



# Alfred Harold Averill

## 13 White Street

Alfred and his wife Edith only lived in White Street for a few years. Moving here in 1913 from Coventry the couple were here until 1918.

Alfred was born in Worcestershire in 1881, one of 10 children. He married Edith Horley in 1907. In 1901 his occupation was a Drysalter; by the 1911 census a *“Shop Assistant: Colour, Oil & Drysaltery”*. Drysalters were dealers in chemical products including glue, varnish, dyes and colourings. Some might supply salt or chemicals for preserving foods while others concentrated on ingredients for producing dyes.

It is not known whether Alfred volunteered for the armed forces or waited until May 1916 when conscription for married men was introduced – by this time he was 35.

The only military records that survive are his medal index card and a listing on the Medal Roll index. These tell us he was assigned to the Royal Garrison Artillery 66<sup>th</sup> Heavy Battery, but not where he served or for how long. First he started as a Gunner; later, in September 1917 he was given a temporary commission as a 2nd Lieutenant.

The Heavy Batteries were equipped with heavy guns that fired large calibre high-explosive shells. They were designed to destroy or neutralise the enemy’s artillery as well as putting destructive fire down on



Battle of Hazebrouck. 60 pounder gun of the 48th Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery in action in the open near Strazeele, during the Spring Offensive 1918.  
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strong points, dumps, stores, roads and railways behind enemy lines. The artillery was positioned well behind the infantry battle line, firing at unseen targets calculated from co-ordinates on a map. Later in the war the RGA was assisted in hitting the correct targets by reconnaissance information provided by the Royal Flying Corps.

Alfred may never have returned to live in White Street – by 1919 he and Edith had moved first to 25 Hartington Street and then to 23 Bass in about 1924. In 1929 Alfred was an executor to his mother’s will where his occupation is listed as a Commercial Traveller.

Alfred and Edith didn’t have any children. She died in 1965 aged 83; he died in 1968 aged 87.