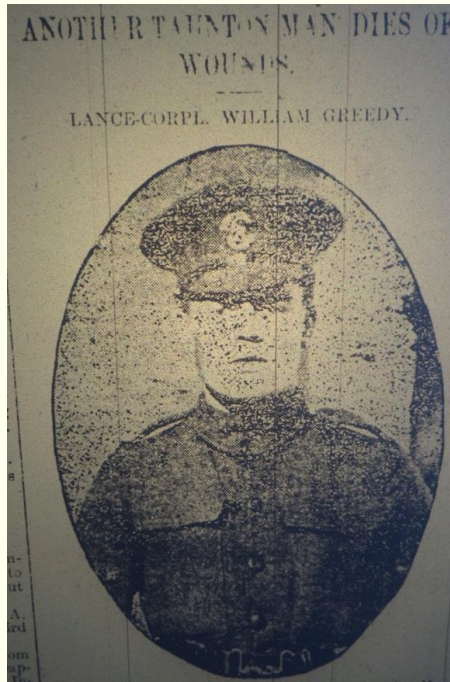


**ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON**

**WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT**

# **William Greedy**



**Name:** William Greedy

**Rank:** Lance Corporal

**Service Number:** 9771

**Regiment:** Somerset Light Infantry

**Battalion/Unit number:** 6th Battalion

**Date/year of Birth:** 13th July 1896

**Place of Birth:** Taunton

**Place of Residence:** 4 Home Cottages, Frieze Hill, Taunton

**Date of Death:** 30th September 1916

**Place of Death:** Rouen Hospital

**Burial/Memorial:** St. Sever Cemetery Rouen

William Greedy was the eldest son of Albion and Mary (Polly?) Greedy. Albion was born in Wiveliscombe one of a family of 11; his parents Charles Greedy and Elizabeth (nee Cording) had moved to Taunton by the 1871 Census when Albion was four. Problems seem to have arisen for him as in 1880 he was placed in a Farm School for boys Surrey, run by the Philanthropic Society and was there until some time after the 1881 census when he was "removed by friends." He appears to have returned to Taunton and in 1895 married Mary Jane ("Polly") Hurley at the Albermarle Chapel in Albermarle Road on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1895 and together they started their family. By 1901 they had three children William, Francis and Burty and were living in Cheddon Road. In 1901 Albion was not present on the census night and may have been serving as a soldier due to a reference to him having seen service in a later newspaper report and his own service records. In all Albion and Polly had thirteen children: William, Francis, Burty, Beatrice, Maggie, Lilly, Florence, Hetty, Mabel, Evelyn Maud, Violet, Stanley and one child who died at birth.

Between 1901 and 1911, the family moved to Home Cottages, Frieze Hill. William and probably his brothers and sisters attended St. James School attached to the Church, and where his teacher was the long serving Joseph Montague. He worked at Exton and Johnson's iron foundry before enlistment.

We also know from the Newspaper articles that he spent time in the Red Cross Hospital with a kidney complaint. The hospital was based in the Priory school in Cranmer Road which had been taken over in 1916 for the duration of the war. The Priory school building is now St. James School. He was discharged and five weeks later was fatally wounded in action.

Three members of the Greedy Family joined the army in the first world war. Albion served in the Defence Corps and then went into the Royal Engineers as a Pioneer in 1917, Francis joined the Sherwood Forresters and William the Somerset Light Infantry. We know something of William's service from an article in the County Gazette, which includes a letter from one of his close friends who wrote to his parents about the day he was wounded.

*"Dear Mrs. Greedy, I am sorry to inform you that your son has been wounded. I met with him in Taunton, and we came out to France together. We were in a charge on the 18<sup>th</sup> (September) and both went over the top together, and we had not gone far when he was knocked over by a bullet in the back. Of course I could not stop then, as it was against the rules, but after we had taken the German trench, and things had quietened down a bit, I crawled out and dragged him into a shell hole for cover, and put him as comfortable as I possibly could. Then I crawled back to the trench. I then told the stretcher bearers where he lay. He gave me his watch and ring to send home, but unfortunately I lost the watch in the scrap we had with the Germans afterwards. I can't write more now, but may God keep you and bless you in your bereavement. I remain, yours truly. F. Dudfield*

William died from his wounds in hospital in Rouen 12 days later.