

GEOFFREY BOWEN YONGE

Second Lieutenant



Geoffrey Bowen Yonge was born at home on 28 November 1898, the son of Duke Mohun Yonge, a solicitor, and Isabella Sydney Yonge of Westpark, Yealmpton. He was baptised at Holy Cross Church on 28 December 1898. At the age of 10 he was sent to Mount House School, at that time in Plymouth. Two years later he went on to Berkhamsted School, where he clearly did well. He was head prefect and also a Sgt Major in the Officer Training Corps. In nominating him for a cadetship at the Royal Military College, his headmaster wrote "He is a thoroughly good fellow; he is not clever, but he has the respect of everybody by his sterling worth."

Geoffrey Yonge joined up on 3 November 1916, just short of his 18th birthday. After training he was assigned to C Company, 1/5th (Prince of Wales) Battalion of The Devonshire Regiment, a territorial battalion based in Plymouth.

As the end of World War 1 approached, the battalion was engaged in the Battle of The Sambre ("The Last Fights in France") in the area of the "Foret de Mormal". Although many German soldiers had by this time lost heart in their cause, there were still pockets of resistance, and this was the case in the Foret de Mormal. On 5 November 1918 1/5 Devon's were heavily involved in taking the villages of Le Cheval Blanc and Le Trechon on the northern edge of the forest. On that day Geoffrey Yonge received a gunshot wound to his right arm, fracturing the humerus. He was moved to the 8th General Hospital at Rouen, and died there on 21 November 1918 aged 19. He is remembered with honour at the St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen (Plot S.V.K.6)

