

Salisbury Cathedral

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War I



SECOND LIEUTENANT

O. B. WORDSWORTH

MACHINE GUN CORPS (INFANTRY)

2ND APRIL, 1917

Osmond/Osmund Bartle WORDSWORTH

Osmond Bartle Wordsworth was born on 17th May, 1887 at Glaston, Rutland to parents Rev. Christopher Wordsworth & Mary Wordsworth (nee Reeve). His birth was registered in the district of Uppingham, Rutland in the June quarter of 1887. Osmond's parents had married in the June quarter, 1874 in the registration district of Totnes, Devon.

The 1891 Census recorded Osmond B. Wordsworth as a 3 year old, living with his family at Tyneham Rectory, Dorset. His parents were recorded as Christopher Wordsworth (Rector of Steeple & Tyneham, aged 43, born Westminster, London) & Mary Wordsworth (aged 42, born Kingswear, Dorset). Osmond was the second youngest of nine children listed on this Census. The children listed in this Census were – Dorothy M. (Scholar, aged 15, born Worcester), Christopher A. (Scholar, aged 14, born Cambridge), Ruth M. (Scholar, aged 13, born Glaston, Rutland), John (Scholar, aged 11, born Glaston, Rutland), William A. (Scholar, aged 9, born Glaston, Rutland), Susanna M. (Scholar, aged 8, born Glaston, Rutland), Reginald G. (Scholar, aged 6, born Glaston, Rutland) then Osmond & Irene M. (aged 1, born Glaston, Rutland). Also listed were 4 servants – Isabella Ogle (Nurse, aged 39), Eliza Codd (Cook, aged 36, Widow), Mary A. Steer (House & Parlour Maid, aged 21) & Florence M. Judd (Nursery Maid, aged 14).



Osmond Bartle Wordsworth attended Mr Pellatt's School (now Durnford) at Langton Matravers in Dorset.

He then attended Winchester College between 1899 to 1906, where he became Prefect of Library, won the Warden and Fellows' Prizes for Greek Prose and Greek Iambics and in his last year played for the College Rugby XV. The 1901 Census recorded Osmund B. Wordsworth as a 13 year old Patient in the "Sickhouse" of St. Mary's College, Winchester, Hampshire.

In 1906 Osmond Bartle Wordsworth won a major scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge and graduated in 1909 in the Classical Tripos. Two years later he was appointed Lecturer in Classics at Selwyn College, Cambridge from 1911 to 1914.

[The 1911 Census recorded Osmond's parents Christopher (Clergyman, aged 63) & Mary Wordsworth (aged 62) living in the 15 roomed St. Peter's Rectory, 51 High Street, Marlborough, Wiltshire. Rev. Wordsworth & his wife Mary had been married for 36 years, having had a total of 9 children – 2 having since died. Also living at The Rectory was Susanna Mary Wordsworth (aged 28) & Irene Mary Wordsworth (aged 21). 3 servants were also listed.]

In 1914 he published a novel entitled "The Happy Exchange". That same year he went to Canada to take up a post on the staff of Trinity College, Toronto, Canada.

Osmund Wordsworth was listed as a passenger arriving at the Port of Buffalo, New York, USA from Canada in May, 1915. His details on the manifest were – aged 27, Lecturer & his last permanent address was Toronto, Canada.

On the 1st May, 1915 Osmond Wordsworth boarded the SS "Lusitania" at New York with his sister, Ruth Mary Wordsworth, to return to England with the intention of enlisting in the army. On the 7th May the "Lusitania" was off the Irish coast when she was hit by a torpedo fired by the German U Boat U20. During the last minutes of the vessel sinking Osmond Wordsworth gave his lifebelt to another passenger but managed to escape, being one of the last to leave the ship, and was rescued. Almost 1,200 lost their lives and around 761 survived. Ruth & her brother did not know each other's fate until they reunited in Ireland. Ruth Wordsworth had survived by clinging onto an overturned collapsible and was rescued by the *Julia*. Ruth had been a missionary in Japan & had met up with her brother in Canada. They had booked a second cabin ticket on the *Lusitania*.



Extract from Newspaper Report on the funeral of Mr J. A. Reeve, of Kingswear:

"The funeral of Mr J.A. Reeve, of Yarrow Bank, Kingswear, took place on Saturday afternoon in the presence of numerous relatives and friends. The service in the parish church was choral, and the officiating clergy were Canon C. Wordsworth (Sub-Dean of Salisbury Cathedral and brother-in-law)....

The principal mourners were the widow, Mrs C. Wordsworth (sister) Messrs J. V. and O. B. Wordsworth (nephews), Miss S. M. Wordsworth (niece).....

Mr B. Wordsworth and Miss Wordsworth (his sister) are survivors of the "Lusitania" disaster, Mr Wordsworth having just returned from Toronto and Miss Wordsworth from Japan. Both had a terrible experience, the former keeping himself afloat by clinging to a boat, and Miss Wordsworth was in the water for some three hours and was picked up in an unconscious condition....." (Western Times, Exeter, Devon – 18 May, 1915).

Osmond Bartle Wordsworth was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 9th Battalion Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry on the 11th June, 1915 and reported to the Commandant at the Portsmouth Garrison for training on the 15th June, 1915.

2nd Lieutenant O. B. Wordsworth transferred to the 21st Company Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) on the 17th April, 1916 and received orders for France on the 28th August, 1916.

2nd Lieutenant O. B. Wordsworth embarked for France with his Company on the 31st of August 1916, landing at Boulogne later the same day, and arriving at Etaples on the 1st of September. On the 15th of November 1916 he attended a machine gun school at Camiers and rejoined his company in the field on the 26th of

November. On the 9th of January 1917 he returned to the UK on leave.

On the 2nd of April 1917, 2nd Lieutenant O. B. Wordsworth brought his guns into position to support an attack at Henin-sur-Cojeul. He saw that one of the gun crews were having trouble getting into position. Refusing to allow any of those of whom he had placed in shelter to carry out his instructions he started to go himself and, soon after, was seen to fall shot through the heart.

2nd Lieutenant O. B. Wordsworth was buried at Henin but the grave was lost in subsequent fighting.

Second Lieutenant Osmond Bartle Wordsworth was killed in action on 2nd April, 1917, aged 29 years.

Second Lieutenant Osmond Bartle Wordsworth is remembered on the Arras Memorial, France – Bay 10 as he has no known grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The CWGC lists Second Lieutenant Osmond Bartle Wordsworth, aged 29, as the son of the Rev. Christopher Wordsworth (Chancellor of Sarum Cathedral), and Mary Reeve Wordsworth, of St. Nicholas, Salisbury, Wilts. Educated at Winton and Trinity College. M.A., (Camb).

Second Lieutenant Osmond Bartle Wordsworth was entitled to the British War & Victory Medals. His Medal Index Card shows that he entered a Theatre of War - France on 31st August, 1916.



Obituary

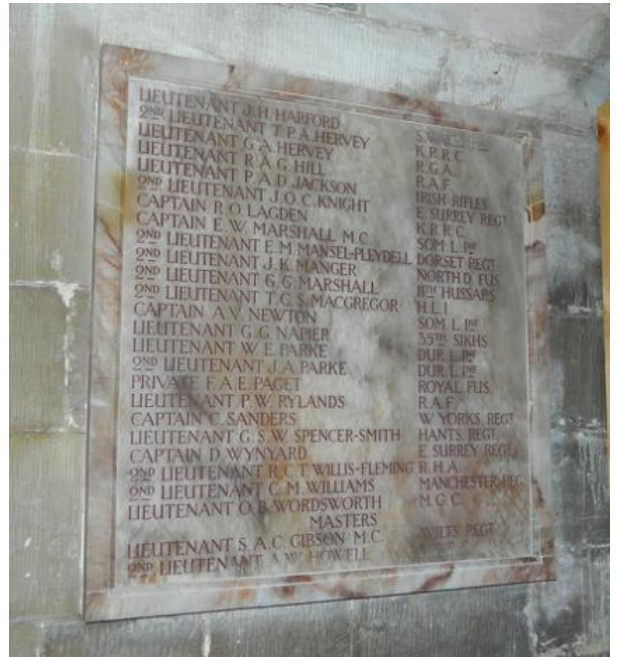
"2nd-Lieut. Osmund Bartle Wordsworth, killed in action near Arras, April 2nd, 1917, aged 29. Youngest son of Canon Christopher Wordsworth, Sub-Dean of Salisbury. Scholar of Winchester and Trin. Coll., Cambridge. 1st Class Classical Tripos, afterwards Lecturer at Selwyn Coll. (1911-14), Classical Teacher, Trinity Coll., Toronto, 1914-15. With his sister he was saved from the Lusitania on his return to England to join the army. He was given a temporary commission in the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry in 1915, being afterwards transferred to the 21st Machine Gun Corps, with which he went to France in Sept., 1916. He was the author of a novel, "A Happy Exchange," by "Herbert B. Thornley." Heath. Cranton. 1915. (Wilts Arch. & Nat. Hist. Mag. (1917))

Probate was granted on 3 May, 1917 at the London Registry:

"Osmund Bartle of St. Nicholas Hospital, Salisbury second lieutenant 23rd M.G.C. died 2 April 1917 in France. Probate London 3 May to John Vincent Wordsworth esquire and Susannah Mary Wordsworth spinster. Effects £1,262 1s. 4d."

O. B. Wordsworth is remembered as a Casualty of WW1 in the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book for Salisbury Cathedral.

O. B. Wordsworth is remembered on the Durnford School War Memorial (second panel).



Durnford School War Memorial (Photo with permission from Michael Day)

Osmond Bartle Wordsworth is remembered in the Trinity College Chapel – War Memorial located on Chapel south wall.



Trinity College Chapel – War Memorial



Second Lieutenant O. B. Wordsworth

(Photos & education information with permission from Suzanne Foster – [Winchester College at War](#))

Osmund Bartle Wordsworth is remembered in Winchester College War Cloister – Outer B5.



Winchester College War Cloister

The Arras Memorial

The Arras Memorial is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.

The French handed over Arras to Commonwealth forces in the spring of 1916 and the system of tunnels upon which the town is built were used and developed in preparation for the major offensive planned for April 1917.

The Commonwealth section of the Faubourg D'Amiens Cemetery was begun in March 1916, behind the French military cemetery established earlier. It continued to be used by field ambulances and fighting units until November 1918. The cemetery was enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields and from two smaller cemeteries in the vicinity.

The cemetery contains over 2,650 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 10 of which are unidentified. The graves in the French military cemetery were removed after the war to other burial grounds and the land they had occupied was used for the construction of the Arras Memorial and Arras Flying Services Memorial.

The adjacent ARRAS MEMORIAL commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave. The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the spring of 1918. Canadian and Australian servicemen killed in these operations are commemorated by memorials at Vimy and Villers-Bretonneux. A separate memorial remembers those killed in the Battle of Cambrai in 1917. (CWGC)



(Photos courtesy of David Milborrow)



Arras Memorial – Bay 10 - O.B. Wordsworth

