

WWI Roll of Honour: Benton Ord Jolly (1894 - 1917)

Benton Ord Jolly was born 31st October 1894 at Kirk Hammerton near York, the son of Thomas and Marion Jolly. From 1906 to 1913 he was a Dayboy at St. Peter's School in York where he was also Head of School, won a number of academic prizes, represented St Peter's School XV and XI teams, and was editor of the school magazine, *The Peterite*. It is fitting that the only surviving photograph of Jolly is from *The Peterite*, showing him as umpire to St. Peter's Cricket Team in 1913.



Jolly came up to Downing from St. Peter's School in 1913, gaining an exhibition for Classics. He was in residence for two years, gaining a Second Class in the Classical Mays, and was able to proceed to the B.A. degree in June 1916 on account of the University's wartime regulations, allowing three extra terms for military service. According to surviving records Jolly brought with him a reputation as 'a good all-round athlete', but a damaged knee prevented him from entering much into College sports, though he was a member of the University Fencing Club and was qualifying for his 'Blue'. His injury delayed his acceptance into the Army until 1915 when he was given a commission in the 11th Battalion of the Yorkshire Regiment.

2nd Lieutenant Jolly joined the 7th Battalion after their losses during the Somme offensive in the summer of 1916 and went to the Front in the autumn of that year. Much of January 1917 was spent in brigade reserve at Guillemont, the Somme and in front line trenches east of Morval, d'Arras until 25th January when the 7th Battalion moved into the line in the area facing Sailly-Saillisel. In early February 1917 the Battalion assembled for an attack on a village nearby and 2nd Lt Jolly was seriously wounded by shellfire whilst supervising the bringing in of prisoners. He died of his wounds the next day, 9th February 1917, aged 22.

2nd Lieutenant Jolly is buried in Grove Town Cemetery, Meaulte (Plot III. A. 1.) and his headstone is inscribed with the immortal words:

*Dulce et Decorum
est Pro patria mori.*

He is also commemorated on the Acomb War Memorial, on the Holy Trinity Church War Memorial, Micklegate, and in the Chapel of St. Peter's School, York.

Sources:

The Griffin, Lent 1917

The Peterite, November 1913.

Coulson, R. *A memorial roll of the Officers of Alexandra Princess of Wales Own Yorkshire Regiment who died 1914 - 1919.* (<http://www.ww1-yorkshires.org.uk/pdf-files/bob%20coulson/officers-died-ww1.pdf>)

Image:

Benton Ord Jolly (back row, far left), *The Peterite* November 1913. Courtesy of St. Peter's School York.

