

119: Frank Burns

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Frank Burns

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 11th Bn. South Lancashire Regiment

Service Number: 21788

Date of Death: 26 January 1917

Age at Death: ?

Buried / Commemorated at: Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery, Saulty, Departement du Pas-de-Calais, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France

Additional information given by CWGC: None

Frank (Francis) Burns was, probably, the first child of collier Patrick and Ellen Burns; Patrick (recorded as *Byrne*) had married Ellen Mealor of Neston at Liverpool Register Office in July/September 1892.

Although Patrick must have worked in Neston as a collier he is not recorded as such since his children were baptised at St Winefride's and the RC registers did not record the occupation of the father. By the time of the 1901 census, the family had moved to the Warrington area where Patrick was working as a collier on the South Lancashire coalfield:

Patrick Burns	Head	M	32	1	"	"	"
Ellen	Wife	M	29	1	"	"	Cheshire Neston
Francis	Son	S	8	1	School	"	"
Annie	Son	S	6	1	"	"	"
Samuel	Son	S	4	1	"	"	"
Catharine	Son	S	1	1	"	"	Son @ Burtonwood
Ellen	"	S	2 1/2	1	"	"	"

1901 census (extract) – 82, Fairclough Street, Burtonwood, Warrington

Patrick Burns	32	coalhewer, miner	born Ireland
Ellen	29		born Neston
Francis	8		born Neston
Annie	6		born Neston
Samuel	4		born Neston
Catharine	1		born Burtonwood
Ellen	2 months		born Burtonwood

Four of Patrick's children were born in Neston:

- Francis born 25 April 1893 and baptised at St Winefride's on 14 May.
- Annie born 29 September 1894 and baptised at St Winefride's on 14 October.
- Samuel born on 18 May 1896 and baptised at St Winefride's on 31 August.
- John born on 1 September 1897 and baptised at St Winefride's on 19 September. John appears to have died before the end of the month and his death was registered in Warrington.

The registration of John's death in Warrington suggests that the family had moved to Burtonwood around the time of his baptism.

By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved from Burtonwood to Cairne Street, St Helens and, like his father, Francis had become a collier. It is quite likely that they were employed at the Ravenhead Coal Mine.

Cairne Street (now demolished) lay in the area of St Helens, to the south of the town centre, known as Thatto Heath:

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.															
Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.														Number of Schedule <u>151</u> (To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection.)	
The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.															
NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.		PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.					PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.				BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.
		For Infants under one year state the age in months as "one month," etc.	For all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," opposite the present Marriages has lasted. If less than one year write "under one."	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)	Children still living.	Children who have died.	Personal Occupation.	Industry or Service with which worker is connected.	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account.	Whether Working at Home.				
1	Patrick Burns	Head	41	married						coal miner (hewer)	150	worked		Monaghan, Ireland	1837
2	Ellen Burns	Wife	40	married 19	11	4	4					worked		Llanchwyt, Neston	1821
3	Francis Burns	Son	18	single						coal miner (drawer)		worked		Llanchwyt, Neston	
4	Annie Burns	Daughter	16	single								worked		Llanchwyt, Neston	
5	Samuel Burns	Son	15	single						colliery cartman (below ground)	160	worked		Llanchwyt, Neston	
6	Catherine Burns	Daughter	11							school	390	0		Lanes, Burtonwood	050
7	Ellen Burns	Daughter	10							school	1	0		Lanes, Burtonwood	
8	Thomas Burns	Son	8							school				Lanes, Burtonwood	
9	Elizabeth Burns	Daughter	4											Lanes, St. Helens	

1911 census – 21, Cairne Street, St Helens

Patrick Burns	41	coal miner (hewer)	born Monaghan, Ireland
Ellen	40		born Neston
Francis	18	coal miner (drawer)	born Neston
Annie	16		born Neston
Samuel	15	colliery cartman (below ground)	born Neston
Catherine	11		born Burtonwood
Ellen	10		born Burtonwood
Thomas	8		born Burtonwood
Elizabeth	4		born St Helens

Patrick and Ellen had been married for 19 years and seven of their eleven children had survived.

A hewer was a collier who worked at the coal face to extract the coal, often with a pick axe and shovel, and load it onto a wagon or conveyor belt. A drawer was the assistant to the hewer; he took the full wagons from the working face to the haulage area, or bottom of the shaft, and brought back empty wagons. A cartman was a less specialised

occupation and was engaged in moving small equipment along the underground roadways.

Francis Burns, recorded as a miner, enlisted in the 11th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers) in Prescott on 28 May 1915 when he gave his age as 23 years 1 month; his enlistment was approved 'subject to dental treatment'. It was noted that he was 5ft 7½ins tall and had a 37-inch expanded chest. His address was given as 21 Cairne Street, Thatto Heath, St Helens.

The 11th (Service) Battalion (St Helens Pioneers) was formed in St. Helens on 1 September 1914 by Lord Derby and moved to Bangor in February 1915. On 15 May 1915, a few days before Francis enlisted, they moved to Grantham and came under the command of the 30th Division as its Pioneer Battalion before being adopted by the War Office on 15 August 1915 and moving to Larkhill (Lark Hill) Camp on Salisbury Plain in September 1915.

On 6 November 1915, having spent 162 days in the UK, Francis embarked for France, landing at Le Havre on 7 November and the division concentrated near Amiens.

Probably before seeing any action, Francis was admitted to hospital (the 98th Field Ambulance) on 26 February 1916 suffering from bronchial catarrh and he was moved to the N^o. 1 General Hospital, at Etretat (on the coast, north of Le Havre - the hospital had been established there in

Army Form B. 103.

Casualty Form—Active Service

Regiment or Corps *11th BATTALION SOUTH LANCASHIRE REGT*

Regimental No. *2178* Rank *Private* Name *Francis Burns*

Enlisted (a) *28/5/15* Terms of Service (a) *3 of term* Service reckons from (a) *28/5/15*

Date of promotion to present rank } Date of appointment to lance rank } Numerical position on roll of N.C.O.s. }

Extended _____ Re-engaged _____ Qualification (b) _____

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 56, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 56, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				
<i>26/2/16</i>	<i>of 16 Rm</i>	<i>To Hospital</i>	<i>In the Tiers</i>	<i>26.2.16</i>	<i>for B.E.F.</i>
<i>4.3.16</i>	<i>21 CCS</i>	<i>Adm. Bronc Cat</i>		<i>28.2.16</i>	<i>Form AT 29.2.16</i>
<i>11.3.16</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>Adm. 144. Etretat. Bronchitis</i>	<i>Etretat</i>	<i>1-3-16</i>	<i>Lieut. 6364</i>
<i>17.3.16</i>	<i>30. S.B.D.</i>	<i>Arrived etc. 1.5.16</i>	<i>Etretat</i>	<i>14.3.16</i>	<i>30.2.16 roll of men joining No. 2205</i>
<i>18.3.16</i>	<i>30.2 B.D.</i>	<i>Fined 7 days pay for absence from parade</i>		<i>17.3.16</i>	<i>B2069</i>
<i>12.3.16</i>	<i>11.2.16.16</i>	<i>Decided to leave E.</i>		<i>17.3.16</i>	<i>B213</i>
<i>10.3.16</i>	<i>98 FA</i>	<i>Adm. Bronchitis</i>	<i>In the Tiers</i>	<i>26.2.16</i>	<i>Form AT 29.2.16</i>
<i>24.7.16</i>	<i>6.9 B.D.</i>	<i>Joined ex Etretat</i>	<i>Norman</i>	<i>23.7.16</i>	<i>Roll</i>
<i>4.8.16</i>	<i>6.8 B.D.</i>	<i>To. Ber</i>	<i>In the Tiers</i>	<i>4.8.16</i>	<i>Roll</i>
<i>5.8.16</i>	<i>of 16 Rm</i>	<i>Joined Ber</i>		<i>5.8.16</i>	<i>Roll</i>
<i>26.8.16</i>	<i>of 16 Rm</i>	<i>Fined 4 days pay - Being in possession of beer contrary to 1st Corps Routine Orders</i>		<i>21.8.16</i>	<i>B2069. 01810/49</i>

(a) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or enlistment will be entered.
 (b) e.g., Signaller, Shooting Smith, etc., etc., also special qualifications in Technical Corps etc.

December 1914) on 1 March where he was diagnosed with bronchitis. Although in hospital, military procedures still had to be adhered to and, on 17 March 1916, Francis forfeited 7 days' pay for being absent from parade at 7.45am.

Francis appears to have remained under medical care until early August as he rejoined his battalion on 5 August and on 21 August he was fined four days' pay for being found in possession of beer 'contrary to 1st Corps. Routine Orders'!

Article

Pipe, Rosary.
National Health Insurance Card.
Tin Box, Silver Coin.
Three Photographs.
Card, Letter, Ring.
Note Book, Farthing
Two Identification Discs.
Two Photographs.

Ms. Ellen Fearinley,
21 Courne Street.

Although the 11th Battalion was involved in The Battle of the Somme, which began on 1 July 1916, it is unclear whether Francis saw much active involvement; certainly, he was admitted to the 20th Casualty Clearing Station, which was based at Warlencourt (between Amiens and Arras), by early January 1917 and he died of pneumonia there on 26 January. Francis had been in France for 1 year and 83 days and he had served for a total of 1 year 245 days. Following his death his personal effects were listed as: pipe; rosary; National Health Insurance Card; a tin box; silver coin; three photographs; card; letter; ring; note book; farthing; two identification discs; two photographs.

Frank Burns is commemorated also on the memorial plaque of St John's Church, Ravenhead, St Helens:



No reference has been found to the death of Francis Burns in any newspaper.

411929	8/317806 1	Burns Frank	11 th Btn P Lانس France Pte Pneumonia 21788	26.1.17	Shrewsbury	4 8 1	4 8 1	2/0 5/7	1-5.17	Pro: Mrs Ellen Fearnley	4 8 1	Distribution
										1.10.19 3	Mrs Ellen Fearnley	7 = = PD

GRATUITY
 Transfer 5671
 Regd. Paper 200
 Serial No. 9847
 7 - -

A. F. W. 5070 SENT
 DATE 4.4.19

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919 the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid. In July 1919 Frank's mother, Ellen Fearnley, received a payment of outstanding wages of £4 8s 1d from the army and, in October, a War Gratuity of £7. This, a total value of £11 8s 1d, is equivalent to a labour value (wages) of around £1750 in 2016.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
BURNS Frank.	S' Lane R.	Pte.	21788
	11		

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	J/1/103	137	Died 26.1.17
BRITISH	do	do	
15 STAR	J/1/103	500	
Theatre of War first served in (1) France			
Date of entry therein 6-11-15.			

British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

Francis's father, Patrick, died in the St Helens district in early 1912, aged 41, and Ellen Burns married William Fearnley at St John the Evangelist Church, Ravenhead, St Helens a few months later (July/September).

In the 1939 Register Ellen and William, with several of Ellen's unmarried children, were living at 5 Lonsdale Avenue, St Helens:

William Fearnley	born 6 December 1874	old age pensioner - general labourer
Ellen	born 31 August 1871	old age pensioner
Catherine Burns	born 2 August 1899	single - unpaid domestic duties
Elizabeth Burns	born 23 October 1905	single - surface hand, colliery
Lily Burns	date of birth obscured	single - surface hand, colliery
Thomas Burns	born 9 October 1902	single - colliery hewer

5 Lonsdale Avenue, St Helens
[Google StreetView]



The Lily recorded in the 1939 Register is, probably, Ellen Burns. Ellen Fearnley, Francis' mother, died in the St Helens South district in mid-1947 aged 76.

William Fearnley may have died, in the Prescot district, in early 1944 aged 71.

Catherine Burns died in the St Helens district, aged 61, in early 1961.

It is not known whether Elizabeth Burns married, or when she died.

An Ellen Burns died, in the St Helens district, in mid-1969; her date of birth was recorded as 5 September 1900.

Thomas Burns, Francis' youngest brother, may have died in the Warrington district in late 1977 aged 74. It is not known if he married.

Samuel Burns, Francis' brother, married May Griffiths at St Helens Parish Church in mid-1917.

On 2 September 1914 Samuel, a collier, enlisted at St Helens in the South Lancashire Regiment (12092). However, he was found to be unfit for military service ("not likely to become an efficient soldier") and was discharged on 8 February 1916.

In the 1939 Register Samuel and May were recorded as living at 27 Cairne Street, St Helens (the location of this street is unknown):

Samuel Burns	born 18 May 1896	coal contractor
May	born 27 May(?) 1898	

Two lines of the record have been redacted

It is possible that Samuel and May had the following children: Samuel (born early 1918, Prescot) ; Agnes (mid-1920, Prescot) ; Edna (late 1923, Prescot) ; Mabel A (mid-1937, St Helens).

May Burns may have died in the Prescot district in early 1967 aged 68. Samuel appears to have died in the St Helens district in late 1969 aged 73.