

92: James Edwin Woodward

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: James Woodward

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 61st Training Reserve Bn. Welsh Regiment

Service Number: TR/4/17473 Date of Death: 03 April 1917 Age at Death: 18

Buried / Commemorated at: St Mary & St Helen Churchyard, Neston

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of James and Hannah Woodward of Gorston Cottage, Little Neston

James Edwin Woodward was the first child of joiner James and Hannah Woodward of Little Neston and he was baptised in Neston on 24 February 1899 (when Hannah was recorded as *Annie*).

In 1911, as in 1901, the family was living at 'Gorston' in Little Neston:

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (Last Birthday) and SEX.		PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.					PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.			BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.	
		Males	Females	State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—	Personal Occupation.	Industry or Service with which worker is connected.	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account.	Whether Working at Home.							
1 James Woodward	Head	43	—	Married	—	—	—	—	Joiner	20	Dwelling Trade	Workshop	Shuster, Estover	—	—
2 Hannah Woodward	Wife	41	—	Married	16	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	Shuster's Hawarden St. Edgely	—	—
3 James Edwin Woodward	Son	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Shuster Neston	By Parentage	—
4 Maria Woodward	Daughter	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Shuster Neston	—	—
5 John William Woodward	Son	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Shuster Neston	—	—

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

I certify that—			Total.		
(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex columns.	Males	Females	Persons		
(2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have entered their sum with the total number of persons.	3	2	5		
(3) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.					

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Rooms, Tenement, or Apartments). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: James Woodward
Postal Address: Gorston Little Neston Cheshire

1911 census (condensed) – 'Gorston', Little Neston

James Woodward	43	joiner, building trade	born Neston
Hannah	41		born Hawarden
James Edwin	12		born Neston
Maria	8		born Neston
John William	3		born Neston

James and Hannah had been married for 16 years and, at the time of the census, all their three children had survived. It is not believed that they had any further children.

James Woodward snr was the son of general labourer John (born Liverpool) and Maria Woodward and in the 1891 census, aged 22, James was a wheelwright. James married Hannah Millington at Our Lady & St Nicholas & St Anne, the Liverpool Parish Church, in

the 2nd quarter of 1895. The second child of James and Hannah, Maria, was baptised at Neston on 14 November 1902 - her mother was recorded as *Anna* - but she died in Wirral Joint Hospital in January 1913 and was buried, aged 10, at Neston on 29 January. The Wirral Joint Hospital Board existed from 1888 to 1948 and administered a number of hospitals in the area, including Clatterbridge.

It is known that James enlisted in the 61st Training Reserve Battalion Welsh Regiment, in Chester, probably towards the end of February 1917.

A considerable reorganisation of the reserve infantry battalions took place on 1 September 1916. Before this date, most of the infantry regiments contained one or more reserve battalions of the regular and new armies. Recruits would be posted to these battalions for basic training, before they were posted to an active service unit. With the introduction of conscription, the regimental system simply could not cope with numbers. A new structure was put into place: the Training Reserve. The local nature of recruitment for infantry regiments was abandoned and the entire system centralised. After 1 September 1916, regimental distinctions disappeared and the reserve units of the regiments were instead re-designated as battalions of the Training Reserve. They were organised into new brigades. The official complement of the Training Reserve was a little over 208,500 soldiers.

[The Long, Long Trail http://www.1914-1918.net/training_reserve]

Part of the 13th Reserve Brigade the 61st Battalion (with the TR/4 designation) trained at Kinmel Park at Bodelwyddan (near St Asaph) which had been built as a training camp in 1914.

DEATH OF MR. JAMES WOODWARD.—
 Much sympathy is felt for the parents of this youth (who had joined up and was training at Kinmel Park, Rhyl), at his death, which took place on Tuesday evening. He was suffering from double pneumonia. The parents were wired for on Tuesday, but unfortunately the lad died before their arrival. He was a promising lad, and highly respected by a large circle of his pals, and will be sadly missed.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 7 April 1917

According to the newspaper reports, James Woodward contracted a cold whilst at the camp and this developed into double pneumonia, this leading to his death in the Military Hospital just about five weeks after he had enlisted. He was buried at Neston on 7 April 1917 when he would have been just 18½.

James Woodward	Military Hospital, Kinmel Park, Bodelwyddan	April 7 th 1917	18 years	H.M. Harris
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The entry in the Neston Parish Register of the burial of James Woodward on 7 April 1917

DEATH OF PRIVATE JAMES WOODWARD.
 —As briefly announced last week the death of Private James Woodward took place at Kimmel Park, on Tuesday week, at the early age of 18. The deceased had only joined up five weeks, and contracted a cold and finally succumbed to double pneumonia. The interment took place at the Parish Church last Saturday, the officiating minister being the Rev. H. M. Harris, curate. The funeral was of a military character with soldiers from Birkenhead and the bearers from Kimmel Park Camp. The corpse was met at the Joint Station and conveyed direct to the Parish Church. Along the whole length of streets were congregated sympathetic spectators, and the scene was very touching, the family being so well known and respected. After the interment the firing party fired three volleys over the grave and the "Last Post" was sounded. There were a large number of mourners and general public present, who were deeply affected. The coffin bore the "Union Jack," and the following were the chief mourners:—Mr. and Mrs. Woodward (parents), Miss Woodward (sister), Mr. Ellis Millington, Mr. Wm. Millington and Mrs. Millington (uncles and aunt), Mr. O. Woodfield, Mr. F. Woodfield, Miss Woodfield, Mr. Hacking, Mr. Lawton, Mr. Anyon, Mr. Lawley, Mrs. Cottrell, Mr. and Mrs. J. Dodd, Mrs. Morrison, Miss L. Meador, Mrs. T. Tickle, Mrs. W. Maelor, Mrs. Cosgrove, Mrs. Bushell, Mrs. H. and Mrs. F. Norman, Mr. Tom Norman, Mr. Geo. Oxton, Mr. H. Dodd, Mr. Geo. Harris, Mr. F. Harris, Mrs. L. Oxton, Mrs. A. Lewis, Miss Jackson, E. Rooke, Mr. Carruthers, Mrs. Geo. Burkey, etc. Many wreaths were sent. The funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr. H. Norman, Little Neston.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 14 April 1917

The report states that one of the mourners was 'Miss Woodward (sister)', yet it is believed that James' only sister, Maria, died (aged 10) in January 1913. This report also fails to mention John Woodward, James' brother.

Maria Woodward, James' sister, died on 26 January 1913 aged 10.

James Woodward snr died, aged 67, on 22 July 1935 and Hannah Woodward died, also aged 67, on 5 April 1938.

John William Woodward (born 13 February 1908), James' younger brother, died on 31 January 1963 aged 55. In the 1939 Register (29 September) he was recorded as a general farmer, ~~smallholder~~, single, living by himself at Gorston Cottage, Gorston Lane.

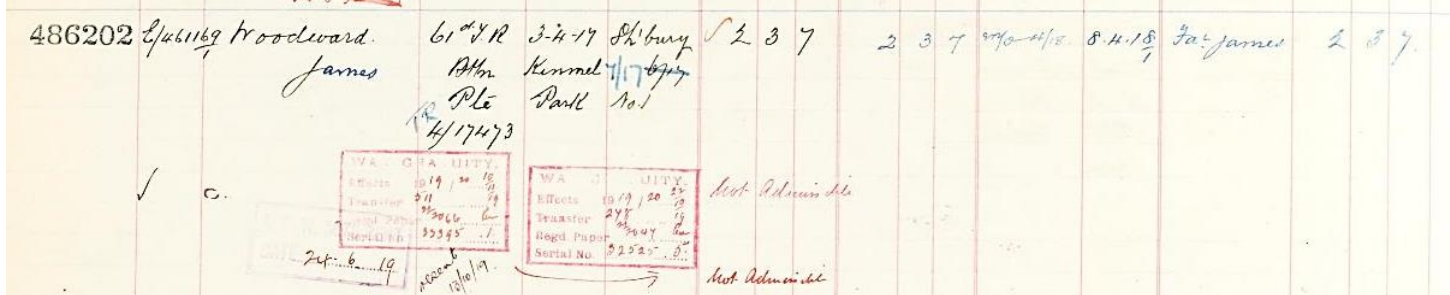
James Edwin Woodward's CWGC headstone at St Mary & St Helen Churchyard, Neston, in front of the weathered family grave.

Little Neston Soldier Dies in Camp.

The news of the death of Private James Woodward has been received with sorrow by the residents of Little Neston and the neighbourhood. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. James Woodward, of Gorston, and was only 18 years of age. Deceased received his education at the Ness Holt Schools, under Mr. Warren, and was of a very bright, cheerful disposition. He belonged to an old and highly-esteemed family. It is only some five weeks since Woodward joined the Army, and proceeded at once to Kimmel Park, where he contracted pneumonia which terminated fatally on Tuesday week. The funeral took place at Neston Parish Church on Saturday afternoon. A firing party preceded the coffin, which was covered with a Union Jack, surmounted by beautiful wreaths, and was carried shoulder high by six khaki-clad comrades of the deceased. A number of wounded soldiers from the local Red Cross Hospital lined the pathway leading to the church, afterwards falling into line behind the mourners. The Rev. H. M. Harris conducted the service, and after the Benediction three volleys were fired over the grave and the "Last Post" sounded. The chief mourners were Mr. and Mrs. James Woodward (parents), Master John Woodward (brother), Mr. and Mrs. E. Millington, Mr. W. Millington (uncles and aunt), Mr. E. Williams, Miss E. Williams, Mr. E. Jellicoe, Mrs. E. Cottrell, Mr. and Mrs. J. Dodd, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. J. Oxton, Messrs. H. Norman, C. Anyon, H. Jones, H. Dodd, O. Woodfield, F. Woodfield, T. Lawton, Joseph Lawley, James Lawley, W. Norman, G. Oxton, C. Oxton, B. Oxton, J. Hacking, E. Williams, jun., Private T. Hackney, etc.

Birkenhead News - Saturday 14 April 1917





Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919, and afterwards, the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid. In October 1919 James' father James, received a payment of outstanding wages of £2 3s 7d from the army; no War Gratuity was paid as James was still undergoing training when he died. The £2 3s 7d, is equivalent to a *labour value* (wages) of around £330 in 2018.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.

A Woodward family grave on the south side of Neston Parish Churchyard

The grave has the following burials:

Ann Williams, wife of Daniel Williams, died		
	7 October 1837	Aged 36
Maria, daughter of Ann and Daniel Williams, died		
	22 June 1905	Aged 76
(James Edwin Woodward's grandmother)		
Maria	26 January 1913	Aged 10
Hannah	5 April 1938	Aged 67
John William	31 January 1963	Aged 55



The highly-weathered Woodward family grave at the rear of Neston Parish Church and behind James Edwin Woodward's CWGC memorial. Although now largely unreadable the family grave is believed to record:

Maria	26 January 1913	Aged 10
James	3 April 1913	Aged 19
[It appears, from the limited inscription still visible, that the stone recorded his battalion and that he died in the hospital at Kinmel Park]		
James	22 July 1935	Aged 67
Hannah	5 April 1938	Aged 67