

## Flight Sgt Arthur George Banfield Rodgman



**DoB:** 16<sup>th</sup> October 1895      **Died:** 20<sup>th</sup> August 1917      **Age:** 21

**Buried:** Higher Cemetery Exeter on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August 1917

**Family:** Born in Bristol to George and Elizabeth Rodgman. Elder brother Leonard survived the war. Arthur was a tailor prior to enlisting.

**Military Career:** Joined the RFC as an Air Mechanic 2<sup>nd</sup> (2AM) Class on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915 aged 19. Promoted to AM 1<sup>st</sup> class (1AM) on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1916. Promoted to Sergeant 5<sup>th</sup> July 1917. Rodgman had been flying for 5 months at the time of the crash, and had been recommended for a commission.

**Accident:** Wolvercote Manor Farm. Arthur was piloting an RE8 (A4655) two-seater reconnaissance aeroplane, visiting from Northolt where he was based with 35 Training Sqdn (TS), and was returning having refuelled at Port Meadow. He crashed shortly after take-off at 3.30 pm, apparently after passing low over an old friend's house he was paying respects to. Smoke was reported to have appeared and the aircraft entered a flat spin and nosedived into ground from 100 ft. The petrol tank exploded and the plane caught fire with flames reported to be up to 30ft high.

The Court of Inquiry returned a verdict of "death by misadventure" with no blame attached to the pilot. An RFC Sergeant escorted the coffin to Exeter and the bearers were RFC men from Farnborough. The funeral was well attended by family (and former school Headmaster) and floral tributes included a "neatly made aeroplane in flowers" from neighbours and friends.