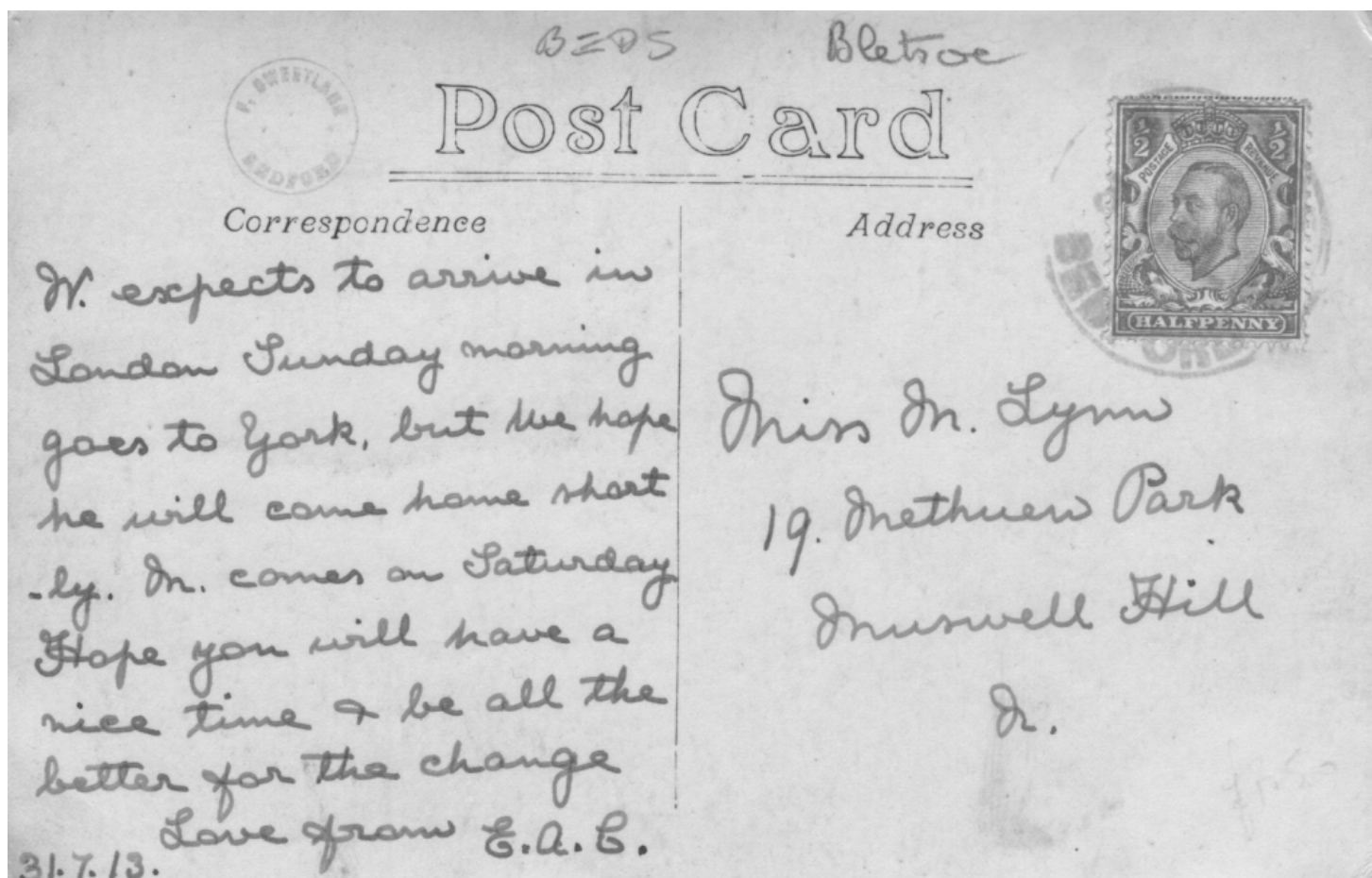




Major Walter Campion at Bletsoe Castle c1914

Probably photographed just prior to his departure for France almost at the outset of the war on 7th September 1914. He was wounded on 20th September but returned to the front and was killed in action near Lille on Wednesday, 28th October 1914, aged 43. He lies buried at Ration Farm Military Cemetery, La Chapelle-d'Armentiere, Nord. A wooden battlefield grave marker bearing his name is now in Bletsoe Church, presumably having found its way there after the erection of a permanent memorial. Walter Campion was gazetted into the 2nd East Yorkshire Regiment from the Militia, and served with some distinction in India, Ireland and South Africa. Having served in France at the very beginning of WW1 he can be regarded as one of the "Old Contemptibles". Following is an extract from Marquis de Ruvigny's Roll of Honour: *Son of Henry Campion of Bletsoe castle near Bedford. Born Dean, co. Beds 9-8-1871, educated Bedford Modern School, gazetted 2nd Lieut East Yorkshire Regiment, from the Militia 12-12-1894, promoted Lieutenant 2-4-1897, Captain 10-5-1900, and Major 16-4-1913. Served in the South Africa War 1900-1902, being employed with the Mounted Infantry (slightly wounded), took part in the operations in the Transvaal in May and June 1900, including actions near Johannesburg, Pretoria and Diamond Hill (11th & 12th June), operations in the Orange River Colony July to 29th Nov 1900, including actions at Wittebergen (1st to 29th July), Bothaville and Caledon River (27th to 29th Nov), operations in Transvaal, west of Pretoria, including action at Frederickstad. Was in command of the 5th Mounted Infantry from Feb to Mar 1902, took part in the operations in Orange River Colony and Cape Colony 30th Nov 1900 to March 1901, operations in the Orange River Colony Mar to Sep 1901 and Oct 1901 and April to 31st May 1902 (mentioned in despatches, London Gazette 10-9-1901 and 29-7-1902, brevet of major, Queens medal with 4 clasps and Kings medal with 2 clasps), subsequently served in Burma, India and with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders, was wounded 20-9-1914, but returned to the front, and was killed in action near Lille 28th Oct following.*



Reverse of postcard showing the Lychgate of St Mary's Church, Bletsoe, dated 31 July 1913 and signed "E.A.C." The handwriting has been identified by her nephew, Desmond Campion, as that of Emily Ann Campion. At the time it was written, Emily Campion lived at Bletsoe Castle with her father Henry and other family members. The first paragraph refers to "W." arriving in London then departing for York. This almost certainly refers to her brother, Major Walter Campion, then serving in the East Yorkshire Regiment, who was killed in action during the early months of The Great War. A subsequent paragraph mentions "M", probably her sister Margretta.

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