

Samuel Alderwood.

Private, No. 50685, 13th (Works) Battalion, Royal Devonshire Regiment.

Samuel Alderwood was born in Birkenhead, Cheshire in 1895 to George Henry and Mary Alderwood and baptised in the Church of St. Paul on the 8th December of that year. The family were living at 40, Fairfield Road in the town and his father worked as a Postman in Liverpool. Samuel and his family subsequently moved to 44, Seymour Street in Birkenhead.

Samuel's grandfather, Henry Alderwood, had lived at Elm Cottage, Wellesbourne since the 1880s. On 31st October 1913 at the age of 72, he died and in his will he bequeathed one quarter of his estate to Samuel's father, George Henry Alderwoodⁱ.

Samuel and his family were still living in Seymour St. Birkenhead as World War 1 entered its second year. It was here that his father received the news that on the 31ST August 1915, his second eldest son, Alfred, had been killed in action at Gallipoli.

George, his wife Mary and son Samuel together with George's mother- in- law, Elizabeth (or Elizaⁱⁱ) McCulloch, who had lived with them for a number of years in Birkenhead, then came to live at Elm Cottage, Wellesbourneⁱⁱⁱ. After Samuel's death they moved to Chapel St. in the village.

Little is known of Samuel's short time in Wellesbourne. Probably as the result of conscription into the military he enlisted Budbroke Barracks, Warwick and joined the Devonshire Regiment 13th (Works) Battalion as a Private, Service No. 50685.^{iv} This was a new Battalion formed in Saltash in June 1916 which subsequently transferred to Plymouth.

Samuel was taken ill and on the 3rd February 1917 in the 4th Southern General Hospital, Plymouth, he died. The cause of death was registered as Bronchitis and Asthma^v.



Samuel was not called for overseas service and therefore no medals were awarded. He is however commemorated on the Roll of Honour for the Dead in St. Peter's Church, Wellesbourne and on the Wellesbourne War Memorial. He is buried amongst other military graves a short distance from the Chapel in Efford Road Cemetery, Plymouth (Grave No. C4955, plot 11).



In the Churchyard of St. Peter's, Wellesbourne, beneath a single Ash tree, lies the grave of Elizabeth McCulloch. The headstone also records the names of her two grandsons who died in the Great War, Samuel Alderwood and his brother Alfred of the 4th Cheshire Regiment.



Footnote: Samuel's brother, Lance Corporal Alfred Alderwood was born in Birkenhead. He was educated at Higher Tranmere higher grade school and worked as an invoice clerk in the offices of Lever Brothers in Port Sunlight. He was interested in athletics, played football for a local church team and was active in the life of St. Mary's church. He died within 12 days of arriving in the Balkans, aged 23 years. It is not known as to whether he ever visited Wellesbourne.

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

ⁱ Will of Henry Alderwood 2th Aug 1912

ⁱⁱ Elizabeth McCulloch is referred to in later documents as Elizabeth as well as Eliza in some census returns.

ⁱⁱⁱ Samuel's death was registered on 5th Feb. 1917 by his father and he is recorded on the death certificate as still living at The Elms, Wellesbourne.

^{iv} UK Soldiers died in the Great War 1914 – 1919 (Ancestry.com)

^v Death Certificate of Samuel Alderwood.