



Woodford Remembers



Trpr. Arthur Smith

24 September 1890 – 9 March 1915

Family

Arthur's mother was a farmer's daughter, Bertha Hill prior to her marriage. Bertha's father was Joseph Hill, a farmer from Sudborough who rented Daventry Farm from approximately 1879 until his retirement, when the farm was taken over by JT Bonsor (prior to moving to the Glebe Farm in Church Street). On retirement in 1889, Joseph moved, with his wife Mary to River View, Addington Road. Joseph and Mary were members of the Baptist Chapel. Both died in 1896 at the ages of 77 and 74 respectively and were buried in St Mary's Churchyard, the funeral being conducted by Pastor Tyrrell of the Chapel.

Arthur's father, Charles Slater Smith was born in Tilbrook in 1865, to Thomas (Corn merchant and Farmer) and Elizabeth. On the 1881 census is listed as a boarding pupil at Kimbolton Grammar School. On 25th July 1889 Charles married Bertha at St Mary's Church Woodford. In 1891 Bertha is recorded with 6-month-old Arthur, staying with her parents in Woodford in River View in which he was born on 24 September 1890. In 1901 the family Charles (Butcher and farmer), Bertha and Arthur were living in Tenby St Mary in Pembrokeshire. At the young age of 14 years Arthur won his first horse race over the jumps. On leaving school Arthur attended Lewisham College in Weston Super Mare and served an informal apprenticeship with Rogers of Cheltenham. As a National Hunt jockey, he rode his first winner in 1908. In 1911 Arthur is recorded as being an assistant Race Horse Trainer. In 1911 he was also 2nd on the list of Gentlemen riders (winners), his most important win being on Sir Halbert in the National Hunt Steeplechase. He turned professional in 1913 and achieved 4th in the list of winning jockeys. One of his major wins was the 1914 Stanley Steeplechase (2 ¼ miles £500 prize) at Aintree on 26th March on Ally Sloper, winning by 2 lengths with odds of 6-1. Ally Sloper went on to win the 1915 Aintree Grand National.

Army Service

On the outbreak of war Arthur volunteered on 8th September to join the Northamptonshire Yeomanry (1155) ("A" squadron initially based in Northampton) and left with his Regiment for the front as part of the 8th Division in November 1914 serving with the Household Cavalry and the Cavalry of the line. In an obituary, one newspaper suggested he must have conned the Army Medical staff as he was so short sighted he should not have been accepted into service, however, pre-war, he was well known for refusing under all circumstances to wear glasses. He was killed in action at Neuve Chappelle on 9th March 1915

Burial / grave

Vielle Chappelle LaCouture New Military Cemetery Grave VII A 11

Dependants

None

Commemoration

St Mary's Church War Memorial Woodford



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If you can help with more information please contact
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