

Colin Matson Wisdom



Colin was born on May 29th, 1892 in Brentford. His father, William Wisdom (1847-1919) was a renowned local builder, box and packing case maker and JP, with premises in South Street, Isleworth.

In the 1901 census, the family were living in Cedar Cottage, Worton Road, Isleworth. His father was 54, his mother Ann (née Reakes 1849-1931, married in 1874, Barham in Kent) 51, sister Minnie Eliza 26 and an Elementary School Mistress; brothers William Towers 23 and Herbert Thomas 20 were builder's assistants in the family firm; sisters Margaret 17 and Isabel Mary 15 were pupil teachers in an Elementary School. Colin was 8 and a scholar.

Colin's brother, George Francis, aged 13 was studying at Emmanuel School in Wandsworth and his brother John, was in the Royal Navy. In 1911, Colin was aged 20, and a boarder, living in Bourton Dorset as an apprentice mechanical engineer

In September 1912, Colin sailed to Canada on the Scandinavian, listing his profession as Engineer, his religion as Episcopalian and his destination as Calgary, Alberta. The ship departed from Glasgow and was destined for Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He enlisted into the Canadian Infantry on September

19th, 1914 at Valcartier, Quebec. His birthday was given as May 22nd 1890, two years earlier than his actual birth, his age, 24 years and 5 months, height 6 feet and ½ inch, fair complexion, blue eyes, and a mole below his liver. A draughtsman by trade, he recorded service with the Queens West for three years. He was Sergeant 16372 in the 16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish), Manitoba Regiment of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The Middlesex Chronicle (24th October 1914) reported that William Wisdom of 'Collingbourne' Whitton Road Hounslow, had two sons on active service: Colin was serving with the first British Columbian Canadian contingent and that his brother John, was Engineer, Lieutenant Commander on HMS Acasta. Colin's battalion saw active service in France and Colin was killed on 9th April, 1917, having previously been reported as wounded. The battalion's war diary for the 8th April record 'the whole day was occupied making final preparations for the offensive which commences tomorrow morning. The enemy is alert and shelled continuously during the day.... At 3.58 am on 9th: Report sent to Brigade Headquarters that all Companies and Units are in Assembly Position and that casualties are few and that casualties are few. The code word is Montreal... Today is Zero Day and Zero Hour is 5.30am...5.32am. first wave of the battalion went over (1 piper with each Company and Pipe Major with each HQ)" Colin was awarded the Military Medal and is commemorated in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery in Thelun and the Arras Road Cemetery Memorial 5. Traces of Colin's original grave, 31/2 miles north of Arras were reported as lost, in the Canadian military letter written to his father, then living at Pendennis, Eversley Crescent, Spring Grove, Isleworth.

His brother George had enlisted into the Canadian Pioneers 3rd Battalion on 4th May, 1914 in Victoria, British Columbia and died of wounds at Ypres, aged 28 on 17th June, 1916. In 1911, John, a Royal Navy lieutenant and engineer, was living with his wife, Susan, an American citizen in Rochester in Kent. They made transatlantic journeys to New York from Southampton on the Majestic in 1926 and also on the Lapland in 1927.