



JOHN GEORGE ANDERSON, Edinburgh University, caps 6, cap number 60

John George Anderson was born on 31st December 1889 in Banbridge, Co Down. He was the second of three children of James Anderson, a master bleacher, and his wife Mary (nee Clugston).

John was educated at Campbell College from 1902 and then went to Edinburgh University to study Medicine.

John was quickly spotted as a hockey talent by the Scotland selectors and was named in the Colours for the final trial in January 1910. Anderson won his first cap on 12th February 1910 in the match against Wales. His selection at Inside Right into an otherwise experienced team was regarded an experiment by the press. Scotland had a comprehensive 7-0 win at Dunfermline that day. Although Anderson didn't score, he did establish himself as a regular in the national team and accumulated 6 caps in total over a three year period (in an era where only 3 caps a year were available). Anderson continued to impress and his play at half back in the 1913 trial was described as untiring and skilful. His final cap was a late call up to play half back against Ireland on 15th March 1913. Scotland lost the game 2-1. Anderson is named as cap No 60 for Scottish Hockey Men.

Anderson graduated from Edinburgh University MB Ch.B in 1914. By then, the clouds of war were spreading over Europe. Like many young men Anderson volunteered and was commissioned as a Lieutenant into the 3rd Highland Field Ambulance on 31st October 1914. The 3rd HFA was raised in Dundee as part of the 51st Highland Division .

The 3rd HFA left Dundee on Saturday 8th May 1915, cheered on by an "immense crowd". Anderson is named as one of the 270 officers and men in the unit. The unit arrived in France on 28th August 1915.

Anderson initially served as a doctor in a Field Hospital dealing with wounded men brought back from the front. In January 1916 he spent some time on temporary attachment to the 1/6th Black Watch as their Regimental Medical Officer (RMO). In

this role he was responsible for the health of the men in the unit and delivering emergency first aid to any wounded soldiers.

On 7th March 1916, Anderson returned to hospital duty. Unfortunately he soon had to be invalided out, leaving on 1st April 1916 suffering from illness. As he recovered he spent some time at the Michelham Convalescent Home, Cimiez, Nice.

When Anderson returned to active duty he became RMO for the 1/6th Black Watch on a full time basis. He was awarded a Military Cross in the 1918 New Year' Honours List for his actions in this role.

On the 21st March 1918 the 1/6th Black Watch were near Cambrai. They were the front left battalion of the 51st Division when the Germans launched their Spring offensive, the Kaiserschlacht (Kaiser' Battle). There was heavy shelling with high explosive, gas and smoke shells followed by an assault. There were no survivors from the 1/6th front companies. The remnants of the battalion including the HQ were outflanked and had to carry out a fighting withdrawal while being shelled and attacked by enemy aircraft. Captain Anderson was reported missing after the action.

John Anderson' body was never identified and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, as well as on Campbell College' memorial and web page, Edinburgh University' Roll of Honour and a private memorial in Bannside Presbyterian Church.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Long Long Trail web page
Campbell College, " behind the glass"
Edinburgh University Roll of Honour
Noonans of Mayfair web page
British Newspaper Archive
Ancestry