

The Four Bamford Brothers.

Both Walter Bamford and his wife Sarah Jane (nee Ingram) were born in the County of Northamptonshire: he from the village of Lamport, close to the town of Daventry and she from the county town of Northampton. The couple married on the 3rd September 1871 in the Parish Church of All Saints, Northampton. Walter worked as a Coachsmith and during their marriage his wife gave birth to 10 children. At some time between the birth of their sixth child, Herbert in 1884 and their seventh, Charles in 1887 the family came to live in Kinton Rd. Wellesbourne Hastings. The last six of their children were all boys. Arthur died in 1903 and Percy the twin of Cecil survived for only one year. The remaining four all signed up for service in the Great War.

Charles Aubrey Bamford.

Private, No. 235273. 2nd Bn, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry.)

It was on the 16th April 1886 that Charles Aubrey Bamford entered this world. His baptism followed on the 11th July in St. Peters Church. After leaving the village school he worked as a gardener and played outside left for the Wellesbourne football team, winners of the Garland Cup and Runners up in the 1909-10 season of the Alderminster and District League. In the late summer of 1914 in the St. Albans Registration District Charles married Nellie Howe.



Information relative to his military service during World War I is, as that of his brothers, very patchy. From the documentation that is available we can deduce the following.

Charles enlisted in Watford and initially joined the 67th Territorial Reserve Battalion (No. 7/6498). He then served as Private No, 400804 in the Essex Regiment before transfer to the 2nd Battalion of the King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry). The medal presentation of the British War and Victory medals to his family at the end of the war suggests that he did not arrive in a war zone until after January 1st 1916¹.

During 1917 the 2nd Battalion of the Yorkshire Light Infantry were attached to the 97th Brigade 32nd Division, involved in operations on the Ancre; the pursuit of the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line.

The Battalion War Diary records that on the 25th November the 2nd Battalion were in positions to the north east of Passchendale. Artillery activity on both sides was the order for that morning and by noon casualties for the British side had numbered 12 killed and 35 wounded. The following day, the 26th, two were killed and 10 wounded. Although it cannot be confirmed for certain it is a distinct possibility that Charles Bamford was one of those wounded on the 25th or 26th. He would have been taken to one of three Casualty Clearing Stations, the 4th, 47th or 61st based in Dozingham which were originally established in preparation for the 1917 summer offensive (The Battle of Passchendale). Charles died from his wounds on the 29th November



and is buried in the cemetery that served the aforementioned Casualty Stations, Dozinghem Military Cemetery, West Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Charles was awarded the Victory and British War Medals. He is commemorated on the Wellesbourne War Memorial and on the Roll of the Dead inside St, Peter's Church.

Ernest Bamford.

Corporal, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Ernest was born on the 17th April 1888 and baptised in St. Peter's Church, Wellesbourne on the 10th June in the same year. He attended the local Church of England school but as the census of 1901 records, he then worked as a 'striker'ⁱⁱ, an assistant to a blacksmith, presumably at his father's Coach building and repairing business.

Ernest played football for the local team and was a member of Wellesbourne Gun Clubⁱⁱⁱ. Before enlisting for service in the Great War he worked for a number of years for Mr. Jeacock who also ran his own coach building company. It is to a series of newspaper reports that we have to refer in order to discover details of his military career^{iv}. His service in France commenced at some time after February 1916 and he served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, although the battalion number remains unknown. He was wounded on the Somme and was later promoted to the rank of Corporal. His medal entitlement would have been the Victory and British Medals although no official record of this has so far been found. After the war he returned to Wellesbourne, living at 5, Kinton Road and was employed as a garage worker. He never married. Ernest died, aged 75 years on the 16th June 1963 at 7, Church St. Wellesbourne and is buried in the village churchyard.

Cecil Bamford.

Military Service: Regiment unknown.

Cecil was the next child after Ernest to be born to Walter and Sarah Jane, in Wellesbourne on the 7th May 1890 to be exact, followed by his baptism on the 10th August. The local Church of England school records indicate that after leaving the school in May 1904 Cecil intended working as a Stable Boy although he later became a house painter.

Cecil fought in the Great War but there is not sufficient evidence to confirm details of his regiment etc. The fact that his name appears on the Wellesbourne Church of England School Roll of Honour suggests that he had volunteered for military service prior to November 1915 which is the date to which ROH can be dated. We are aware however that at some time towards the end of 1917 he suffered the effects of gas inhalation and was hospitalised^v. After the war Cecil returned home and towards the end of 1920 he married Emma Elizabeth Wilks and the couple settled in Chapel Street. Cecil continued to work as a house painter for a number of local firms and was a keen member of the local bowls club.

Three years before his death which occurred on the 18th December 1972 at the age of 82 years he moved to the local village of Tiddington to live with his daughter^{vi}. His wife predeceased him by 2 years.

Herbert William Bamford

Military service: Regiment unknown.

Herbert was the 6th of Walter and Sarah Jane's ten children and the last to be born in Northamptonshire, prior to his families arrival in Wellesbourne. Born on the 19th January 1884 and baptised on the 6th May in All Saints church in the city of Northampton Herbert attended the Wellesbourne village school. Later records would suggest that he probably initially worked in his father's business before leaving the village.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century a number of young men left Wellesbourne to seek better paid jobs particularly in the coal fields surrounding the north Warwickshire towns of Bedworth and Nuneaton. The 1901 Census records however reveal that Herbert was lodging in Handsworth, then classified as Staffordshire, where he practised his trade as a Blacksmith's Striker^{vii}, one that he would have learnt from his father. By the time of the next census (1911) Herbert had arrived in the Nuneaton coalfield where he lodged at 180 Arbury Road, Chilvers Coton close to the home of John Hone one of the former residents of Wellesbourne who was to become a casualty of the upcoming conflict. Herbert worked as a 'filler' in a coal mine^{viii}.

Unfortunately there is little known of Herbert's regiment or of his military service during the Great War apart from extracts that appeared in local newspapers of the time. Like his brother Cecil, Herbert's name appears on the Wellesbourne Church of England Roll of Honour. This would indicate that Herbert had enlisted prior to November 1915. The Stratford upon Avon Herald's edition of the 4th January 1918 records his return home on leave and the 27th September edition of the same paper that his parents had been informed that he had been wounded and was in hospital.

Herbert survived the war and continued to work in the mines. He married Fanny Collins in 1921 and the couple lived at 303, Arbury Rd. Chilvers Coton^{ix}. He died in 1921.

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ⁱ The award of the 1914-1915 Star would indicate that he was in a war zone prior to the end of 1915

ⁱⁱ A person who assisted the blacksmith in his job, working with iron using a furnace, anvil, and hammer.

ⁱⁱⁱ Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 5/2/1916

^{iv} Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 5/2/1916 and 23/9/1916, Stratford upon Avon Herald 13/7/1917,

^v Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 8/12/1917

^{vi} Stratford upon Avon Herald 22/12/1917

^{vii} A person who assisted the blacksmith in his job, working with iron using a furnace, anvil, and hammer.

^{viii} A Coal Filler, filled kibbles, skips, tubs, trams, or wagons with coal by hand or shovel for conveyance away from the working place. (Rootschat.com)

^{ix} 1939 Register.



Signifies a casualty of the war.

Other Sources:

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

War Diaries of the 2nd. Bn The Kings Own (Royal Yorkshire Light Infantry) (NA WO95/2402/1)