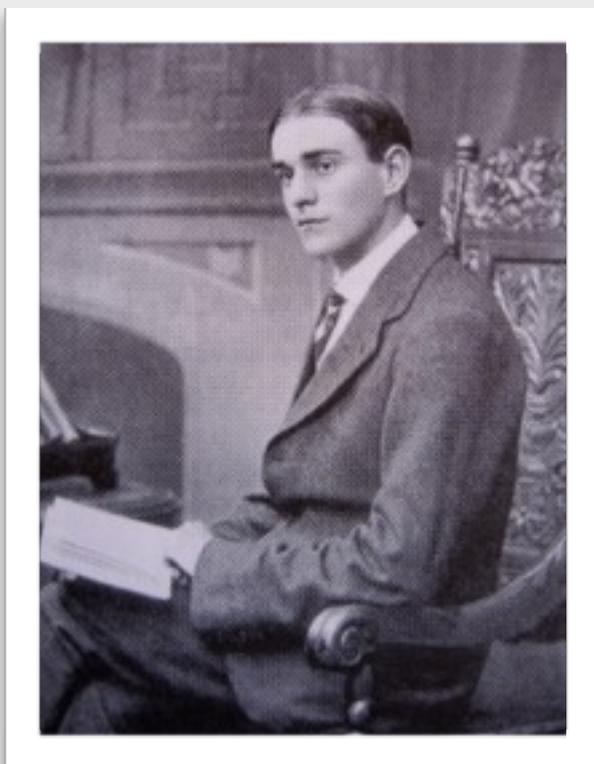


Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch of The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Second Lieutenant John Emerton Sanders 17th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers

John Emerton Sanders was the elder son of Richard and Charlotte Hay Sanders of Homestead, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham. He was educated at Wycliffe College, Stonehouse between 1909 and 1914 and on the outbreak of war applied for a commission in the Army. Impatient at the seeming delay, he enlisted as No 2566 in D Company, 1/5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment and although under military age he went with the battalion to France on 15 May 1915, later being assigned to the machine gun section. He received his commission on 24 August 1916, after a course in a training school near to GHQ in France and was assigned to 17th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers, a 'bantam' battalion.

In August 1916 the Fusiliers were engaged in the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, part of the ongoing Somme Offensive and on 24 August sent out a strong patrol to gather information concerning enemy positions. The patrol ran into a German post, heavily defended and only a few wounded

stragglers returned, reporting that there were others lying wounded in some shell holes. On 25 August, the first day of his appointment, Second Lieutenant Sanders was ordered to take out a bombing party that night to look for survivors. This he did, returning safely with his command. He then went out by himself and did not return.

His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial. He was one of seventy eight former students of Wycliffe College to die in the Great War and is therefore also commemorated on the College Roll of Honour and also on Cheltenham Borough War Memorial and that in the Church of the Holy Apostles, London Road.

(Taken from Leaving All That Was Dear - Cheltenham and the Great War by J Devereux and G Sacker)