

BRYAN OSMOND DEWES

Birth:- April 1894 in Bromley Kent.

The elder Son of Hugh William Dewes, Dental Surgeon, and Alice Jane Dewes of 32 Harley Street and "Glebelands", 23 Lee Terrace, Blackheath.

He was educated at St Andrews, Eastbourne and Repton and was just beginning a Medical course at St Thomas's Hospital. He was a member of the London Rowing Club and rowed stroke in their second boat at Henley in 1914.

This was the letter from his commanding officer to Mrs Dewes after her son's death:-

"He was always cheery and ready for any amount of work, not knowing what fear was, and getting on excellently with his men who would have followed him anywhere.

You can imagine how I miss him being here.

You would have found him considerably changed. He came here a delightfull, high-spirited, healthy boy who suddenly became a man, retaining all his old boyishness.

Today he has left us and we have lost a very gallant officer and a very gentle gentleman."

His family was very involved with the life of St Margaret's Church.

Hugh was the Church's "People's Warden" for 11 years and Treasurer for part of it. Added to that he was the person to whom people had to apply if they wanted to live in any of the Almshouses.

In 1914, when he was Churchwarden, Mr Dewes gave St Margaret's the chiming clock that is on the west wall. It was made by Mr G.A.W.Smith, a clockmaker from Lee. It was given "in memory of a friend" possibly Father Charles Stanton who had recently died. Hugh unveiled the clock and set it going.

Alice was the Chair and organiser of the Ladies Needlework Guild, and also a Church Clothing charity which provided clothing for Children over 7 and Adults.

Bryan became an honorary Bell Ringer in January 1914. Sadly he was one of the first of the St Margaret's "Death from the Front" on 30th July 1915.

In May 1916 Mr and Mrs Dewes left the neighbourhood. They returned for Mr Dewes to unveil the WWI War Memorial. He did it with his friend Walter Russell and they both had sons who were commemorated on the memorial.

Second Lieutenant, DEWES, BRYAN OSMOND, of the 1st Bn. Middlesex Regiment.

Died 30/07/1915, Aged 21. RUE-DU-BACQUE(13TH LONDON) GRAVEYARD, LAVENTIE [F. 19] (France).

War Service:

When he was killed on 30 July 1915, aged 21, he was acting Machine Gun Officer for the battalion.

He had joined the Artists Rifles on 4 August 1914, went to France in October and was commissioned in February 1915. He is buried at the Rue du Bacquerot (13th London) Graveyard [F. 19] at Laventie (France) with 191 other WW1 graves.



Location of Memorial:

He is remembered on the Memorial at St Margaret's Lee, in the Great War Memorial Book of the Central Council of Church Bellringers displayed in St. Paul's cathedral, and St Margaret's Bellringers Memorial in the tower:-

*"Bryan Osmond Dewes and Walter Tresham Russell
1914 – 1918"
provided by their fellow ringers.*

A memorial service was held in St Margaret's, Blackheath on 7th August 1915.

"All men must die; it is only given to the few to die for their country".

Dates :1894 – 1915
The Times 6.10.1915