

2nd Lt Albert Vincent Scholes MM



DoB: 13th September 1897 **Died:** 1st November 1918 **Age:** 21

Buried: Edgerton Cemetery, Huddersfield

Family:

Born in Bucklebury Berkshire to Carpenter (died in Leicester 1902) & Jane Scholes who then settled in Huddersfield. 3 siblings - 2 older (1 of those died in 1913), and 1 younger who died aged 4 in 1903. He worked as a sorting clerk in Huddersfield GPO, and then from 1913 a GPO telegraphist.

Military Career:

Aged 17 when he joined the RFC on 6th July 1915 as a 2AM (Air Mechanic 2nd class). Promoted to Air Mechanic 1st class (1AM) on 1st September 1916, then Corporal on 1st December 1916 and appointed Sgt Mechanic on 15th July 1917. Albert was in France as a wireless operator from 16th Oct 1915 to 10th April 1917 receiving a chest wound on 4th April during the Battle of Arras, where a shrapnel bullet struck the bar of his medal and glanced off, entering his chest an inch above his heart. He was treated at Birmingham War Hospital and returned to France on 29th September 1917 to 28 Jan 1918.

He was subsequently discharged from non-commissioned service on 5th June 1918 having been selected for appointment to a temporary commission. He achieved 2nd Lt on 7th July 1918 in a Technical capacity in view of his telegraphy experience, and was posted to 44 TDS at Port Meadow on 12th August 1918, and then to W.T (Wireless Telephony) Flight 21st Wing on 11th October, which was also based at the aerodrome. Albert was awarded the Military Medal on 19th December 1916 for "efficiency in keeping in communication with an aeroplane while under heavy shellfire", in a ground based RFC forward observation/liaison role with the army, presumably during the Somme offensive.

Accident:

Wolvercote. Capt Lenox Stanley Arbuthnot (22) undertook an unauthorised low flying "stunting" display, piloting Bristol Fighter C4774 (pictured above) with Albert as passenger, taken up to test equipment. The undercarriage struck the ground hard coming out of a dive, breaking off a wheel and causing the aircraft to veer towards and hit a building, ripping off part of a wing before climbing to 100 ft and then diving into ground.

The accident was witnessed by the Wing Examining Officer, Capt Geoffrey Hughes MC, and recorded in his diary: "...two Bristols [Fighters] stunting wildly round the hangars & [I] narrowly missed a collision with one of them. Then for ten minutes saw the worst and most nerve wracking bit of flying I've ever seen as one Bristol dived at people on the aerodrome. Finally an awful crash ended the career of the Pilot & passenger".