



Thame Remembers

2nd Lieutenant Francis Willoughby Fielding



Francis Willoughby Fielding was born in Towersey on 8th October 1892 to parents Harry and Letitia Fielding who later lived at Stoneleigh in Thame. After leaving Lord Williams's Grammar School, by 1911 he had moved to Coventry and begun work in the fledgling motor industry as a draughtsman.

He volunteered in the Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars (formerly the Oxfordshire Yeomanry) during 1909/1910 (Service number 1522), and was mobilisation at the outbreak of WW1. He would have travelled to France with the regiment in the autumn of 1914, where the regiment saw action in the doomed attempts to save Dunkirk and Antwerp from the German advance, and then fell into the routine of trench warfare, holding the line at Messines. During this early stage of the war, and by now a corporal, he was wounded and invalided back to the UK.

Gazetted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in April 1915, he returned to the Western Front with the London Regiment 9th Battalion (Queen Victoria Rifles). On 1st July 1916 the battalion was one of the lead units in the attack at Gommecourt, a supposedly diversionary tactic as part of the main Somme offensive. Unfortunately the Germans had too much warning and the battalion suffered heavy losses, including the death of Francis Willoughby Fielding, age 23.

His grave can be found at the Gommecourt British Cemetery. As well as the main Thame War Memorial, F W Fielding is also remembered in Thame on the St Mary's, All Saints and the School Memorial Boards



**The Thame Remembers
Cross was delivered
to his grave on
18 April 2015
by Michael Hutson
Thame resident**

