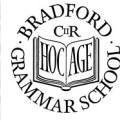


# CHARLES STUART HYDE



1st July 1916

1890-1916 Aged 25

## Second Lieutenant 16th Service Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, 1st 'Bradford Pals'.

Charles was born on 4th December 1890 at Street House, Dudley Hill, Bradford (entered on the census as Heckmondwike). His father, the Reverend Tom Dodsworth Hyde, was a Church of England clergyman who was soon to become the Vicar of White-chapel, Cleckheaton. Charles' mother Mary Jane Croft was the daughter of a Bradford banker. The couple had three sons, Edward, Charles and Emil, all of whom went to Bradford Grammar School. Charles started in 1902 when he was eleven and he completed two full years' studies. His best results were in reading, writing, grammar and Physics. He left soon after he reached the age of fifteen, part way through his third year. He took up a position on the staff of the Union of London and Smiths' Bank of Leeds, where he was a clerk. He worked at times in the Dewsbury and Cleckheaton branches.

The outbreak of war in August 1914 must have seemed a great opportunity for adventure to Charles. When it was announced on 3rd September that a Leeds 'Friends' battalion was to be formed, two hundred men submitted their names on the first day. Hyde's regimental number 15/494 indicates he was a relatively early volunteer, certainly before recruitment was suspended in December. Shortly after enlisting, Charles's application for a commission was successful, and on 27th April 1915 he was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant in the 16th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, the 1st Bradford Pals. For some reason Hyde did not accompany the battalion to Egypt in December 1915, and it was not until 19th May 1916 that he joined them in France, where they were preparing for the 'Big Push' with the French near the River Somme.

The 16th Battalion entered the communication trenches near Euston Road Cemetery, Colincamps, on the evening of 30th June. They reached their assembly positions in Bradford Trench around 3 a.m. As they were in the second wave, at 7.30 a.m. they would have to leave their trench and cross open ground until they reached the British front line, then



cross it and pass through the barbed wire into no man's land. Hyde got this far, although his battalion had already suffered grievous losses from enemy shellfire and from machine-guns in Serre village and the salient in the German lines known as the Quadrilateral. He was then wounded in the arm and leg, but he refused to go to the rear to have his wounds attended to. Instead, unable to walk he sat on the edge of a shell crater in no man's land and gave encouragement to his men who were pinned down. He was killed later in the day by a shell explosion. One of Hyde's fellow officers wrote: *'I always considered him one of our most conscientious and painstaking officers.'*

When the battlefield could be cleared of the dead ten months later, Charles Hyde's body could no longer be identified. He may be the *'Unknown officer of the West Yorks.'* (CWGC Register) who is buried in Serre Road Cemetery No. 3. This lies in the old no man's land between the two front lines where the shell holes would have been in which Hyde and his men sheltered.

Hyde's younger brother Emil would die on the Somme in October. His elder brother Edward survived the war.

Old Bradfordians—'We will remember them'



### **Acknowledgements:**

The photo is taken from the O.B.A. Roll of Honour, with thanks. Hyde's family was traced using Ancestry.com, helped by the entry in De Ruvigny's *Roll of Honour*. His school years were researched using the Annual Class Lists 1903-1906. There is an entry for Charles on Charlie Turpin's 'World War One—1914-18—Officers –Spenborough Branch The Royal British Legion' website (<https://www.google.co.uk/?ion=1&espv=2#q=Charles+Stuart+Hyde>). I differ from him in some respects—information is now more easily available. David Raw, *Bradford Pals* (Barnsley, 2008), p.68, states that Hyde was commissioned into the 18th Battalion, 2nd Bradford Pals. The Medal Index Card does state he was 'Dis[charged to] Comm[ission]: 18/W.York R. 27 4/15', however other records state he was with the 16th Battalion, and he died with them.

I am grateful to Tricia Platts for sharing her research into Bradford soldiers with me—the observation about Hyde's burial is hers.

Compiled and composed by Nick Hooper, June 2016 (Nhooper1956@googlemail.com).