

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Second Lieutenant David Roderick Eccles
Royal Flying Corps

David Roderick Eccles was a Canadian, who lived in the USA and who volunteered for the Royal Flying Corps, training in Canada before arriving in Gloucestershire.

He was born in 1899, to parents who lived in St John's, New Brunswick. They died when he was in his early teens and he went to live with an uncle in Brooklyn, New York City, where he later studied at business school and gained employment as an accountant.

In June 1917 the Canadian Army conducted a recruiting campaign in New York City and David responded and was accepted for entry into the

Royal Flying Corps. He spent the months of June to August 1917 at Toronto and Camp Borden, Ontario, training for service abroad.

In September 1917 he was commissioned as a Temporary Second Lieutenant and sent to England. On 30 October 1917 he was posted to 62 Squadron at Rendcomb, near Cirencester. The squadron was equipped with the Bristol F2b Fighter and his time was taken up with learning to fly this machine and the art of aerial gunnery.

On 5 December he met his death following an aeroplane accident. Unusually the Gloucestershire

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newspapers did not report this or the usual inquest, so the exact circumstances are unknown. However we do know, from a report in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, that following the accident he was taken to Cirencester Cottage Hospital where he died.

His uncle in Brooklyn was down as next of kin and was immediately informed of the accident by cable. He cabled back requesting that his nephew's body be sent for interment in the family

plot at St John's, New Brunswick. However this request was never met and he now lies in North Cerney (All Saints) Churchyard, where a standard CWGC headstone marks his grave.

After the war his medals were sent to a surviving younger brother, via their uncle.



All Saints, North Cerney