

In Memory of

Lieutenant

# Sydney Esmond O'Hanlon

M C

Royal Flying Corps who died on 03 February 1918 Age 23

Son of Sydney and Isabel O'Hanlon, of Windyridge Farm, Dean Row, Wilmslow, Cheshire. Born at Hale, Cheshire.

Remembered with Honour

Manchester Crematorium



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Lieutenant Sydney Esmond O'Hanlon MC

## 63 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Died: 03 February 1918      Age: 23

How Died: Accidental

Country of burial: U.K.

Cemetery or Memorial: Manchester Crematorium

Town Memorial: Hale

---

Born at Hale, Cheshire on the 31st August 1894, the elder son of William Sydney & Isabel O'Hanlon (nee Mills). Birth registered during the December quarter in the Altrincham R.D. - ref: 8a/163. 1901 Census - "Oak Dell", Alan Drive Hale, Cheshire. Son (listed as Edmund) - aged: 6 - born: Hale. Head of household - Sydney O'Hanlon - Married - aged: 31 - occ: Merchant of Homemade Cotton Goods - born: Bowdon. Also - Isabella O'Hanlon - Wife - aged: 33 - born: Bowdon. Plus 1 younger brother and 3 Domestic Servants.

He attended Wadham House School, Hale after which he went to The Leys School, Cambridge where he started as a boarder in the autumn of 1908 and left in 1912. The Leys was established as a Methodist boarding school in 1875 and took most of its pupils from the Methodist commercial and manufacturing world of Yorkshire and the North-West. John Harding from The Leys School sent me this information and went on to say that he was described as being too small to be successful in team games. However, in 1911 he did shoot in the School VIII at Bisley, so must have been a good shot.

1911 Census - The Leys School, Cambridge. Boarder - aged: 16 - Scholar - born: Hale, Cheshire. His parents were still residing at "Oak Dell", Alan Drive Hale, and Cheshire. Head of household - William Sydney O'Hanlon - Married - aged: 41 - occ: Merchant of Homemade Cotton Goods - born: Bowdon. Also - Isabella O'Hanlon - Wife - aged: 44 - born: Bowdon. Plus 1 younger sister and domestic Servants.. "Oak Dell" was a 15 room house. His father's business address was:- 49 Dale Street, Manchester.

Member of the Hale Congregational Church. After leaving school, he studied wireless telegraphy.

Presumably, he enlisted at the outbreak of war, or very soon afterwards, as it is reported that at the end of 1914, he went the Morfa Camp at Conway for training as a machine gunner with the Lancashire Fusiliers, later transferring to the RFC. The first date on his RAF record is the 30th May 1916 when he was appointed as Flying Officer and detailed to 4 Sqn Home Establishment.

Transferred from Home Establishment to Reading on 30/01/1917. (No.1 School of Military Aeronautics was based at Reading). Drafted to Vendome, France on 25/03/1917. No.209 TDS (Training Depot Station) was based at Vendome, east by south-east of Le Mans. Posted to 65 Sqn on 30/04/1917.

Transferred to 63 (Training) Sqn as an Assistant Instructor on 15/7/1917. Seriously injured on 29/01/1918. He died at the Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, Kent on the 3rd February 1918.

His medical reports states that due to a gunshot wound, he was unfit for duty for two months from 13/06/1917. Likewise, he was unfit for another three months from 23/08/1917. Medically examined again on 20/11/1917 and whilst he was cleared to return to service on Artillery (spotting?) work or ferrying, a restriction was placed on him that he was not to fly above 4,000 feet.

His MIC only records his RFC service - no mention of any earlier Army service. It states that he served in France, but gives no date. Apart from his Military Cross, he was awarded only the BWM & Victory Medals, indicating that he did not enter a war zone until 1916.

Mentioned in the Royal Flying Corps Communiqués of 1915 - 1918.

Communiqué No. 56 (29th September - 8th October 1916) - During the period 2nd - 6th October, the weather was continually unfavourable for aerial operations, strong westerly and south-westerly wind prevailing and on the majority of days heavy rain falling. In spite of this considerable amount of work was accomplished. 128 targets were dealt with by aeroplanes in co-operation with the artillery, more than 100 photographs were taken and nearly two tons of bombs were dropped on various points of importance in the enemy's lines.

On the 5th October, by means of the zone call, shrapnel fire was brought to bear on the enemy's trenches north of Thiepval within two minutes of the call being sent down by Lt. Dickie and Lt. O'Hanlon of 4 Sqn. The 13<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery (RGA) employing 9.2 inch howitzers and co-operating with Captain Walsh of 4 Sqn, in

very difficult weather conditions, succeeded in destroying one pit and setting fire to ammunition.

Communiqué No. 58 (14th - 22nd October 1916) - In spite of unfavourable weather conditions on the 14th October, some bombing was carried out by the 4th & 5th Brigades and some successful contact patrol work was accomplished. Lt. Dickie and Lt. O'Hanlon of 4 Sqn, reported accurately on the position of infantry at Schwaben and Stuff Redoubts.

Communiqué No. 60 (28th October - 5th November 1916) - There were very strong winds on the 3rd November which greatly handicapped aerial operations. 120 targets were engaged with aeroplane and kite balloon observation, many direct hits were obtained on emplacements and batteries were silenced. A considerable amount of wire cutting and trench registration was successfully accomplished. The 65th Siege Battery (RGA), employing 12 inch howitzers, with observation by Lt. Gabell & Lt. Pemberton of 5 Sqn, demolished all four pits and one hostile battery and damaged three pits in other batteries. Lt. Long and Lt. O'Hanlon of 4 Sqn, sent zone call for an infantry target. 60 - pounder shrapnel fire caused many casualties. These two officers also informed 17th Divisional Artillery of a party of men working on a strong point. Again shrapnel fire was turned onto them and the party moved. The artillery was switched to the new point and many casualties were caused in the working party.

The 08/09/1916 edition of the local newspaper reports on his award of the Military Cross. It also states that he is the son of the late W. O'Hanlon, West Thorpe, Bowdon. But his RAF record states that they resided at "Oak Dell", Hale. He was Mentioned in Dispatches and awarded the Military Cross, but no dates are given for either award - probably during the Battle of the Somme 1916.

He was instructing at the Joyce Green RFC Base, at Dartford, Kent on the 29th January 1918, another aeroplane that had gone out of control hit Lt O'Hanlon's machine and he was seriously injured. Listed as Esmond O'Hanlon on the Roll of Honour - as does the local newspaper.

He died in the Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, Kent.

Death reported in the 08/02/1918 edition of the Altrincham Guardian, which stated that he was cremated at the Golders Green Crematorium, London - the service being conducted by the Headmaster of the Leys School - the Rev. W.T.A.

Barber DD. Not according to the CWGC records and the WWI Memorial Headstone in the Manchester Crematorium Grounds.

From:- <http://www.roll-of-honour.com/cheshire/HaleWadhamHouseSchool.html>

O'HANLON, MC Sydney Esmond - Lieutenant, General List and Royal Flying Corps. Killed 3rd February 1918. Aged 23. Born at Hale, Cheshire. Son of Sydney and Isabel O'Hanlon, of Windyridge Farm, Dean Row, Wilmslow, Cheshire. Awarded the Military Cross (M.C.).

Cremated and commemorated on crematorium panel in MANCHESTER CREMATORIUM, Lancashire.

See also Kelvin Young's "Aircrew Remembered" website - <http://aircrewremembered.com/ohanlon-sydney.html>

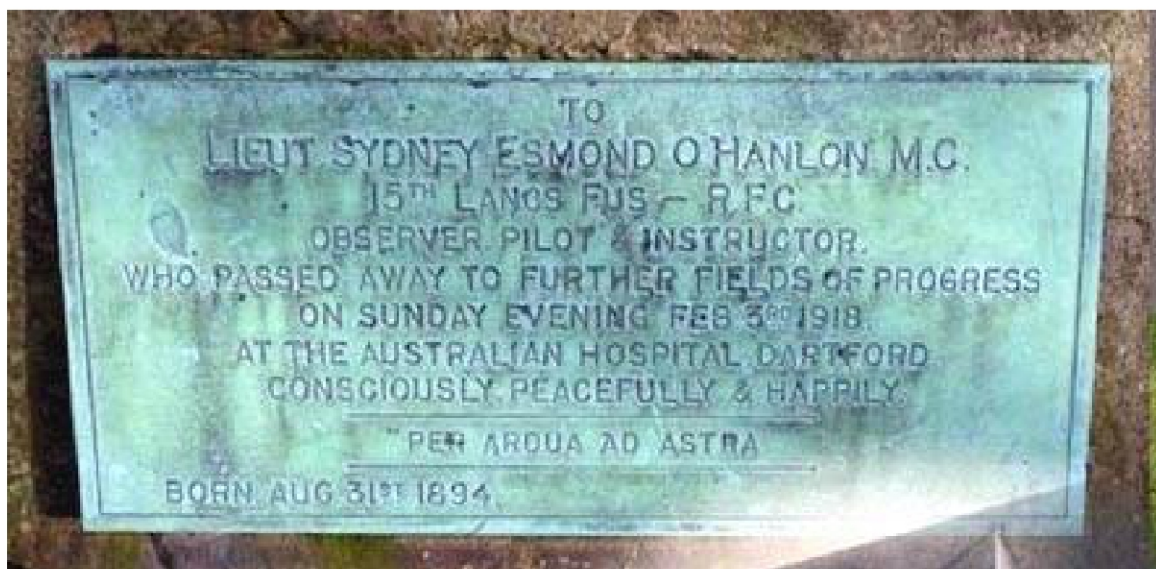
---

### **Memorials found on:**

Altrincham United Reformed Church, Hale

Wadham House School, Hale

Altrincham & District Roll of Honour



**Memorial Plaque at Manchester Crematorium**





**The Communal WWI Memorial Headstone  
at Manchester Crematorium**