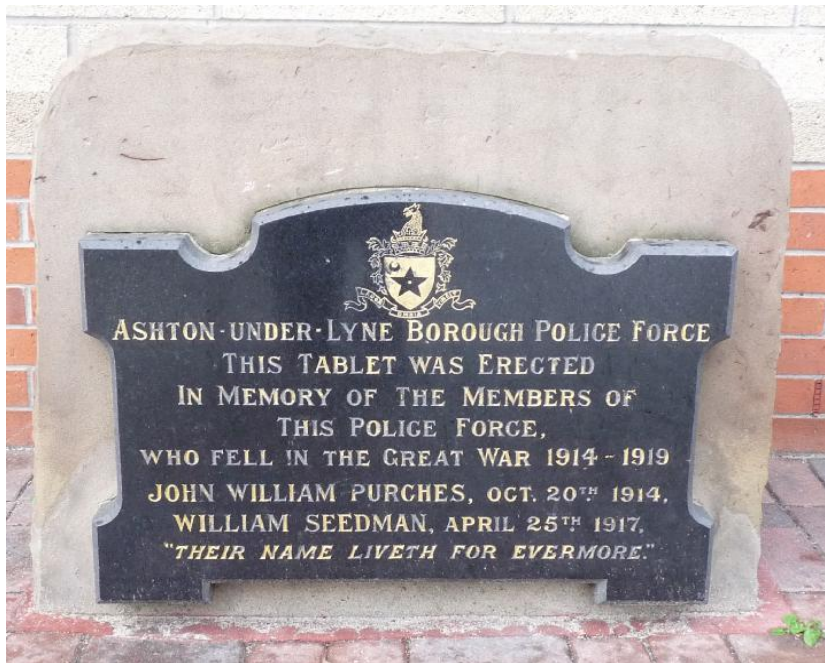


Ashton Under Lyne Borough Police Force Tablet

A dark grey granite tablet with Coat of Arms in top centre. Mounted on a free-standing stone. Situated at entrance to

Greater Manchester Police: Tameside Divisional Headquarters
Manchester Road
Ashton-under-Lyne



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JOHN WILLIAM PURCHES 1885 - 1914 Service Number: 7270

Regiment and Unit: Cheshire Regiment 1st Battalion

John William Purchess (spelling on birth record and baptism record) was born in 1885 in Newton, Hyde. He was baptised on 28 Oct 1885 at St Mark's, Dukinfield, son of Thomas Purchess and his wife Hannah Clough. Thomas Purchess, John's father, died aged 31 in Dukinfield in 1891. Hannah Purchess was a 29-year-old widow in the 1891 census with five children to support. John William, aged 5, had three older sisters and a younger brother. The family lived at 50 Victoria Street, Dukinfield.

By 1901, the family had moved to Godley. They lived at 42 Union Street. Hannah, aged 39, had four children still at home: Edith (20), Vanda (18), John William (16) and Joseph (15). In the 1911 census John William Purches was a boarder in the household of Thomas Humphrey Allenby at 113 Katherine Street, Ashton. John was 25 years old and a police constable.

John William Purches' service records have survived. From these we find that he enlisted in Hyde when he was just 18 years old on 4 Nov 1903. He was 5 feet 8 ins tall, with fair complexion, grey eyes, and sandy hair. He had tattoo marks on both forearms. A young woman was tattooed on the back of his right forearm. He gave his address as 42 Union Street, Hyde. John went to India with the 6th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment in September 1904. He served for 2 years and 128 days and returned home on 26 Jan 1907. His next of kin were named as Anna Purches (actually Hannah, his mother) of 42 Union St Hyde and his brother Joseph who had joined the Cheshire Regiment. John joined the Army Reserve in 1907.

John William Purches married May Mosley, daughter of William Mosley of Haughton Green on 2 Sept 1911 at St Mary's church, Haughton. The witnesses were Thomas Mosley and Edith Purches (John's sister).

He was mobilised to France on 16 August 1914. He had been transferred to the Cheshire Regiment 1st Battalion with service number 7270. John was made Acting paid Lance Corporal (in the field) on 5 Sept 1914 and was promoted to Acting Sergeant on 11 September, only six days later. This would lead to extensive letter-writing between commanding officers as John William Purches was confused with his brother, Joseph, who was also in the Cheshire Regiment with service number 7189. Joseph was interned in Holland during the War after the Battle of La Bassee.

A letter dated 23 October 1914 from 13th General Hospital, Boulogne reported that Sgt John William Purches died from his wounds at 10,30pm on 22 October 1914 (the date

on the memorial is incorrect). John William Purches was buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Part IV, UK Graves P-Z.

John's widow, May received eleven shillings pension per week from May 1915. May Purches nee Mosley remarried in 1920 to Ernest Markham Allenby, son of Thomas Humphrey Allenby of 257 Cavendish Street, where John William Purches had boarded in 1911.

John William Purches was awarded the British Victory Medal, the 1914 Star and Flash as well as the British War Medal.

WILLIAM SEEDMAN 1883- 1917 Service Number: 15709

Regiment and Unit: Manchester Regiment 12th Battalion

William Edward Seedman was born towards the end of 1883 in Warley, Essex. He was the son of Charles Seedman and his wife Jane Amelia Cassidy. His parents married on 10 Feb 1874 at Christ Church, Great Warley.

In the 1891 census William was aged 7 living with his parents at the Army Barracks on Mossley Road, Ashton. He had two older brothers, Charles (junior), aged 15, born Colchester Essex & Talbot aged 11, born Aldershot, and a younger brother, Albert Edward aged 5 born at the Barracks, Ashton. Their places of birth reflect the fact that their father was a Colour Sergeant in the Infantry.

By 1901 the family had moved to Church Street, which was in the vicinity of St Michael's Parish Church. William's father was now employed as a Caretaker at the Estate Office. William (17) and Albert (15) were still living at home. Both were Army drummers (infantry). Their father Charles Frederick Seedman died in 1906 aged 59.

In 1911 Jane Amelia Seedman was a 50-year-old widow living with her two sons, William and Albert, at 36 Egerton Street, Ashton. William was now a police constable. His brother Albert was a labourer in a brewery.

William Edward Seedman married Elsie Barker Holden in 1913 at St James Church, Cowhill Lane, Ashton under Lyne.

William Edward Seedman, Company Sargeant Major in the 12th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment, lost his life on 25 April 1917 in France. He was 34 years old.

He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial Bay 7, son of the late Charles Frederick Seedman and Jane Amelia Seedman of 54 Beauchamp Street and husband of Elsie Barker Seedman of 6 Albemarle Street, Ashton under Lyne. William and Elsie had three daughters: Eva Holden Seedman born 1913, May born 1914 and Bessie born 1915. May died aged 1 in 1915. Eva and Bessie were living with their widowed mother at their maternal grandparents' house at 6 Albemarle Street in the 1921 census.

Seedman's death was reported in the Stalybridge Reporter 16 Jun 1917.

An Ashton Constable Killed in Action After Taking Officer's Place

"Corporal Shaw has informed the widow Mrs Seedman of 43 Raynham Street that Seedman's Company Officer was wounded. He took his place and was wounded in the leg first and then in the side. He was taken to the dressing station where he died.

Corporal J. Nield of 14 Mount Street Ryecroft, who soldiered in India with Sweetman when they were youths, has also informed Mrs Seedman of her husband's fate."