

John Mence.

Private, No 20902, 3rd Battalion, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

Thomas Mence, the grandfather of John Mence was born in Whittington, Staffordshire and came to Wellesbourne in the middle of the 19th century and set up his own building business employing 12 men. His son John, born in Wellesbourne, worked as a Bricklayer and in August 1886 he married Annie McCowan who originated from Scotland. John was very active in the community and served on various committees including the cricket club and Parish Council. He was also Secretary of the Working Men's Conservative Club. Annie and John had five children of which two did not survive beyond their second birthday.

John, their third child was born in Wellesbourne on the 1st April and baptised on the 14th June 1891 in the village Church of St. Peter's. The family were living in Church Walk at the time. He attended both the infants and junior departments of the village school before leaving on the 1st April 1905ⁱ to become an errand boy. His father presumably taught him his own trade and John subsequently became a bricklayer.

He enlisted for War Service at the Stratford recruiting office and joined 'D' Company of the 3rd Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry with the rank of Private and Service number 20902. The 3rd Battalion was a Depot/Training unit raised in Bodmin, Cornwall which then transferred to Falmouth on mobilisation. In May 1915 the unit moved again but this time to Freshwater, Isle of White.



A month after arriving on the Isle of White John contracted pneumonia. On the 17th June 1915 he died aged 22 years at Nunwell Park, Bradingⁱⁱ and was buried in the Parkhurst Military Cemetery (Grave III.E.76).

With no overseas service there was no medal entitlement. Percy is however commemorated on the Wellesbourne Church of England School Roll of Honour, the St. Peter's Church, Wellesbourne Roll of Honour for the Dead and on Wellesbourne War Memorial.

Researched by Grev Hudson (Mar. 2014) (grev.hudson@tinyworld.co.uk)

ⁱ Wellesbourne School records CR 371/1, CD371/2, CR371/3 and CR371/4(WRO)

ⁱⁱ Death Certificate. The place of death Nunwell Park, Brading is recorded on J. Mence's death Certificate, however The Record office in Newport, Isle of White have indicated that Nunwell House was not used as a hospital during WW1.