



# Woodford Remembers



## Alfred William Mehew

January 1881 – 9 May 1915

### Family

Alfred's parents were not Woodford people. His father William was born in Spaldwick in 1856, and mother Lois Warren was born in Twywell in 1860. They married on 15 April 1880 in Woodford and lived off Lower Green (Church Green). William worked as a Labourer in Ironstone according to the 1881 census. Alfred was born in 1881 and is three months old on the census date. By 1901 they were living in Newtown. Their eldest now known as William had two siblings Percy, and Annie Myrtle who died at the age of 14 years. Alfred William appears to have been named after his father's brother who had died at the age of 2

(Alfred) William was a shoemaker / riveter when he married Hannah Wilson who was two years his senior. They were married in St Mary's Church Woodford on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1902. By 1911 they were living in Church Green and William was employed at the Islip Furnaces. The couple had four children William (dob 6 June 1903) and Hilda (dob 1 October 1905). Hilda's twin sister, Clarice, had died in infancy. Another daughter, Melba, was born on 15 June 1912). William played football for Woodford. School records show that when Hilda commenced her education at the junior school on 3 May 1915 the family still resided in Church Green, but by 1920 the widowed Hannah had moved to the High Street just above Blacksmiths Cottage.

### Army Service

William enlisted for service with the Northamptonshire Regiment (2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion) in Kettering in November 1914. His regimental service number was 16496. Private Mehew was mobilised to France on 15 April 1915 and on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1915 he took part in the Battle of Aubers Ridge, which was an unmitigated disaster, with no ground gained and no tactical advantage won. There were 426 casualties from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Steelbacks. William was at first reported in The Times as wounded, then as wounded but missing and only on 15<sup>th</sup> August, more than three months later, was he reported as being killed at that fateful battle. A report in the Kettering Leader describes that he sustained an injury to his hand and whilst returning for treatment was killed.

### Burial / grave

Pont-du-Hem Cemetery, La Gorgue, Pas de Calais

### Dependants

Wife Hannah and three children William and Hilda and Melba

### Commemoration

Woodford War Memorial Village Green

Woodford St Mary's Church Memorial



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With thanks to Sharon Safford

(Great Granddaughter) for photographs and additional material