

Herbert Cowell Ainsworth

Herbert Cowell Ainsworth was born in Darwen, Lancashire, on 25th November 1889, the son of John and Sarah Ann (nee Cowell) Ainsworth. Brought up and educated in Darwen, he was the sixth of seven children. The family lived in Tockholes Road. His father was an insurance agent and tax collector. Before joining up, Herbert worked as a bank clerk at the Darwen branch of the Manchester and County Bank. He married Gertrude Cocker in 1912.



In September 1915, Herbert joined the army and served as a Private in the 26th (Bankers) Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. This Battalion was made up of bank clerks and accountants from all over the country and was formed on July 17th 1915 by the Mayor of the City of London. In November 1915, after initial locally based training, the Battalion came under the 124th Brigade, 41st Division at Aldershot. They embarked for France, landing on May 4th 1916, concentrating between Hazebrouck and Bailleul and were involved in the battle of Flers - Courcellette. Herbert was killed in action on October 4th 1916. He was twenty five years old. His older brother, Arnold, was killed in action just twenty days earlier, also on the Somme. Herbert left a wife and one child, born in 1913. He is buried at the AIF Burial Ground, near Flers, France.

Author: Tricia Thomas