

CHARLES NEVILLE JOLLY



10th February 1920

Aged 26 1893-1920



Volunteer, Young Men's Christian Association.

While Charles Jolly was unable to serve in the armed forces during the First World War, he was nonetheless determined to 'do his bit', and his service in the war zone was believed to have played a role in his early death.

Charles was the youngest child of five children of the Reverend John Jolly and his second wife Mary Elizabeth née Harding. John Jolly had been a grocer's apprentice who became a Baptist minister in Lincolnshire. He later altered his doctrinal views and studied at Trinity College, Dublin, before he was ordained in the Church of England Ripon diocese. He came to Bradford as a curate, was appointed the first Vicar of St. Crysostom's, Idle, and was subsequently preferred to Thornton, a living he held for sixteen years. Charles was born in Thornton on 3rd October 1893, six years after his nearest sibling, his only sister Elsie. Two of his elder brothers, Newman and Reginald, followed their father into the Established Church. Reginald was educated at Thornton Grammar School, then attended Bradford Grammar for two years. Charles followed him to B.G.S. in 1904 when he was eleven, and over the next five years he moved up through the Classical forms. He gained Lower Certificates in seven subjects and captained his house Second XI. However, his father's death at the start of 1909 caused his mother to move to Edgbaston, where her eldest son was a clergyman. Charles thus left Bradford and enrolled at King Edward's School, Birmingham which he attended until 1912. In the year above him (until 1911) was the creator of Middle Earth, J.R.R. Tolkien.

From King Edward's Jolly gained a place at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, where he took a 2.2 in the History Tripos Part I, followed by a 1st in the Theology Tripos Part II. In his first year he gained his college colours for rugby, an event *The Bradfordian* reported, and in 1915 he was awarded the Carus Greek Testament Prize. After the outbreak of war, Jolly tried several times to enlist, only to be rejected. Since his physical fitness does not appear

to have been in question, it may have been his eyesight that led to him being turned down. Undaunted by this, after graduation Jolly volunteered for the Y.M.C.A. and he went to France at the start of August 1916 at the height of the Battle of the Somme.

The main role of the Y.M.C.A. in the war was to provide recreation centres for soldiers, both in Britain and in the overseas theatres of war. They served vast quantities of refreshments to troops on the move, at base depots, on lines of communication, and also close to the front. They also escorted family members visiting their dangerously wounded soldier relatives. When the British sent divisions to shore up the Italian Front at the end of 1917, Jolly accompanied them.

With the end of the war, Jolly returned to Peterhouse in 1919 on a studentship for research in Theology. However, his health had been undermined by his war service. He soon became ill with Ulcerative Endocarditis, a bacterial heart infection, and then acute Nephritis of his kidneys set in. He died at his mother's home in Toxteth, Liverpool on 10th February 1920, attended by his brother Harding, who was Vicar of Shipley.



Acknowledgements:

Jolly's photo is from the School memorial book courtesy of the O.B.A. and B.G.S. The family was researched using Ancestry.co.uk. His years at B.G.S. are recorded in the Annual Reports for 1905 to 1909. The source for his university years and war service is *Admissions to Peterhouse in the University of Cambridge, October 1911—December 1930*, compiled by E. Ansell (Cambridge, 1939), 8 (<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=0DYZCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA8&lpg=PA8&dq=Charles+Neville+Jolly&source=bl&ots=YRx6zC-Mfv&sig=SCwmUmykBvwFUF5Mo_cRnM8t7a4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjk_qP1xfPXAhWKLVAKHfMbBTkQ6AEIUjAL#v=onepage&q=Charles%20Neville%20Jolly&f=false>). The causes of death are taken from Jolly's death certificate. For the Y.M.C.A., see <<https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/other-aspects-of-order-of-battle/ymca-british-volunteer-organisations-1914-1918/>> (accessed 29.10.2019).

This biography was researched and composed by Nick Hooper in October 2019. For further information, contact Nhooper1956@googlemail.com, or see <<http://www.bradfordgrammar.com/former-pupils/bradford-grammar-school-in-ww1/>>.