



William Frances Waugh Shields, the eldest son of Rev. William Henry Shields and his wife, Margaret, was born at Bacchus Marsh, Victoria, Australia on 29th October 1892 where his father was 'locum tenens' whilst the usual incumbent was in Europe. The family returned to England in 1894 and settled in the North East. They did return to Melbourne for a further incumbency but were resident in Shrewsbury, Shropshire by the time that William was to enter Ellesmere College in May 1905 when just twelve years old.

He took up his place in the Harold dormitory and spent seven years at the college. He started making a name for himself in his very first term with his appearance in the first of many drama productions. Academically, he progressed well and went on to sit and pass his Senior Oxford Local Examinations. Over the years he was awarded prizes in various subjects including Latin, French, Divinity & Public Speaking. He was an active member of the Debating Society at the same time progressing through the ranks of the Officer Training Corps, attaining the rank of Colour Sergeant in his final year.

On the playing field there was hardly a sport that he was not involved in. He played cricket (ending up as Captain of the 1st XI) and a commentator for the school magazine for Worksop College in 1911 recorded "*Ellesmere needed fourteen to win. These they quite failed to get, though Shields made a most plucky attempt to get the runs, and we were not comfortable until he found one from Spink too good for him*".

He was a familiar sight on the hockey and football pitches playing for both his dormitory and the school and he was also to be seen on the tennis courts and athletics tracks. He was Captain of the Shooting VIII and was undisputed Chess Champion in the school for three years.

In 1909 he was appointed Dormitory Prefect and, over the course of his final two years, he was variously appointed Prefect of Hall, Prefect of Chapel, and Captain of School. He left Ellesmere in December 1911 and took up his place at Keble College, Oxford in the Lent term of 1912. At Oxford, he also played a full part in University life and was a member of the 1st Association Football XI for the 1913-1914 season. He enlisted in the Officer Training Corps and, following the outbreak of war received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant on the same day as he received his Degree.

He was gazetted to the 9th (Reserve) Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry (K.S.L.I.), attached to the 5th Territorial Battalion K.S.L.I. that had been formed in August 1914 from the mass of enthusiastic volunteers that came forward to enlist in Kitchener's Army – some 100,000 men volunteered and signed up in less than six weeks. The Battalion trained at Aldershot and then set sail for France, landing at Boulogne in April 1915, and was involved in some of the fiercest fighting of the war in the Ypres salient, the Somme in 1916, Arras and the 3rd Battle of Ypres in 1917.

William embarked for France on 30th July 1915 and moved to the Front towards the end of August. He was killed in action only five weeks later on 25th September 1915.

He was awarded the Victory Medal, the British War Medal and The 1915 Star.

His memory is commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, on the War Memorial at Ellesmere College and on the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour. He was one of the 4710 men of the K.S.L.I. who gave their lives in the conflict.

Family:

Father	William Henry	(1857 -1914)	Clergyman
Mother	Margaret Louisa	(1869 -1922)	nee Sinclair
Siblings	Margery Gertrude	(1895 -)	
	Frances Isobel	(1899 - 1983)	
	John Sinclair	(1903 - 1997)	

Photographs:

Ellesmere College	Roll of Honour, p.29
Oxford University	Keble College Roll of Honour

Sources:

Ellesmere College	Headmaster's Register
Ellesmere College	Roll of Honour
Ellesmerian Magazines:	

Dec 1905, p. 9,99,128,146	Apr 1906, p. 20-22	Jul 1906, p. 43
Dec 1906, p. 85,88.	Apr 1909, p. 27	
Jun 1909, p. 31-33,43,65-68,76,142		
Jul 1909, p. 47-56,59,60	Nov 1909, p. 64,69-76	Mar 1910, p. 5,12
Apr 1910, p. 20,21,23	Jun 1910, p.29-31,38	
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Feb 1911, p. 81,82,85,87	Apr 1911, p. 92-97	Jun 1911, p. 103-110,114
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Apr 1913, p. 137	Nov 1914, p. 81	Dec 1915, p. 135,136

www.ancestry.co.uk

National Probate Calendar, 1915, p. 212
WW1 Medal Rolls Index Cards
Soldiers Died in the Great War
1911 Census
Outward Passenger Lists, 4th October 1900

National Archives

WO 339/24625

CWGC

Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on panels 47 & 49.

The London Gazette

9th October 1914, p.8044

Rolls of Honour

Ellesmere College, Shropshire
Keble College, Oxford University
Bacchus Marsh & District
"In continuing and grateful memory – The Menin Gate"

Memorials

Ellesmere College War Memorial
Menin Gate Memorial
Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour – tree N 233

The Times

1st October 1915

The Birmingham Daily Mail

2nd October 1915

The Birmingham Daily Post	2 nd October 1915
	10 th October 1914
The Birmingham Gazette	6 th October 1915
	1 st October 1915
The Evening Despatch	6 th October 1915
The Manchester Courier	6 th October 1915
The Melton Express	2 nd February 1918, p.4
The Bacchus Marsh Express	18 th November 1915, p.2
	13 th November 1915, p.2
	17 th February 1894, p.2 (family leaving district)
	21 st December 1918 (Roll of Honour)
The Argus (Melbourne)	3 rd November 1892, p.1 (Birth announcement)
	13 th November 1915, p. 13 (Death announcement)