

WALTER BLOMFIELD ANDREWS

Born: 22 December 1876, Wood Norton¹

Enlisted: 3rd April 1900, Norwich - 1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment (Private 5584).
Transferred to Army Service Corps (Driver T/42578) on the 5th December 1918.²



Medals: 1914 Star; British War Medal; Victory Medal³



Demobilised: 25th May 1919⁴

Walter Blomfield Andrews was born on the 22 December 1876, the son of Susanna Andrews, and baptised on the 5th June 1881 in Wood Norton parish church.⁵ By the time of Walter's baptism, Susanna had married (she married James Winterbone on the 4th October 1880, in Hindolveston parish church),⁶ referred to in the baptism register as 'Spinster - now Winterbone' (see Figure 1).

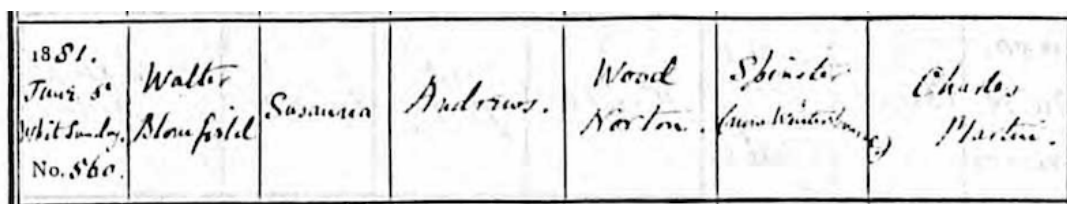


Figure 1 : Extract from the Wood Norton Baptisms, 1881

¹ FreeBMD, *Quarter to March 1877, Aylsham, Vol.4b, p.78* (www.freebmd.org.uk); 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 209) (www.ancestry.co.uk); 1939 England and Wales Register, Walsingham RD (www.ancestry.co.uk). The 1939 Register records his date of birth as 22 December 1876.

² British Army WW1 Pension Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

³ British Army WW1 Medal Roll Index Cards, 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁴ British Army WW1 Pension Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁵ Baptisms Register, 1881, Wood Norton (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁶ FreeBMD, *Quarter to December 1880, Aylsham Vol.4b, p.233* (www.freebmd.org.uk); Marriage Register 1880, Hindolveston (www.ancestry.co.uk).

Walter's Short Service Attestation papers have survived as part of his pension records.⁷ These record that by the time war broke out in 1914 Walter was already an army man, having enlisted with the Norfolk Regiment in 1900, for 7 years Army Service and 5 years Reserve Service. He gave his age at enlistment as 23 years 2 months, height as 5' 7", and his occupation as 'Labourer'. He spelt and signed his middle name as *Bloomfield* (rather than 'Blomfield') on his papers and indicated that he was already serving with the 4th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment (a Militia regiment). He was re-engaged for another 4 years, from the 3rd April 1912 (having already served 12 years with the Regiment).

Walter was mobilised to the 3rd Battalion on the 5th August 1914, and posted to the 1st Battalion, the Norfolk Regiment on the 11th September 1914. On the 3rd April 1917, his service was extended for the duration of the hostilities under the Military Service Act 1916 (Session 2).

In all, he served a total of 19 years, 53 days:

At Home	3 rd April 1900	to 4 th January 1901	277 days
In India	5 th January 1901	to 28 th September 1904	3 years, 267 days
In South Africa	29 th September 1904	to 30 th March 1908	3 years, 189 days
At Home	31 st March 1908	to 11 th September 1914	6 years, 165 days
In France	12 th September 1914	to 16 th November 1917	3 years, 66 days
On Board Ship	17 th November 1917	to 17 th November 1917	1 day
At Home	18 th November 1917	to 25 th May 1919	1 year, 199 days

Table of Army Service, from Walter's Short Service Attestation papers

The Norfolk Regiment Casualty Book (p.161a) records that Walter, whilst with the 1st Battalion, suffered a septic hand in 1917 and was admitted to hospital in Boulogne:⁸

5584 Pte 1st Andrews W.B. Septic Hand Sgt. 58 G.H. Boulogne 12.11.17. Sick 2 Mil. Hos. Old Park Canterbury 17.11.17.

He was sent to the No. 58 General Hospital in Boulogne, and then shipped back to England to the 2nd Military Hospital, Old Park, Canterbury, on the 17th November 1917 (see the entry in the Table of Army Service above). Walter was transferred to the Army Service Corps (T/42576) on the 5th December 1918, from which he was demobilised on the 25th May 1919, at the age of 43.

During the period that Walter served with the 1st Battalion, the Norfolk Regiment were engaged in various actions on the Western Front after being mobilised for war in August 1914 and landing at Le Havre:

1914: The Battle of Mons and subsequent retreat, The Battle of Le Cateau and the Affair of Crepy-en-Valois, The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne, The Battles of La Bassee and Messines 1914, The First Battle of Ypres.

⁷ British Army WW1 Pension Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁸ *The Norfolk Regiment Casualty and Sickness Book*, Norfolk Museums Service, The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum, Shirehall, Market Avenue, Norwich (<http://thecasualtybook.co.uk>)

- 1915: *The Second Battle of Ypres and the Capture of Hill 60.*
 1916: *The Attacks on High Wood, The Battle of Guillemont, The Battle of Flers-Courcelette, The Battle of Morval, The Battle of Le Transloy.*
 1917: *The Battle of Vimy, The Attack on La Coulotte, The Third Battle of the Scarpe, The Capture of Oppy Wood, The Battle of Polygon Wood, The Battle of Broodseinde, The Battle of Poelcapelle, The Second Battle of Passchendaele.*⁹

Walter was awarded the 1914 Star whilst serving with the Norfolk Regiment, having been posted to France in September 1914. The 1914 Star was awarded to men who served in France (or Belgium) from the 5th August 1914 to the 22nd November 1914. The Victory and British War medals were awarded whilst serving with the [Royal] Army Service Corps (see Figure 2).

Name	Corps	Rank	Regtl. No.
ANDREWS Walter B.	* 11 YORKF. R. RASC	PM	5584 T/42576
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	* RASC/1016/167	17014	
BRITISH			
14 STAR	12/11/3	8	
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein	15.9.14		

Figure 2 : Medal Roll index card for Walter Blomfield Andrews

Following demobilisation, it appears that Walter returned to live and work in Norfolk. In the 1939 Register, he is living opposite the School in Stibbard. He is single and his occupation is given as agricultural labourer. He is undertaking ARP Service duties.¹⁰

Walter's mother, Susanna Andrews, was born in Wood Norton in 1854 and baptised on the 7th January 1855 in Wood Norton parish church, the daughter of William and Mary Andrews.¹¹ She died in 1923, aged 68, and is buried in Stibbard.¹² The 1911 census for Wood Norton records that there were two children born to Susanna; Walter had a half-sister, Ethel Jane Winterbone (1884-1960).¹³

It appears that Walter never married (perhaps not surprising, given the number of years he spent serving with the army). He died in 1947, aged 70.¹⁴

⁹ Forces War Records, Unit History, Norfolk Regiment (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/276/norfolk-regiment>).

¹⁰ 1939 England and Wales Register, Walsingham RD, Enumeration District TSNB, Schedule 8 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹¹ FreeBMD, Quarter to June 1854, Aylsham, Vol.4b, p.73 (www.freebmd.org.uk); Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Baptisms, 1855 (p.35).

¹² FreeBMD, Quarter to March 1923, Walsingham, Vol.4b, p.294 (www.freebmd.org.uk); Burial Register, 1923, Stibbard (www.ancesry.co.uk).

¹³ 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 209) (www.ancestry.co.uk); FreeBMD, Birth, Quarter to September 1884, Aylsham, Vol.4b, p.79; Ancestry Family Trees (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹⁴ FreeBMD, Quarter to September 1947, Fakenham Vol.4b, p.326 (www.freebmd.org.uk).