

# CHARLES MARSH

Rank/Number: Private G/8168  
Regiment: "A" Company, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Charles Marsh was born in 1888, the third child of George and Ann Marsh. The family lived at Bone House, Green Lane, Buckland before moving to 2, Pineham Cottages, Whitfield. His father was a thatcher and hay-cutter. He died on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1907. At the time of the 1911 Census, Charles was employed as a hay trusser and was living in Pineham with his widowed mother.

Charles answered Lord Kitchener's call for volunteers and joined the 8th Battalion, The Buffs, which was formed in Canterbury and attached to the 72<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 24<sup>th</sup> Division. The early days were chaotic with insufficient officers and no organised billets, uniforms or equipment. In March 1915 the men received their uniforms and moved to Aldershot for final training. On 19<sup>th</sup> August the Division was inspected by Lord Kitchener and the next day by King George V. That day, orders were received to move to France.

At 0130hrs on 1<sup>st</sup> September the 8<sup>th</sup> Buffs arrived in Boulogne and travelled by train and on foot to Maninghem, near Etaples where they were occupied with exercises, practice attacks and trench digging until the Division began to advance towards the battle front on 21<sup>st</sup> September. They were to be in reserve for the British Army assault at Loos. Following a series of night-time forced marches they arrived in Bethune early on 25<sup>th</sup> September.



By noon, Loos had been captured, but the 8<sup>th</sup> Buffs were not called to advance until late afternoon. During the evening they attacked Vendin-Le-Vieil but were forced to withdraw, spending a cold night in the trenches. The following day they launched an attack on a nearby German position but could find no gaps in the wire and came under heavy machine gun fire. They were ordered to withdraw, having incurred 554 casualties.

Private Charles Marsh was wounded in the attack and was evacuated to a nearby casualty clearing station, where, on 28<sup>th</sup> September, he died. He was buried at Lapugnoy Military Cemetery.

His younger brother, Albert, also of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Buffs, died two days later from wounds he received in the same battle.