

124: Robert Singlehurst Cross

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Robert Singlehurst Cross

Rank: Lieutenant

Battalion / Regiment: 10th Bn. The King's (Liverpool Regiment)

Service Number: Date of Death: 02 January 1920

Age at Death: ?

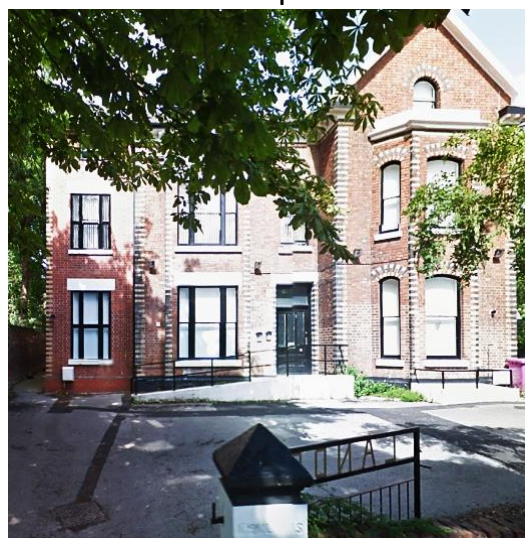
Buried / Commemorated at: Liverpool (Allerton) Cemetery

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of the late F. R. and Mary Cross, of Liverpool and husband of Gertrude St. George Cross, of Parkgate

Robert Singlehurst Cross was the fourth child of wealthy grain merchant (later general produce broker and corn merchant) Frank Richardson Cross and Mary and he was born at 30, Waverley Road, Toxteth Park, Liverpool on 27 November 1889 and baptised at St Michael's church, Toxteth Park, on 29 December 1889.

Frank Richardson Cross married Mary Singlehurst of Birkenhead at St Matthew with St. James Church, Mossley Hill, West Derby, Liverpool, in 1878 and in the 1881 census they were shown as living at Caenby House, Caenby, North Lincolnshire, where Frank (36) was recorded as being a farmer of 353 acres. By this date their daughter, Mary Ethel (7 months) had been recently born.

Ten years later, however, at the time of the 1891 census the family had moved to a substantial house at Toxteth Park and Frank was now a commercial broker and three sons had been born:



3 Alpass Road, Liverpool
[Source: Google StreetView]

Name	Relationship	Age	Sex	Occupation	Place of Birth
Frank R. Cross	Head	46	M	General Produce Broker	Glentworth, Lincs.
Mary	Wife	36	F		Birkenhead
Mary E.	Daughter	10	F		Caenby, Lincs.
Alfred S.	Son	9	M		Liverpool
Charles N.	Son	4	M		Liverpool
Robert S.	Son	1	M		Liverpool
May Ada Thompson	Nurse	5	F	Hospital Nurse	Glentworth, Lincs.
Kath Leonard	Serv	35	F	Cook	Birkenhead
Sarah A Jones	Serv	24	F	Nurse	Birkenhead
Ellen Boothwaite	Serv	20	F	Waitress	Lancashire, Liverpool
Ann M. Jones	Serv	28	F	Housemaid	Lancashire, Liverpool

1891 census (extract) - 3 Alpass Road, Toxteth Park, Liverpool

Frank R. Cross	46	general produce broker	born Glentworth, Lincs.
Mary	36		born Birkenhead
Mary E.	10		born Caenby, Lincs.
Alfred S.	9		born Liverpool
Charles N.	4		born Liverpool
Robert S.	1		born Liverpool

Also in the household was a hospital nurse, a cook, a nurse, a waitress and a housemaid.



Source: Ancestry

Robert Singlehurst Cross (left) and Charles Norman Cross (right), possibly about 1895.



Charles Norman Cross (left) and Robert Singlehurst Cross (right) in about 1898.

By 1901 the family had moved a short distance east to an even larger house in Fulwood Park, a broad and leafy road close to Otterspool Park and Promenade:

Frank R Cross	Head	M	56	Grain Merchant	Employer	Lincs, Glentworth
Mary	Wife	Mrs	47			Lancashire, Birkenhead
Mary E	Daughter	S	20			Lincs, Caenby
Alfred S.	Son	S	19			Lancs, Liverpool
Charles N.	Son	S	14			do do
Robert S	Son	S	11			do do
Frank N.	Son	S	5			do do
Jessie Leigh	Governess	S.	28	Governess, School	Worker	do do
Jessie Henry	Serv	S	27	Cook, Domestic		Lancashire, Willaston
Elizabeth E. Fereday	Serv	S	25	Housemaid		Staffs, Heath Town
Martha Parry	Serv	S	24	Waitress		Anglesea, Bodorgan

1901 census (extract) – 15, Fulwood Park, Toxteth Park, Sefton, Liverpool

Frank R. Cross	56	grain merchant	born Glentworth, Lincs.
Mary	47		born Birkenhead
Mary E.	20		born Caenby, Lincs.
Alfred S.	19		born Liverpool
Charles N.	14		born Liverpool
Robert S.	11		born Liverpool
Frank N.	5		born Liverpool
Jessie Leigh	28	governess, school	born Liverpool
Jessie Henry	27	cook, domestic	born Willaston
Elizabeth E. Fereday	25	housemaid	born Heath Town, Staffs.
Martha Parry	24	waitress	born Bodorgan, Anglesey

Also in the household was Maggie Rose, 26, a domestic nurse born in Scotland.

Robert was at Shrewsbury School (where he was a member of the Officers' Training Corps) but by the time of the 1911 census, aged 21, he had joined his father as a general products broker & corn merchant:

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)				(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)							
1	Frank R Cross	Head	66	Married	General Products Broker & Corn Merchant	Employed	no	Glentworth Lincs	180		
2	Mary Cross	Wife	56	Married	do	do	no	Birkenhead Cheshire	121		
3	Mary Ethel Cross	Daughter	30	Single	do	do	no	Caenby Lincs	180		
4	Charles N Cross	Son	24	do	do	do	no	Liverpool Lancs			
5	Robert S Cross	do	21	do	do	do	no	do			
6	Jessie Leigh	Lady's Companion	39	do	Lady's Companion Domestic	Employed	no	Liverpool			
7	Gertrude G Griffiths	Waitress	28	do	Waitress	do	no	do			
8	Maud M Watson	do	30	do	Cook	do	no	do			
9	Ellen Lindsey	do	22	do	Housemaid	do	no	do			
10	Gertrude Watson	do	17	do	do	do	no	Boothle Lancashire	1855		
I certify that— (1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper age column. (2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sums with the total number of persons. (3) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on this Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous. Initials of Enumerator: G.A.				Total Males: 3 Females: 7 Persons: 10 05				Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop. I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief. Signature: Frank R Cross Postal Address: 15 Fulwood Park, Liverpool			

1911 census (condensed) – 15, Fulwood Park, Liverpool

Frank R. Cross	66	general products broker & corn merchant	born Glentworth, Lincs.
Mary	56		born Birkenhead
Mary Ethel	30		born Caenby, Lincs.
Charles N.	24	general products broker & corn merchant	born Liverpool
Robert S.	21	general products broker & corn merchant	born Liverpool
Jessie Leigh	39	lady's companion, domestic	born Liverpool
Gertrude G. Griffiths	28	waitress	born Liverpool
Maud M. Watson	30	cook	born Liverpool
Ellen Lindsey	22	housemaid	born Liverpool
Gertrude Watson	17	housemaid	born Bootle

Frank and Mary had been married for 32 years and all five children had survived.

Many of the original properties still stand in this area and 15, Fulwood Park is now a Grade 2 listed building.

A 9-bedroomed house it was sold in 2012 for around £1 million and was then described by the selling agents as being a:

beautiful detached 'Italianate' mansion house situated in one of Liverpool's more prestigious private parks. Arguably one of the city's most impressive properties, 15 Fulwood Park would offer any prospective purchaser an enviable lifestyle. Situated within substantial grounds of approximately 1.5 acres, this stucco rendered building has retained much of its original character and charm and offers spacious and elegant accommodation over several levels. The property is approached via decorative gate piers and a sweeping driveway leading to a turning circle finished in gravel. The imposing front elevation is breath taking and sets a precedent for the accommodation you are about to experience. Passing through the vestibule entrance the wonderful architectural design of this property becomes apparent as you walk into the magnificent reception hall. As well as detailed joinery, lincrusta wall coverings and wonderful covings there is an elegant easy tread return staircase with cast iron spindles leading to the upper floors.



Frank Richardson Cross was, clearly, a businessman of some status and wealth.

On 6 June 1914 Robert married Gertrude St George Burrell at Christ Church, Sefton Park; Gertrude was the daughter of timber merchant John and Gertrude Burrell of Ontario. As two children, born in 1915 and 1920, were registered in Shropshire it is presumed that the family lived there after the marriage. In fact, when he died, Robert was described as being a 'Gentleman Farmer' and his home address was given as 'The Hey Farm', Madeley, Salop. He was 30 years old.

'Hey Farm' (often '*Hay Farm*') lay above Coalport and is a Grade 2 listed building and was connected with many of the most important families playing a role in the industrial



Source: <http://madeleylocalhistory.org/buildings/great-hay.html>

revolution in that part of Shropshire - in 1758 Abraham Darby purchased half of the property. In the early years of the 20th century it became the property of private farmers before being sold in the 1970s to Telford Development Corporation who developed much of the land as a golf course. Since then it has changed hands a number of times and is now owned by a hotel chain.

As Robert's Service Record has not been found it is not possible to detail his military career although it is known that he was serving with the 10th

Battalion The King's (Liverpool Regiment) when he died on 2 January 1920, some thirteen months after the end of WW1.

The 10th Battalion was the Liverpool Scottish, known diminutively as "the Scottish", a unit of the Territorial Army raised in 1900 as an infantry battalion. When Robert attested on 11 January 1916 he was posted to the Army Reserve. Interestingly, Robert was mobilised and enlisted at the Inns of Court Officers Training Corps ¹ on 14 December 1916, with the Service Number 10192. On 26 June 1917 Robert Singlehurst Cross was discharged to a commission in the 10th Battalion The King's (Liverpool Regiment) and was sent to France in October 1917.

¹ Up until September 1916, the Inns of Court provided basic and officer training at Berkhamsted. The subjects covered were drill, musketry (although limited by a shortage of suitable ranges), entrenching (but little in the way of trench warfare, apart from bombing), map reading, field exercises in open warfare (designed to instil leadership and initiative), and lectures, which covered a whole range of subjects from sanitation, through tactics, to the history of the war. [<http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/topic/7727-inns-of-court-otc/>]

The Inns of Court OTC expanded rapidly in August and September 1914, as thousands volunteered for military service following the outbreak of the First World War, and the corps quickly outgrew its peacetime premises in London. A training camp opened in tents on Berkhamsted Common, in the west of Hertfordshire in September 1914 and remained in operation until June 1919, hosting around 2,000 officer cadets. As part of their training, the men dug around 13 miles trenches across Berkhamsted Common. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inns_of_Court_Regiment]



Elm Grove, Neston, the home of Robert's daughter, Ann Pauline, photographed in October 2017. Originally a town house built by Dr Stephen Bond in about 1800, it was later altered and converted into a hotel.

Jacqueline Cross married Charles William Noel Miles, a son of Lt.-Col. Sir Charles William Miles, 5th Bt. and Favell Mary Hill, on 16 March 1940. She died in 1998. Jacqueline and Charles are known to have had at least two children:

Phinola Jane Miles - born 19 Aug 1943 She married Anthony McCandlish Smith, a son of Dr. David Smith, on 30 September 1967.

Anthony William Miles - born 2 Dec 1946, died 28 Feb 1969.

Robert Singlehurst Cross's mother, Mary, died in the West Derby area of Liverpool in June 1916 and his father, Frank Richardson Cross, died in Liverpool on 7 July 1925.

Of Robert Singlehurst Cross's siblings:

Mary Ethel - born in about 1881 in Lincolnshire. It is not known whether she married or when she died.

Alfred Singlehurst - born March 1882. He was married to Margaret Madeline Cross and a daughter, Mary Betty Cross (the only child known) was born in Northumberland on 10 September 1910. In 1911 he was living at 55 Broomgrove Road, Sheffield, recorded as an electrical engineer. It is believed that Alfred died in 1940.

Charles Norman - born 15 January 1887 and baptised 20 February 1887. In June 1921 he married Sybil Mary Estcourt Boucher in Leicestershire and it is known that they had at least two children:

Elizabeth Mary Cross born 9 July 1922 in Liverpool, died 22 February 2008 in Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

Robert Singlehurst Cross born 12 May 1925, died 14 May 2011 in Winchester, Hampshire.

It is believed that Charles died on 26 February 1939 in Madeira. Sybil died in December 1976 in Northamptonshire.

Frank Noel - born 1 September 1895 at Toxteth Park, Liverpool. He served with distinction in WW1 - he was a 2nd Lieutenant in France on 6 September 1915 - and was awarded the DSO for gallantry. The citation reads:-

Temp. Lt. Frank Noel Cross, L'pool Reg.

For conspicuous gallantry in action. Although wounded, he led a bombing attack with the greatest courage and skill, capturing the enemy's position. Later, he greatly assisted in repulsing several counter-attacks.



Charles Norman Cross in about 1935

Frank was also Mentioned in Despatches and on 22 June 1916 he was promoted to Captain and transferred to the Indian Army.

Frank returned to England on 21 October 1919 and married Eileen Mary Bleasedale later that year and his medals were issued to an address in Malvern after war. In 1937 he was appointed Capt. in the Territorial Army Reserve of Officers, 21 Royal Gloucesters, RTC (Armoured Car Company).

Frank died in December 1967 in Cheltenham and Eileen died in 1996.



Frank Noel Cross

Robert Singlehurst Cross is commemorated also on the War Memorial at Christ Church, Linnet Lane, Sefton Park, Liverpool.



Robert Singlehurst Cross

W213. RB525/6/19—5 Bks.—Wt. & Sons, Ltd. 2486

Record No.	Registry No.	NAME AND RANK	Regt. or Corps	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS		
					Account	Effects	Effects
56081	9/8/1919	Cross. R. S.	Liverpool Reg.	2. 1. 20	R.P. Tavistock Sq, 4/20.	19. 20	20-21 ✓ 5

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919, and after, 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 January 1920, although no outstanding wages were due to Robert Singlehurst Cross, a payment of £5 was made to 'R. P. Tavistock Square'; the significance of this is unknown. The labour earnings value (ie income) of £5 in 2017 is about £540.

The darkness crumbles away.
It is the same old Druid Time as ever.
Only a live thing leaps my hand,
A queer sardonic rat,
As I pull the parapet's poppy
To stick behind my ear.
Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew
Your cosmopolitan sympathies.
Now you have touched this English hand
You will do the same to a German
Soon, no doubt, if it be your pleasure
To cross the sleeping green between.
It seems, odd thing, you grin as you pass
Strong eyes, fine limbs, haughty athletes,
Less chanced than you for life,
Bonds to the whims of murder,
Sprawled in the bowels of the earth,
The torn fields of France.
What do you see in our eyes
At the shrieking iron and flame,
Hurl'd through still heavens?
What quaver - what heart aghast?
Poppies whose roots are in man's veins
Drop, and are ever dropping,
But mine in my ear is safe -
Just a little white with the dust.

"Break of Day in the Trenches"

Isaac Rosenberg

(1890 - 1918)

