

Sidney Leonard White

killed in action 21 Feb 1915

age 23 years



16th (The Queen's) Lancers on the march, September 1914. Image Q56309 courtesy of the Imperial War Museum.

Sidney Leonard White's parents, Charles and Harriet, started their married life in Sussex in 1872. In the 1880's they moved to Odiham but by 1901 they were living in Kennel Cottage, Dummer. Sidney's father, Charles William White was a groom and agricultural labourer.

Sidney had 9 brothers and sisters. He was born in 1891 in Odiham. His only surviving younger brother Percy, was born in 1897 in Kempshott.

By 1911 Sidney, still single, was working as a cowman at Kennel Farm.

Sidney enlisted in the Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line, 16th Lancers (The Queens) at Winchester. He held the rank of Lance Corporal and his number was 5685.

21st February 1915

At 0600 on the 21st February the first serious German attack against the British occurred when a 100 kilogram blast at Shrewsbury Forest, part of the Ypres Salient, left the 16th Lancers with 5 officers and 12 men killed, 29 wounded and 11 missing; a heavy and abrupt loss. The Germans exploded a mine which blew up a short length of the front trench of the 16th Lancers in Shrewsbury Forest north of Klein Zillebeke. The 2nd Cavalry Division at the time was holding 1,400 yards of the French IX Corps line. The reserve squadron at once counter attacked, and only 40 yards of ground in depth and 100 yards long were lost. The German attempts to advance beyond this point were prevented only by the coolness and daring of the officers and men. In order to check the enemies onslaught a machine gun detachment rushed forward into the open under terrific fire and brought their guns into action at point blank range almost on the brink of the crater caused by the explosion. The German infantry attempted to advance down the communication trenches which connected the fire trenches with those in the rear and also laterally along the fire trenches. At a turn in one of these narrow passages a Sergeant and a Private took their stand and held the trench alone and unaided against the oncoming Germans shooting or bayoneting them as they came around the corner. Of the 12 other ranks killed in the explosion or subsequent fighting only one has a known grave. They are all commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.



Charles William White
b. 1853, Kew, Surrey
d. 1935, Basingstoke
res. 1901, Kennel Cottage Dummer
m. 27 May 1871, Donnington Sussex

Harriet Beech
b. 1854, Donnington, Sussex

UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919 about Sidney Leonard White	
Name:	Sidney Leonard White
Birth Place:	Odiham, Hants
Residence:	Basingstoke
Death Date:	21 Feb 1915
Death Place:	France and Flanders
Enlistment Place:	Winchester
Rank:	L Corporal
Regiment:	Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line
Battalion:	16th Lancers (The Queens)
Regimental Number:	5685
Type of Casualty:	Killed in action
Theatre of War:	Western European Theatre
Other Records:	



Percy Victor White, Sidney's younger brother, survived the war. He served as a Private in the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) from 1916 to 1918. Regimental number G63559



Memorial to 16th The Queen's Lancers in Canterbury Cathedral. Behind the grill is a book listing all those who fell in the First World War.

The 2nd Cavalry Division in 1914-1915

On 6 September 1914, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade (then under 1st Cavalry Division) and 5th Cavalry Brigade (an independent command) were placed under orders of Brigadier-General Hubert Gough. A week later they were formed into the 2nd Cavalry Division and other units required to make up the divisional structure were added as they arrived. **The 16th (The Queen's) Lancers joined in September 1914.** The Division remained on the Western Front in France and Flanders throughout the war. It took part in most of the major actions, including:

- 1914
 - The Battle of the Aisne (12 - 15 September)
 - The Battle of Messines 1914 (12 October - 2 November)
 - The Battle of Armentieres (13 - 17 October)
 - The Battle of Gheluvelt (30 - 31 October, a phase of the Battles of Ypres 1914) ("First Ypres")
- 1915
 - Winter Operations 1914-15
 - The Battle of Neuve Chapelle (10 - 12 March 1915)
 - The Battle of St Julien (26 April - 3 May, a phase of the Battles of Ypres 1915) ("Second Ypres")
 - The Battle of Bellewaarde Ridge (24 - 25 May, a phase of the Battles of Ypres 1915) ("Second Ypres")

1916
No major engagements