



## **William Airey**

### **1886-1920**

William was born in Walsall, Staffordshire in 1886. His father was George Airey, a Saddle Girth Weaver born in Kendal, Westmorland in 1861 and died in 1929. His mother was Eleanor/Ellen (nee Troughton) born in Kendal in 1863 and died in 1908. They were married in Kendal in 1880.

Their other children were; Agnes Ann, born in Kendal in 1881 and died in 1895, George William, born in Aston, Birmingham in 1882, Frank, born in Birmingham in 1884, Thomas, born in Walsall in 1888, Elizabeth Ellen, born in Walsall in 1890, May, born in Walsall in 1892, Clara, born in Walsall in 1894 and died in 1894, Ethel, born in Birmingham in 1895 and Israel Banks, born in Aston in 1897 and died in 1900.

On the 1881 Census George and Ellen are living at 6, Yard 3, Kirkland, Kendal, in 1891 the family are at 8, Upper Navigation Street, Walsall, in 1901 at 48, High Street, Dewsbury (William is living with his paternal grandmother at 34, Chapel Lane, Kirkland, Kendal) and in 1911 at 34, Granville Street, Dewsbury.

George was remarried in 1909 to Laura Amelia Broadwater (born in 1871 and died in 1913). He was married for the third time in 1914 to a widow with four children, Charlotte Annie Oates (nee Nicholls, born in 1869 and died in 1937).

William was employed as a Willeyer and later as a Railway Worker; he was married on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1909 to Annie Breheney (born in 1890 and died in 1975) they lived at 3, Back Albion Street, Springfield, Dewsbury and later at 27, Exley's Yard, Earlsheaton. They had five children; Ellen, born in 1910, Annie, born in 1912, Alice, born in 1913, Marion, born in 1918 and William, born in 1920 twelve days after his father's death. Annie was remarried in 1927 to Frederic William Tong (born in 1875 and died in 1958).

He enlisted on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1914 in the York and Lancaster Regiment as Private 16329 and was discharged as medically unfit on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1914 after only 18 days service. His brother Thomas enlisted into the same Regiment on the same date and was discharged medically unfit on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914 after only 11 days service. He enlisted again on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1915 serving as Private 18401 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers and served in the Gallipoli Campaign from 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1915 and after the evacuation of the peninsula on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1916, he continued in the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force until 10<sup>th</sup> March that same year. He was then posted to the Western Front from 11<sup>th</sup> March 1916 to 9<sup>th</sup> March 1917 and then returned to home service until 31<sup>st</sup> July 1917 when he returned to the Western Front on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1917. He was then transferred to the 775<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Company of the Labour Corps with new Service Number 418481 and served until 14<sup>th</sup> January 1919. He was discharged on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1919 and transferred to the Army Reserve. During his military service he suffered from scabies, impetigo and a scalded foot. A post-discharge examination on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1919 diagnosed that he was suffering from bronchial catarrh and suspicion of phthisis (pulmonary tuberculosis); a disability pension was awarded to his wife and four daughters from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1920. On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1920 the diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis was confirmed, and he died at Staincliffe Hospital, Dewsbury on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1920 and was buried in Earlsheaton Cemetery. William was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

William is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Earlsheaton Park War Memorial.

Although his cause of death was 100% attributable to his war service, for some unknown reason William was not commemorated as a war casualty by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and he had been buried in an unmarked grave in Earlsheaton Cemetery. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, Dewsbury Sacrifices submitted his service records to the relevant authorities and on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2016 his name was added to the records of the CWGC. In January 2017, a Commission Headstone was erected on his grave.

In Memory of

Private

**William Airey**

418481, 775th Agricultural Coy., Labour Corps who died on 28 August 1920 Age 34

Son of George Airey; Husband of Annie Airey of Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

**Dewsbury (Earlsheaton) Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

