



PRIVATE AMBROSE GEORGE OFFER

SERVICE NO. 4/3105

4TH BN., HAMPSHIRE REGIMENT

DIED 8TH JANUARY 1916 AGE 25

Ambrose Offer was the son of Mrs Alfred (Keturah) Keel and the late George Offer. He was born in 1891 in Uphill, Urchfont, Wiltshire, where his father was a carter on a local farmⁱ. George Offer died a year later, aged 39ⁱⁱ. In 1897, Ambrose's mother, Keturah, married Alfred Keel in Wiltshireⁱⁱⁱ, and by 1901 the family had moved to Cemetery Hill, Odiham^{iv}. In 1911 Ambrose was employed as a 'Motor and cycle repairer' and lived with his mother and stepfather in King Street^v.

Not long after war was declared, Ambrose left his employment as a motor mechanic with Mr J J Baker, and enlisted at the local recruitment office in the High Street and joined the 4th Hampshire Regiment. His name appears on the Roll of Honour^{vi} published in the Hants & Berks Gazette of 12 September 1914. After initial training in Winchester, Ambrose and the rest of 1st/4th Battalion departed for India on 9 October, 1914. He entered a theatre of war (Mesopotamia) on 18 March 1915^{vii}, and arrived in Basra with the Battalion in April 1915. At some stage thereafter he contracted blood poisoning, necessitating a return to India for treatment. Having recovered, he returned to the Mesopotamian theatre of war, re-joining the Battalion at the end of October 1915, probably in Amara. Whether or not he was with A or D Companies which went on to Kut-el-Amara is unknown. We do know that he wrote a letter home on 14th November 1915, but not where he was when he did so. He then developed enteric fever, was taken back to India for treatment at the Military Hospital at Colaba, a district of Bombay, where he died on 8th January 1916^{viii}. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal 1914-20 and the Victory Medal 1914-19^{ix}. His "He died for freedom and honour" plaque is held by the Hampshire Regiment Museum and is pictured below (Ill.1). He is commemorated on the Kirkee 1914-1918 Memorial, near Poona, India. Ambrose was the first of our six local 1st/4th Hampshire Regiment casualties.



III.1. Ambrose Offer's "He died for freedom and honour" plaque
Source:*The Royal Hampshire Regiment Museum, Winchester*

ⁱ 1891 Census, Uphill, Erchont, Devizes, Wiltshire. Ref: Class: RG12; Piece: 1601; Schedule Number: 136; page:10

ⁱⁱ GRO Deaths, www.findmypast.co.uk

ⁱⁱⁱ GRO Marriages, www.findmypast.co.uk

^{iv} 1901 Census, Odiham, Hampshire, ref: RG13, Piece: 1102; Folio: 37; Page: 29

^v 1911 Census, Odiham, Hampshire, ref: Class: RG14; Piece:6245, Schedule Number: 180

^{vi} At this early stage of the war, this Roll of Honour was for those enlisting in the armed forces.

^{vii} Source - Ancestry.com. *British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920*

^{viii} Source – Obituary in The Hants & Berks Gazette, 15th January, 1916

^{ix} Source - British Army WW1 Medal Rolls and Index Cards, 1914-1920. www.ancestry.co.uk