

Charles Uppleby GEIDT

Born 6 August 1894, India

Died 10 April 1918, Egypt, aged 23

Lieutenant Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, attached to the R.F.C.

Charles Uppleby Geidt was born in India to a family attached to the Indian Civil Service. Public Service ran in the family and a great nephew has held the office of Private Secretary to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Rt. Hon Sir Christopher Geidt KCVO,OBE, has only recently retired from that position.

Bernard George Geidt (1855-1913), was born in Bengal, India and was one of seven children of the Rev'd Bernard Geidt (1813-1881) and Isabella Deacon (1826-1882).

After schooling at Shrewsbury, Bernard G Geidt was appointed in 1874 to the Indian Civil Service as Assistant Magistrate & Collector in Burdwan, Bengal.

His first marriage when he was 30 was to Florence Emily Oldham in Shillong, Bengal on 23 October 1884 but the marriage came to a sad end with her death in 1888. They had no children. He married again, to Agnes Ellen Wollaston (1865-1894) in Christchurch, Hampshire in October 1890. They had three sons:

Edward Wollaston Geidt 1891-1961

Frederick Bernard Geidt 1892-1955

Charles Uppleby Geidt 1894-1918

All were born in Bengal. The death of Agnes Ellen Geidt in Darjeeling on 10 August 1894 followed closely on the birth of **Charles** on 6 August.

The young boys were sent home for an English education and in the 1901 census Frederick and **Charles** are shown in the home of Lucy Sarah Wollaston, mother of Agnes, at 'Scotter', Chine Crescent Road, Bournemouth West Cliff. They went on to Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire, where they are listed aged 18 and 16 in the 1911 census.

Edward Wollaston Geidt married Anna Dorothy Margaret Partridge (1891-1961) and had three children, the eldest of which was Mervyn Bernard Geidt (1926-1991), the father of Sir Christopher Geidt.

After the death of his second wife, Bernard George Geidt married again in October 1902 in St Mary's Church, Cofton, to Violet Louisa Waterfield (1869-1940) the daughter of William and Matilda Rose Waterfield who leased Eastdon House, Cockwood from Lionel Eales between 1887 and 1910. William Waterfield (1832-1907) had also worked in the Indian Civil Service and Violet Louisa was born in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Violet's brother, Philip Gay Waterfield (1872-1954) appears to have entered the army as he is listed in Kelly's Directory for Dawlish, 1902, as the Commanding Officer of the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment. After the death of William Waterfield in 1907, Eastdon House was sold to John George Denman Partridge in 1911 and it next changed hands in 1984.

The cemetery by St Mary's Church, Cofton, contains the graves of many members of the Waterfield, Partridge and Geidt families.

Bernard Geidt was appointed in June 1901 to be a member of the Lieutenant Governor's Council, Bengal, and between 1902 and 1904 he was a High Court Judge in Calcutta.

*India Office,
May 12, 1904.*

The KING has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. Bernard George Geidt, of the Civil Service of India, to be a Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Fort William in Bengal, in the place of Mr. John Foster Stevens, of the Civil Service of India, who has resigned that office.

His wife appears at first to have stayed in Eastdon House for she had a son, Leonard Waterfield Geidt who died in infancy in 1904, in the registration district. A second son, David William Geidt (1906-1979) was born on 8 July 1906 in Bengal, India.

*India Office,
May 6, 1908.*

The KING has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. Henry Reynell Holled Coxe, Indian Civil Service, to be a Judge of the High Court of Judicature, at Fort William, in Bengal, in the place of Mr. Justice Bernard George Geidt, Indian Civil Service, who has retired.

Bernard Geidt and family returned from India to live in Cheltenham for they are found in the 1911 census at Bayshill House with their youngest son, David William Geidt aged 4 and a nurse Emily Philpot (see the entry for Tom Pook, listed at Cofton church on the War Memorial). The household also contained a cook, a parlourmaid, a housemaid and a kitchenmaid. Bernard George Geidt's retirement did not last long for he died in the Hotel Victoria, Oberhofen, Bern, Switzerland on 12 September 1913 aged 58.

Charles Uppleby Geidt took part in the O.T.C. (Officer Training Corps) at Wellington College between April 1909 and April 1911 when he left school. He also records previous service as a Trooper with the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles from August 11, 1914 to 24 April 1915 when he left to take up a commission in England. This implies that he sailed to Canada at some point but extensive search of Canadian Government Archives does not provide evidence.

(Some references suggest that the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles were not formed until 1915, but it is possible that he joined the 30th Regiment, British Columbia Horse which was placed on active service on 6 August 1914 for local protection duty. Part of the regiment was the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, which was authorized on 7 November 1914 as the '2nd Regiment, Canadian Mounted Rifles, CEF'. It embarked for Britain on 12 June 1915. It disembarked in France on 22 September 1915 as part of the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles Brigade.)

The National Archive at Kew holds officer records which show that **Charles Uppleby Geidt** applied for a Temporary Commission in the New Army in July 1915. He was posted as a Temporary 2nd Lieutenant to the 13th Reserve Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. A letter from the War Office, dated 10th August, details how and where he should report. His widowed step-mother counter-signed his application. A character reference was

given by C. Esdaile Burkitt, vicar of Budleigh Salterton who certified that **Charles Geidt** had lived with him from 1911 to 1912.

His army service is not recorded on file but a minute sheet shows that he was ordered to report at Reading by letter dated 20th December 1917 for instruction in aviation. Lt Geidt, Cameron Highlanders and R.F.C., then wrote the same day to the Director of Air Organization, Air Board, Strand, London, as follows:

Sir,

I have the honour to request that I may be sent to EGYPT to train as a pilot, instead of learning in ENGLAND.

I was born in India, and am used to, and benefit by, a warm climate.

My orders at present are to report at READING on Jan 10th, 1918.

The instruction was changed and the minute note shows that "proceeded to Egypt 8/1/18 for instr in aviation."

Little is known about the circumstances of his death although a reference shows that he "was accidentally killed while flying with 193 Training Squadron, flying DH6 C1971."

A flying school was established using airfields near Alexandria at Aboukir and Heliopolis. Accidents were not uncommon in these early aircraft. An article in Cross & Cockade Journal records the RFC and RAF Officer and Cadet Fatalities in Egypt between 1916 and 1919, and they were numerous. Mid-air collisions appear alarmingly frequent.

The DH.6 was specifically designed as a military trainer, at a time when it was usual for obsolete service types to be used in this role. Geoffrey de Havilland had two design criteria in mind. The first was that it should be inexpensive and easy to build, and above all, simple to repair after the mishaps common in training units. The top and bottom wings were square-cut and interchangeable, hence roundels often located in unusual positions. The fuselage structure was a straight box with no attempt at refinement of outline – instructor and pupil sat in tandem on basketwork seats in a single cockpit, spartan even by the standards of the time. The standard engine was the readily-available 90hp, and the engine was familiar to RFC mechanics. No cowling was used, and upswept straight exhaust pipes were fitted.

Charles Uppleby Geidt made a Will and probate was granted on 12 December 1918 to his brother Frederick Bernard Geidt, Captain, R.F.A.

It is not known if there is an entry on the Devon Roll of Honour at Starcross/Cofton. He is shown on Wellington College Roll of Honour ref 812620.

Cofton War memorial inscription: Charles U Geidt Royal Flying Corps April 23rd, 1918 (Date error -ed)

Commonwealth War Graves entry: Charles Uppleby Geidt Rank: Lieutenant
Date of Death: 10/04/1918 Age: 23 Royal Air Force and Cameron Highlanders
Cemetery: [ALEXANDRIA \(HADRA\) WAR MEMORIAL CEMETERY](#) Grave Reference: B. 56.
Additional Information: Son of Bernard George and Agnes Ellen Geidt.

Last known address: Rownly, Mount Park, Harrow, Middlesex

Dawlish World War One Project

Next of kin: (Step) Mother, Violet Geidt

References:

Birth Marriage death refs

The National Archive, Kew, Officer Record file

The Colonies & India from London, 15 September 1894

London Gazette

Kelly's Directory, Devon, 1902

wikipedia – airco DH6

Cross & Cockade Journal Vol 47, No 1

Eastdon Hamlet & the elusive Cockwood House, by Tricia Whiteaway, Dawlish Local History Group publication 2007/2011.

refs via subscription website:

Kingman Ford & Wilson family tree

census records