**Gerald Clapham**

Gerald Clapham, born in Marylebone, London in 1896, was the eldest son of Frederick Richard Clapham and his wife Gertrude. His father was a manufacturing traveller, an employer running his own service. Soon after Gerald was born, the family moved from London to Hertfordshire. They lived initially at ‘Beechcroft’, a house on Aldenham Road, where they employed a nursery governess and a general servant. Gerald’s sister, Violet, and his brother, Richard, were both born in Bushey. By the time of the 1911 census, they has settled at ’Wayside’, one of the new houses built in Grange Road. Gerald was fifteen and still at school.

When war broke out, Gerald enlisted in London as Private 933 in the 10th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers and went to France in July 1915. He was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal and was awarded the Military Cross, a medal awarded to non-commissioned officers for bravery in land battle.



He was wounded in action on 15 July 1916 and the Watford Observer published details of his death:

Lance Corporal Gerald Clapham, Royal Fusiliers, son of Mr and Mrs F Clapham of Bushey, has died of wounds received in action on July 15th. He enlisted in the Royal Fusiliers at the outbreak of the war, going to France the following July. He had been twelve months without a break at the front and would have been 21 years of age on July 30th. The deceased was well known at the Bushey Hall Golf Club, and was held in high esteem. His sergeant, writing to Mr Clapham, says that the deceased was one of the best men in his platoon and well-liked by everybody. He was always willing to do his bit, and very often did more. It was during a glorious advance by the Battalion that he was wounded. He was got back to the dressing station all right, and everybody hoped he was not seriously hit and would pull through.

Gerald Clapham died of his wounds on 18 July 1915, aged 20. He was buried at Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L´Abbe on the Somme, France,

plot: II. D. 40. He is commemorated on the Bushey Memorial, at St James’ Parish Church in Bushey and at St Paul’s. After his death his parents returned to London and were resident at 31, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road.

