

## **Herts at War**

([www.hertsatwar.co.uk](http://www.hertsatwar.co.uk))

**Name:** Frederick Ansell

**Rank:** Sergeant

**Service Number:** 2584

**Date of Death:** 18<sup>th</sup> May 1915

**Age:** 27

**Regiment/Service:** Hertfordshire Regiment

**Award:** 1914 Star, British War and Victory medals.

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** Panel 47

**Cemetery/Memorial:** Le Touret Memorial. France

**UK Cemetery/Memorial:** Hitchin Territorials' Memorial

**Pre War:**



He was born in Stevenage, enlisted in Hertford and his home was in Stevenage.

### **Wartime Service:**

He was the son of William and Emma Ansell of 41, Alleyns Rd, Stevenage, Herts. His Regimental number was 2584 and he was killed in action in France having arrived in France on the 6th November 1914.

At the time of his death, the 1st Herts were part of the 4th (Guards Brigade) in the 2nd Division. They were extremely proud that, as a Territorial Force Battalion, they were accepted by the regular Guards Battalions and even called themselves the Herts Guards. During the three months before his death, the Battalion was engaged in normal trench warfare routines such as digging and repairing trenches, putting up wire, etc, sometimes in the front line, sometimes in support and occasionally in reserve or at rest in or near a town such as Bethune.

An offensive operation began early on the 18th May 1915 at Festubert when the Brigade attacked positions known as Pl4 and Ferme Cour d'Avous. The Herts were working closely with the Irish Guards with part involved in the attack and others helping as stretcher-bearers for the large numbers of Irish Guard casualties. That evening, the Herts relieved the Irish Guards due to the heavy casualties the Irishmen had sustained. The Herts in turn were relieved on the night of the 19th May but in those forty-eight hours had sustained 25 killed and 91 wounded. The Commanding Officer of the Irish Guards sent a letter to the Commanding Officer of the Hertfordshires thanking them for all their assistance.

A comrade wrote to his parents that his last words were "*a piece of dirt has hit me on the head*". It is unlikely that he was wearing a steel helmet at the time. He was reportedly buried between Richebourg St. Vadet and Festubert.

### **Additional Information:**

### **Acknowledgments:**

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

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