Cleckheaton, the youngest of three sons of Frederick Farrow and Clara Stainthorpe nee Foster. Frederick was from Oldham in Lancashire where his father Jacob managed a cotton spinning mill. By 1887, when he married Clara, Frederick was qualified as a Surgeon and had established his practice in Cleckheaton. Frederick and Clara married in 1887, and they had three sons. Cyril, the eldest, was born with spastic paralysis and died when a teenager. Eric and Brian both started at Bradford Grammar School in September 1901, when they were eleven and nine. Eric was the more academically successful. Brian was better at literary subjects than he was at Maths, Physics and Chemistry, and he won the Form I Modern Reading prize in 1904.

At the end of 1904, Frederick moved his practice and family to Manchester, and in January 1905 the brothers started at Manchester Grammar School. He was on the Modern side of the school, indicating that a career in business was intended rather than university. He left school in 1906 when he was fourteen and was apprenticed to the firm of Sir Charles Behrens & Co. Behrens was a former pupil of B.G.S. who became Lord Mayor of Manchester. His company specialized in shipping cloth, mainly to Germany. Brian was with the company for ten years until the war began. In September 1914, Brian responded to a newspaper appeal by joining the Public Schools Battalion of the City of London Regiment (18th Royal Fusiliers), gaining his first promotion to Lance-Corporal. As was the case with many of the well-educated young men of this battalion, Brian was accepted for a commission in May 1915, and he was gazetted to the 4th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers in December 1915. This was a reserve battalion which formed part of the force defending the shipyards of Barrow-in-Furness. In May 1916 he was attached to the 2nd Battalion, a regular army battalion which had gone to France with the original B.E.F. in August 1914.



On 1st July, as part of 12th Brigade of 4th Division, Farrow's battalion were in support of the 11th Brigade. At 8.30 a.m. they began to advance in widely spaced artillery formation, crossing their own front line at 9.15. They had already suffered many casualties; however they were able to cross no man's land and to follow 11th Brigade which had captured part of the German defences known as the Quadrilateral. The failure of the Leeds and Bradford Pals' attack on their left (93rd Brigade), and 29th Division's attack on Beaumont Hamel on their right, meant that the British foothold in the German line came under counter-attack from three sides. Cut off from reinforcements and running short of grenades and ammunition, they were ordered to pull back to their own front line at 2 a.m. on 2nd July. They lost 368 men, although only thirty were killed. Farrow was one of six officers killed in action. His body was recovered from no man's land when the battlefield was cleared in May 1917, after the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line. He was buried in Serre Road No. 1 Cemetery, at Grave I. C. 6.

Brian's father also enlisted, despite his age, and served with the Medical Corps at Gallipoli and the Suez Canal. He was awarded the Military Cross and survived the war.



Acknowledgements: