**Sydney Victor Flitt**

Sydney Victor Flitt, born in Bushey in 1895, was the eldest son of Walter and Alice Flitt of 16 Vale Road, Bushey. (The road numbers changed after the 1911 census. Number 16 became number 39). His father was a caretaker and messenger to Andre and Sleigh, photographic engravers of Bushey. Alice and Walter Flitt had five children. Their eldest daughter, Olive, was 10 years older than Sydney and in 1901 was employed as a domestic housemaid. By 1911 Sydney was 16 and working as a caddy boy, while his younger siblings, Edward, Ruby and Frederick, were still at school.

When war was declared Sydney enlisted in London as Gunner 46234 with the Royal Horse Artillery. He served on the Western Front and wrote letters home to his parents and brothers and sisters. On 13 September 1916, he wrote enquiring about his friends, including Reginald Glennerster, who also lived in Vale Road. A postscript reads ‘Don’t forget my birthday on the 21st’. Sydney died of wounds in France on 5 November 1916, aged 21.

On 6 November 1916, Chaplain Reginald Gorringe wrote the following letter to Sydney’s mother:

Dear Mrs Flitt,

You will have received my letter of Nov 4th telling you that your son Sidney (sic) had been brought here wounded. I am very grieved to have to write to tell you today that he passed away last evening. He was very badly wounded in his legs, back and left arm, and in spite of the doctor doing all he could for him he rapidly became worse after I had written, and was unconscious for 24 hours before he died. If he had lived he would have had to lose both legs and would have been a cripple for the rest of his life, so you must take comfort from the thought that he has been spared a lot of suffering. I have buried him this morning in our Cemetery. I am not at liberty to tell you the name of the place but his grave will be marked with a wooden cross bearing his name and after the War is over you will be able to find out where he lies. I offer you my deepest sympathy with your sad loss and may God give you strength to bear it.

Sincerely yours

Reginald E T Gorringe

C of E Chaplain

Sydney was buried at Puchevillers British Cemetery in France, grave reference III. C. 21. He is commemorated in Bushey on the memorial on Clay Hill, at James’ Parish Church and at St Paul’s Church, Bushey.



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