

Rifleman R /35506, 18th Battalion, King 's Royal Rifle Corps

In the 1891 Census William, aged 7, was living with his parents in Whielden Street Amersham. His father was a painter and he had a brother Richard Austin, aged 6, a sister Beatrice Ellen, aged 3, and another brother Harry Lovell aged 1. His grandfather Edward, aged 71 and also a painter, was living with them.

By the time of the 1901 Census William was still living in Amersham in Union Street with his parents. He was aged 17 and a plumber's mate. His father was a house painter. His brother Richard was a butcher and there are the two sisters plus two other brothers, Harry aged 11 and John aged 9.

William's parents were still living in Amersham, according to the 1911 Census, at Whielden Street. (Note that the name of Whielden Street was changed for a while to Union Street as the Union Workhouse, which later formed the core of Amersham Hospital, was sited there.)

William could not be found on the 1911 Census but his marriage, on the 29 July 1911 to Amy Elizabeth Stanley at St Saviour's Church, Herne Hill, was registered in the Parish of Lambeth. His occupation was stated as plumber's mate. A Copy of the marriage entry in the register is given below:-

Page 210

1911. Marriage solemnized at <u>St. Savinus, Hem Hill</u> in the <u>Parish of Lambeth</u> in the County of <u>London</u>									
Church No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.	
419	<u>July 24<sup>th</sup></u> <u>1911</u>	<u>William George King</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>Bachelor</u>	<u>Fishmonger</u>	<u>58 Ansty Road</u>	<u>James King</u> <u>(deceased)</u>	<u>Valer</u>	
		<u>July Edith Dale</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>Spinster</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>58 Ansty Rd</u>	<u>George Dale</u>	<u>Insurance Agent.</u>	
Married in the <u>St. Savinus Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Established Church</u> by <u>—</u> or after <u>Banns</u> by me, <u>—</u> <u>William George King</u> in the Presence of us, <u>George Dale</u> This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>Edith Dale</u> <u>Mary Barrow</u> <u>H. R. Hamister</u>									
1911. Marriage solemnized at <u>St. Savinus, Hem Hill</u> in the <u>Parish of Lambeth</u> in the County of <u>London</u>									
Church No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.	
420	<u>July 27<sup>th</sup></u> <u>1911</u>	<u>William Stannell</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>Bachelor</u>	<u>Plumber</u>	<u>77 Flaxman Rd</u>	<u>Richard August Stannell</u>	<u>Printer</u>	
		<u>Amey Elizabeth Stannell</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>Spinster</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>10 Linsdown Hill</u> <u>Lewisham</u>	<u>David William Stannell</u>	<u>Gardener</u>	
Married in the <u>St. Savinus Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Established Church</u> by <u>—</u> or after <u>Banns</u> by me, <u>—</u> <u>William Stannell</u> in the Presence of us, <u>David W Stannell</u> This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>Amey Elizabeth Stannell</u> <u>John Stannell</u> <u>Robert Bedford</u> <u>H. R. Hamister</u>									

The 1911 Census showed that Amy Elizabeth Stanley was employed as a housemaid in the Jakeman household at 10 Lewisham Hill, the address given on her marriage certificate. William, at the time of the marriage, was living at 79 Flaxman Road.

Amy Stronnell was a Worcestershire girl and her family lived in Broadway, near Evesham. Her last known address was 1 Poplar Walk Road, Herne Hill. This is the address given by William when he made his Will on 8 March 1917 and his wife was shown living there in the 1919 and 1921 electoral

rolls. The informal Will was usually written and signed when the soldier arrived in the theatre of war and before going into action.

William Stronnell joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps at Camberwell in Surrey (date unknown).

**King's Royal Rifle Corps** :- The 18th (Service) Battalion (Arts & Crafts) was formed at Gidea Park in London by Major Sir Herbert Raphael on 4 June 1915. In October 1915 it moved to Witley and came under orders of 122nd Brigade in 41st Division. The Battalion moved to Aldershot in November 1915, on to Witley in February and thence back to Aldershot. On 3 May 1916 the battalion moved to France and concentrated between Hazebrouk and Bailleul.<sup>1</sup> The division remained on the Western Front until October 1917 and took part in many battles, including the Battle of Flers -Courcelette, a phase of the Battles of the Somme (1916) and in 1917 was involved in The Battle of Messines as well as phases of the Third Battle of Ypres.

On 12 November 1917, the 41<sup>st</sup> Division moved by train to Italy, and all units concentrated north west of Mantua. The Division took over a sector of the front line behind the River Piave, near Treviso. On 28 February 1918 the Division prepared to return to France and by 9 March was in position near Doullens and Mondicourt. The 41<sup>st</sup> Division took part in several battles which were phases of the last major German Offensive, Somme 1918. It must have been in this area that William Stronnell was fatally wounded. According to his record<sup>2</sup> Rifleman William Stronnell died of his wounds on 28 March 1918 (aged 34).

He was awarded The Allied Victory Medal and The British War Medal, 1914-18.

**Rifleman William Stronnell is remembered with Honour and buried in Bancourt British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. (Grave ref. II.4.A.)**



Bancourt British Cemetery © Courtesy: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Bancourt British Cemetery is 4 kms from Bapaume. The village of Bancourt was occupied by the British until it was lost in the German spring offensive in 1918. The cemetery was begun by the New Zealand Division in September 1918 and contains the graves of 1018 casualties, the largest proportion of which are from Australia and New Zealand.

Rifleman William Stronnell is one of 28 soldiers from the King's Royal Rifle Corps buried in the cemetery.

<sup>1</sup> The Long, Long Trail - The British Army in the Great War of 1914-1918. [www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net)

<sup>2</sup> UK Soldiers who died in the Great War 1914-1918 [www.Ancestry.co.uk](http://www.Ancestry.co.uk)



## Memorial to the 41<sup>st</sup> Division Flers, Somme, France

It was constructed in commemoration of their liberation of the village. The statue is by Albert Tofts.

The 41<sup>st</sup> Division included the 122<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of which the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps was a member.

The Great War cost the 41<sup>st</sup> Division 32,158 men killed, wounded or missing.

The inscription reads:

TO THE GLORIOUS MEMORY OF  
THOSE WHO FELL  
41<sup>st</sup> BRITISH DIVISION  
1916-1918

(The 41<sup>st</sup> Division Memorial perhaps between the wars.  
Photo: J Souillard).