

Banstead Remembers

*2nd Lieutenant Bernard Marshall
of The Elms, Copt Hill Lane, Burgh Heath*

*1st Northamptonshire Regiment
Killed in Action in France, aged 19
5th April 1916*



TUESDAY 5th APRIL

at All Saints Church, Banstead

7:30am: the churchyard flag will be raised to half-mast
11:55am: a short service of remembrance will be held
Noon: a church bell will be tolled 100 times

All are welcome to attend to help commemorate the 100th anniversary of Bernard's death. Please come and remember the sacrifice that our local community made 100 years ago in World War One.

*We will remember **each** one*

2nd Lieutenant Bernard Marshall of The Elms, Copt Hill Lane, Burgh Heath

Bernard Gouldsmith Marshall was born on 4th August 1896 in Streatham, the son of Edwyn, a publisher, and Mary (nee Gouldsmith). He was the sixth and youngest of their surviving children.

The family moved to The Elms (now known as Chesham House), a 14-room mansion in Copt Hill Lane, midway between Burgh Heath and Kingswood. The area bounded by Copt Hill Lane, Furze Hill and Waterhouse Lane had only just started to develop after the opening of the new Kingswood and Burgh Heath railway station in 1897 so there were few other houses when the Marshalls moved in and The Elms was surrounded on 3 sides by fields.

Bernard enrolled at Epsom College as a day boy (meaning he lived at home rather than boarding at the school) on 3rd May 1909. He was an able scholar, became a sub-prefect, played Hockey and Cricket for the school and served as a lance corporal in the Officer Training Cadets. He passed his school certificate in July 1912 and matriculated to the University of London in September 1912.

Bernard chose to study medicine and he passed the first exams for his degree in 1913, while still at Epsom College. He left College in July to study at Guy's Hospital in London and joined the medical unit of the University of London Officer Training Cadets.

Bernard and his brothers joined up to fight soon after war broke out. They are shown on a roll of honour in the *Surrey Mirror* in October 1914, amongst 91 men from the Kingswood area. Bernard enlisted as a private in the newly-formed 16th (Service) Middlesex Battalion on 26th September.

The 16th Middlesex were the original Public Schools battalion, one of Lord Kitchener's Pals battalions; they recruited privately, with membership by application only. They were oversubscribed and so 4 further battalions were raised at Epsom. The 16th trained at Kempton Park racecourse and then at Warlingham. They remained at home for further training as the rest of Kitchener's New Army began to deploy to France in the Spring of 1915.

The Public Schools battalions were full of the men who would usually form the backbone of the officer corps and so the cadets and ex-cadets of the Officer Training Corps amongst them were encouraged to apply for commissions in other units. Bernard applied for officer training and was commissioned into the Northamptonshire Regiment (in which one of his brothers was serving) as a 2nd lieutenant in April 1915. He continued his training with their depot unit, the 3rd Battalion.

Bernard was posted to the 1st Battalion and joined them in France on 8th February 1916. Winter was biting, it was frosty and cold, snow fell. The men smeared their feet with whale oil to protect against frostbite. They were in the Loos area, a flat mining landscape, where even slight rises in the ground gave considerable tactical advantages. Craters pockmarked No Man's Land, a legacy of the underground war waged by the two sides' sappers and miners. Above ground, the area was quiet with little to report beyond the everyday attrition of trench warfare.

At 6a.m. on 5th April, in the growing early morning light, Bernard was in a sap trench by Hart's Crater when he was killed by a German rifle grenade. He was 19 and had been in France for less than 2 months.

Bernard is buried in St Patrick's Cemetery, Loos; his headstone inscription reads "Until the day dawn and the shadows flee away." He is remembered on the panels in St Mary's, Burgh Heath, in the Burgh Heath War Memorial Hall, on the Great War memorial in Epsom College chapel, on the Wilson House war memorial, on the Kingswood war memorial and on several rolls of honour.

Bernard was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.