

William George Griffin

William George Griffin was born in Nursling, the son of William and Ann Griffin. In 1891 the family were living in Balmoral cottage and William senior (who came from Swanmore) was working as a plumber and seems to be living with *his* father, a retired publican. In 1901, William junior is listed as a florist, over which somebody seems to have started writing "gardener" or "garden". By 1911, William is listed as the head of the family, living at North Lodge, West Grinstead. He was a domestic gardener, with Percy Geering as a lodger.

And then, as they say, the trail goes rather cold. I haven't been able to find out any more about Percy (except that he didn't seem to have served in WWI), but I may have found William's widow. She's listed as Beatrice Griffin, living at Young's Cottage, Victoria Rd., Sevenoaks. There was a Beatrice Mainard (Maynard?) working as a housemaid at West Grinstead Park. She came from Chelsea, where her father was a police sergeant. She and William were married in 1911. She remarried a chap called Wood in 1940. I hope that marriage was longer lived.

William enlisted at Sevenoaks. He was killed on 28th January 1918, the last winter of the war. The 9th Royal Sussex were holding the line at Hargicourt a village near St. Quentin, in France. On the 24th, the battalion was detailed to relieve the 7th Northants in the front line. The Battalion War Diary describes this period as " Quiet tour. 1 O.R. (other rank) killed". Private Griffin is buried in Hargicourt British Cemetery. His name is also listed on the Sevenoaks war memorial.

Ann Laird - Rownhams December 2013