Lieutenant Harold Quinlan (XC 1912-13)

From “The Xaverian” 1914 p. 41

Cecil and Harold Quinlan both left for the home countries at the beginning of the year, and are studying in Dublin, where Cecil has entered on the medical course at Trinity. Both have been keeping up their sporting interests, though they think Rugby is not half the game that the Australian game is. … Harold meanwhile, kept up his old love for boxing, and entered for the Amateur Middleweight Championship of Ireland. He fought through to the final round, then boxed a twenty round final, after which Harold had to be content as runner-up. Just as we go to press we hear that he has cabled to his father in Perth, and obtained leave from him to join Kitchener’s Army.

From “The Xaverian” 1915 p. 19

Harold Quinlan—Lieutenant in the 4th Hussars—that’s about all we know, for Harold always held himself (and does so still) as an exception to “the pen being mightier than the sword.” However, though silent, he is not idle, and one of these days we shall get enough matter about him to set the Editor’s quill quivering for weeks.

Harold Daniel Quinlan

Rank: Lieutenant
Unit: British Army
Regiment: Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line
Battalion: 4th (Queens Own) Hussars
Date of death: 20 March 1918
Cause of death: Killed in action
Age at death: 24 (approx.)
Place of death: France
Memorial details: Pozieres Memorial (Panel 3), Somme, France

The Pozieres Memorial relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields, and the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from 21 March to 7 Au-

From “The Xaverian” 1918 p. 58

Lieutenant Harold Quinlan.—Poor Harold, serving with the 14th Hussars, was killed in action on 26th March. God rest his soul, and may the sweet mother whose feast of her annunciation was the day before—25th March—have been mindful in death of him who in life did not forget her.

Two incidents have been reported to us as taking place at the time of his death. We have done our best to substantiate them before setting them down, and the best authority that can be consulted here vouches for their accuracy.
The first is this—Side by side with him fell Rodgerson, an old Scotch Collegian. They had been rivals on the fields of play, but stood shoulder to shoulder in the sterner one of war. Poor Quinlan was killed outright, but Rodgerson had the good fortune to escape with a wound. Truly here is a coincidence, but not a greater one, we think than that of Lieutenant H. B. Dickenson, of Wesley College, first speaking on behalf of the other Public Schools at the send-off given at the School to the Old Xaverians of the First Expeditionary Force, and promising that one Public School boy would ever stand to another in a tight corner on the field of battle, and then, later, actually carrying Lieutenant M. B. Ryan, of Xavier (one of the guests of the evening), when wounded, off the field of battle. “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

The second incident is—Harold met his death while trying to help another. During the action his orderly fell wounded, and it was while bearing the sufferer back to a place of safety that he received his own death wound. Rest to poor Harold’s soul, and length of life to him who was succoured by one who, in the rush of battle did not forget the God-given law of charity.

From “The Xaverian” 1918 p. 80

Tuesday, April 9th.—Gloom cast over the School to-day as there were posted two telegrams telling of the deaths at the front of Assal O’Brien and Harold Quinlan. Both were of fairly recent years, especially Harold, who had been at the school with many of the present boys. May they both rest in peace.