

WW1 Roll of Honour: Harold Dunkerley (1889-1918)



Harold Dunkerley was born on 27 May 1889 in Bombay, India to James Herbert and Mary Ann Dunkerley. By the time he was two years old, he was living with his paternal great-aunt and 7-year-old brother, William, in Oldham, Lancashire. (*He is pictured here, c1900, in a family photograph*). He attended Giggleswick School from 1898 to 1906, where he was a great all-rounder and a praeposter (senior prefect). He was a successful cricketer, captaining the 1st XI, and also won colours in rugby. He also helped form the school's Music Society and was an active member of the Debating Society.

In 1907, Harold matriculated at Downing College studying Natural Sciences, and was an active member of College life from the start, rowing in the Boat Club Trials in his first term. He tried his hand at most College sports, excelling in many and gaining colours in Cricket, Rugby Football, Hockey and Lawn Tennis. He initially played as a three-quarter in the rugby team, eventually moving to half, and captained the team (*pictured below in the 1909-10 team, seated on first row of chairs, 2nd from right*). He also played soccer on a more occasional basis and was elected a Griffin in Easter 1909. He was also a member of the College Debating Society and was profiled in 'The Griffin', the College magazine, as one of their 'Leading Lights' in his final year. The article described him as 'the pride of our community' and his rooms in I staircase (now O) 'the centre of the social life of the College'.



Downing College Rugby XV, 1909-10

After receiving his BA in 1910, he completed his medical studies at the London Hospital, qualifying in 1914 as M.R.C.S and L.R.C.P. and working as a Clinical Assistant in the Surgical Out-patient Department from September 1914 until December, when he obtained a temporary commission as Lieutenant in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He married Florence Haughton Foster in London on 6th February 1915 before proceeding to France on 19 May 1915 with the 8th Rifle Brigade, with whom he saw nine months' service before being wounded and invalided home. He was promoted to Captain after a year's service. After three months' convalescence he returned to the Front, and was attached to a stationary hospital in Boulogne before serving with the North Somerset Yeomanry. He was later transferred to the 95th Field Ambulance unit, with which he served until his death, by which time he was recorded as acting Major.



Major Dunkerley was killed in action on 23 March 1918, aged 28. He is buried in Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez.

Sources:

With thanks to the family of Harold Dunkerley and Giggleswick School Archives for their assistance in compiling this biography.

'The Griffin', 1907-1910, 1918

'The London Hospital Gazette' obituary, 1918

Images:

Family photograph, c1900, courtesy of the Harris family.

'Leading Lights' photograph, 'The Griffin', Michaelmas 1909

Downing College Rugby XV, 1910 (DCPH/2/3/8/1) and Rowing Trials 1907 (DCPH/2/3/2/51) - courtesy of Lafayette Photography Ltd.

Major Dunkerley in uniform, 'Illustrated London News', 1 June 1918.

