



WW1 Roll of Honour: Arthur George Richard Whitworth

Arthur George Richard Whitworth was born on 23 January 1897 in Fordham, Cambridgeshire, the only son of Julius Henry and Selina Elton Whitworth. Arthur had an older sister and the family were living at 'The Lodge' in Worlington, Suffolk during his childhood. (His parents later moved to Buxton, then Tunbridge Wells).

Arthur was educated at the Perse School in Cambridge from 1909 as a day boy. He played in the 1st Rugby XV in his final year and a photograph has also survived of him in the School's archive acting in a Latin play (*both reproduced here with kind permission of the Perse School Archivist*).



He matriculated at Downing in 1914, at the early age of 17. He is pictured below in the matriculation photograph (*third from the left, front row, on the lower step*). This first term following the outbreak of the war was a strange time for residents in the College, many of whom had returned to find friends absent and already on military service. The College magazine, 'The Griffin', described the subdued atmosphere in College at the time: "*those who came up were few; on every hand we miss the wonted number of our friends. Daily we are reminded of them in untenanted room and silent stair, and the empty seats in Hall speak eloquently of their numbers*".



Arthur was in residence for four terms, before leaving to go into munitions work.

In early 1916 Arthur enlisted as a Private with the Artists' Rifles (28th Battalion, London Regiment), going out to France the following year. He was later evacuated to hospital suffering with exposure after being trapped in a shell hole under heavy fire for two days and nights but returned to his battalion after recovering. By March 1918, Arthur was a 2nd Lieutenant serving with the 19th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers. On 28 March, following the start of the German Spring Offensive, he was wounded and died two days later on 30 March 1918, aged just 20 years old.

His obituary in 'The Griffin' reported that 'he proved himself a most capable and popular officer, and his company commander writes: "Never did a company commander have a more conscientious subaltern, a braver colleague and a truer friend. The best proof of his courage and manliness was the high esteem and love his men bore towards him, a love and admiration equally borne for him by his brother officers."'

2nd Lt. Whitworth is buried in the Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No.1. He is also commemorated on memorials in Buxton, Cambridge, The Perse School and Downing College.

Sources:

With grateful thanks to the Perse School Archivist
http://www.buxtonwarmemorials.co.uk/whitworth_agr.html
'The Griffin', Easter 1918

Images:

1914 Downing College Freshmen photograph (copyright Lafayette Photography Ltd)