

## WWI Roll of Honour: David Dewar (1893 - 1918)

David Dewar (also known as 'Sonnie') was born on 1 September 1893 in Northampton, the eldest son of the Rev. David and Annie Dewar. The family moved to Leicester and later Loughborough, where David's father was Vicar of Holy Trinity Church. David was educated at Wyggeston Grammar School for Boys from 1902 and St John's School, Leatherhead, from September 1903. He stayed there for eight years, excelling academically and winning prizes in Classics and Divinity, before gaining an exhibition to Downing in 1912, studying Law. He wrote regularly to his old School while at Cambridge and, by the time he graduated, was President of the Cambridge Old Johnian Society.



At Downing, David was an active member of several academic societies as well as the Boat Club during his first two years. Reports of meetings of the College Debating Society in the College magazine, 'The Griffin', describe him as 'amusing' and 'well considered'. He was a member of the Theological Society committee from 1913-14 and read a well-received paper on Canon Law in Michaelmas 1913, pointing out that this lay 'at the very root of the question of Disestablishment and Disendowment'. He also presented to the College Literary Society in the same term, on 'George Borrow'. He was an active member of the Boat Club, reserve for the May Boat in 1913, rowing at 7 in the Trial Eights in Michaelmas 1913 and at Bow in the Lent and May Boats in 1914. He is thought to have been hoping to take Holy Orders and work as a missionary in China. After the outbreak of war he joined the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps, beginning his military training while finishing his studies, and proceeded to his BA degree in 1915, also taking his LLB in the same year.



He obtained his commission as Temporary 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment in June 1915. In March 1916 he transferred to the Machine Gun Corps, but did not proceed to France until 7 January 1917, by which time he had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Lt Dewar was killed in action on 22 March 1918, during the Battle of St Quentin. His Commanding Officer wrote that he "was the bravest officer and the finest gentleman it was ever my luck to meet." He was mentioned in despatches, posthumously, on 20 May 1918. Although recorded as 'Killed in Action', David's body was not discovered until January 1922, when he was identified and buried in the British Military Cemetery at Grand-Seraucourt.

He is commemorated on memorials at Wyggeston Grammar School for Boys (now Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College), St John's School, Leatherhead, Downing College and at All Saints with Holy Trinity Church and the Carillon Tower Memorial in Loughborough.

Sources:

<http://stjohnsleatherheadatwar.co.uk/>

<https://www.loughboroughecho.net/news/local-news/loughborough-vicars-officer-son-who-14345498>

Commonwealth War Graves Commission burial records ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org))

'The Griffin', Downing College magazine, 1912-1915.

Images:

Cambridge Old Johnians, 1913 (*courtesy of St John's School, Leatherhead*).

Military uniform courtesy of <http://www.loughborough-rollofhonour.com>

