

164: Arthur Sumner

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Arthur Sumner

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: Yorkshire Hussars

Service Number: 77087

Date of Death: 10 October 1918

Age at Death: 40

Buried / Commemorated at: Hollybrook Memorial, Shirley, Southampton Unitary Authority, Hampshire

Additional information given by CWGC: None

Arthur Sumner was the third child, first son, of labourer James and Mary Sumner of Morley Green, Wilmslow.

James Sumner married Mary Bower at a Civil Marriage in Altrincham in late 1874 and their first child, Emily, was born in early 1875.

Sarah Ann, their second daughter, was born in late 1876 and Arthur was born in the 3rd quarter of 1878. In 1881 the family was living at Morley Green Road, Wilmslow:

Person	Head of Family	Marriage	Male	Female	Occupation	Residence
James Sumner	Head	Mar	31		Agricultural Labourer	Cheshire, Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Mary Sumner	Wife	Mar		31		Do, Do, Wilmslow
Emily Sumner	Daughter			6	Scholar	Do, Do, Wilmslow
Sarah Ann Sumner	Daughter			4	Scholar	Do, Do, Wilmslow
Arthur Sumner	Son		2			Do, Do, Wilmslow
Walter Sumner	Son		7 Mo			Do, Wilmslow
Walter Sumner	Head	Mar	55		Agricultural Labourer	Do, Wilmslow

1881 census (extract) – Morley Green Road, Wilmslow

James Sumner	31	agricultural labourer	born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Mary	31		born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Emily	6		born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Sarah Ann	4		born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Arthur	2		born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow
Walter	7 months		born Pownall Lane, Wilmslow

By the time of the 1891 census three further sons had been born (no further children are known) and the family was still living in the same house on Morley Green Road. Arthur, although only 12, had now started to work and was probably doing light work on a farm.



Agricultural cottages on Morley Green Road, Wilmslow.
[Google StreetView]

James Sumner	Head	m	42	General Labourer	x	do	Morley
Mary	Wife	w	44			do	do
Sarah A.	daur	d	14	Wine & Cotton operative	x	do	do
Arthur	son	s	12	Ag Farm Servant	x	do	do
Walter	son	s	10	Wholam		do	do
William	son	s	8	do		do	do
James	son	s	6	do		do	do
John	son	s	5	do		do	do
Robert	son	s	3	do		do	do

1891 census (extract) – Morley, Wilmslow

James Sumner	42	general labourer	born Morley
Mary	42		born Morley
Sarah A.	14	(?) and cotton operative	born Morley
Arthur	12	agricultural farm servant	born Morley
Walter	10		born Morley
William	8		born Morley
James	6		born Morley
John	5		born Morley
Robert	3		born Morley

Mary Sumner died, aged 44, in April/June 1893 and at the time of the 1901 census only Robert (12) was living with his father, James (53, council road man). They were then living at 21 Cousin's Lane, Morley and William Sumner (18, farm servant, waggoner) was recorded a short distance away at a farm at 4 Morley Green.

In early 1900 Arthur Sumner married Florry Cox at Christ Church, Barnton (to the north-east of Northwich) and in the 1901 census Arthur (22, gas works labourer) and Florry (22, born Northwich) were living on Church Street in Wilmslow.

In the 1911 census they were recorded as living in Mill Street, Wilmslow; Arthur was still recorded as a gas fitter and, very probably, it was this occupation that brought him to Neston sometime after the 1911 census.

The Parkgate and Neston Gas Company was formed in 1881 following a public meeting and William Pritchard of Little Neston was contracted to build a gasworks on Church



Gascott Court House on Church Lane was the house serving the gas works.

Lane. Pritchard, who was 33 in 1881, was the most important builder in the town employing 25 men and 5 boys and the work was completed by the end of the following year when the company had 33 customers. Although the enterprise was considered a financial success the uptake of this form of lighting (the only use then made of gas) was very slow and by the end of 1885 there were still fewer than 50 customers and new housing built in the town, such as Gladstone Road, were not connected to the supply.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 166
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after selection.)

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.

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.
			State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—	Completed years the present Marriage has lasted (if less than one year write "under one.")	Children born alive (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.			
Arthur Sumner	Head	61	Married						Gas Fitter 952	Worship	Cheshire Morley	
Florry Sumner	Wife	32	Married	11	2	2	0				Cheshire Anderton	
Norman Sumner	Son	8									Cheshire Wilmslow	
Mary Elizabeth Sumner	Daughter	2									Cheshire Wilmslow	
William Bradbury	Boarder	31	Single						General Labourer 530	Worship	Cheshire Wilmslow	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)
I certify that—
(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex columns.
(2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have entered their sum with the total number of persons.
(3) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have reported such as appeared to be erroneous.
Initials of Enumerator: J.D.

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)
I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Signature: Arthur Sumner
Postal Address: Mill Street Wilmslow

1911 census (condensed) – Mill Street, Wilmslow

Arthur Sumner	31	gas fitter	born Morley
Florry	32		born Anderton
Norman	8		born Wilmslow
Mary Elizabeth	2		born Wilmslow
William Bradbury	31	general labourer	born Wilmslow

Arthur and Florry had been married for eleven years and both their children had survived. It is believed that they had no further children.

In 1911 James Sumner, Arthur's widowed father was 61 and living on Morley Green Road, Wilmslow. His occupation was recorded as 'farming' and his spinster sister, Mary Ann Sumner (65) was living with him as housekeeper as was his unmarried son, James (27, general labourer, building trade).

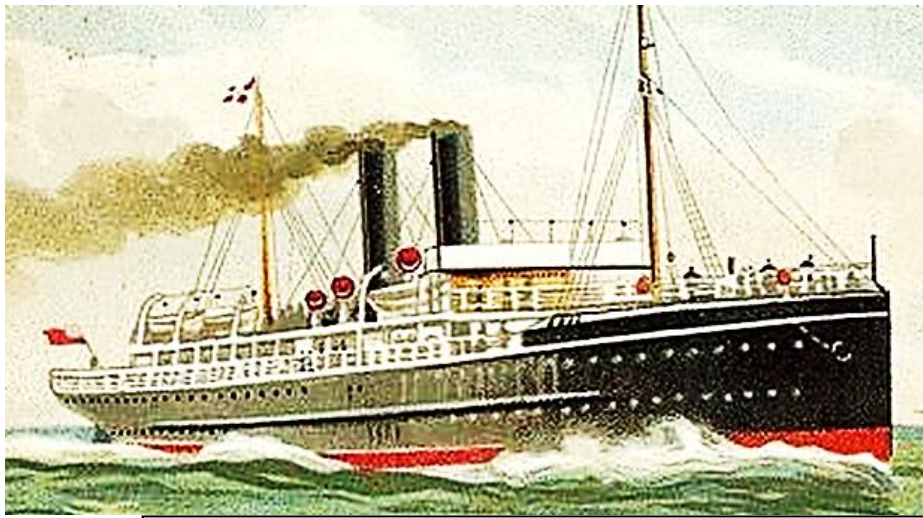
As Arthur's Service Record has not been found no details of his army career are known other than, whilst living in Neston, he enlisted at Chester and served with the Corps of Hussars, Yorkshire Hussars (Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own) Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line.

The regiment was formed on the creation of the Territorial Force in April 1908 and it is most probable that Arthur served with the 2/1st Yorkshire Mounted Brigade and that he never saw service on the continent.

In July 1916 there was a major reorganization of the 2nd Line yeomanry units in Britain when all but 12 regiments were converted to cyclists and the brigade converted to the 11th Cyclist Brigade. Further reorganisation in October and November 1916 saw the brigade re-designated as the 7th Cyclist Brigade in November, and they were now in the Bridlington area on coastal duties. In March 1917 the regiment moved to Driffield in the East Riding of Yorkshire and in July to Barmston on the coast, six miles south of Bridlington. It returned to Bridlington in January 1918 before, in about May 1918, the Brigade moved to Ireland where the regiment was stationed at Fermoy, County Cork

and Fethard in County Tipperary. Under the command of Lord Deramore, the troops were mainly older soldiers, many aged over 40.

Private Arthur Sumner was one of around 350 military personnel who died when the



RMS Leinster [Source: www.encyclopedia-titanica.org]

RMS *Leinster* was sunk by torpedoes from a German submarine in the Irish Sea, 16 miles east of Dublin and four miles east of the Kish Light, shortly before 10am on the morning of 10 October 1918, whilst on its outbound journey of 100km [68 miles] from Kingstown, Dublin, to Holyhead, Anglesey. This was just one month before the end of the war. The *Leinster* was sunk by torpedoes fired from

UB-123, commanded by 27-year old Oberleutnant Robert Ramm; the first torpedo missed, but the second hit the Mail Room and the third hit the Engine Room. Eight days later on 18 October 1918, during its return to Germany, UB-123 hit a mine in the North Sea and sank with the loss of the entire crew of 2 officers and 33 men. Their bodies were never recovered.

Shortly before 9 a.m. on 10 October 1918 the R.M.S Leinster left Carlisle Pier, Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire), Co. Dublin, Ireland. Bound for Holyhead Anglesey, Wales she carried 771 passengers and crew. The ship was commanded by Captain William Birch (61), a Dubliner who had settled with his family in Holyhead. Apart from Birch, the Leinster had a crew of 76, drawn from the ports of Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) and Holyhead. Also on board were 22 postal sorters from Dublin Post Office, working in the ship's onboard postal sorting room. There were 180 civilian passengers, men, women and children, most of them from Ireland and Britain.

But by far the greatest number of passengers on board the Leinster were military personnel. Many of them were going on leave or returning from leave. They came from Ireland, Britain, Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. On the Western Front the German Army was being pushed back by the relentless assaults of the Allied armies. On 4 October Germany had asked U.S. President Woodrow Wilson for peace terms.

As the Leinster set sail the weather was fine, but the sea was rough following recent storms. Earlier that morning a number of Royal Navy ships at sea off Holyhead were forced to return to port due to the stormy conditions.

Shortly before 10 a.m. about 16 miles from Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) a few people on the deck of the Leinster saw a torpedo approaching the port (left) side of the ship. It missed the Leinster, passing in front of her. Soon afterwards another torpedo struck the port side where the postal sorting room was located. Postal Sorter John Higgins said that the torpedo exploded, blowing a hole in the port side. The explosion travelled across the ship, also blowing a whole in the starboard side.

In an attempt to return to port, the Leinster turned 180 degrees, until it faced the direction from which it had come. With speed reduced and slowly sinking, the ship had sustained few casualties. Lifeboats were being launched. At this point a torpedo struck the ship on the starboard (right) side, practically blowing it to pieces. The Leinster sank soon afterwards, bow first.

Many of those on board were killed in the sinking. In lifeboats or clinging to rafts and flotsam, the survivors now began a grim struggle for survival in the rough sea. Many died while awaiting rescue. Eventually a number of destroyers and other ships arrived. The survivors were landed at Victoria Wharf, Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire), where the ferry terminal now stands.

Doctors, nurses, rescue workers and a fleet of 200 ambulances rushed to Victoria Wharf. Those needing medical care were brought to St. Michael's Hospital in Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) and several Dublin Hospitals. Those not requiring medical treatment were brought to local hotels and guest houses.

In the days that followed bodies were recovered from the sea. Funerals took place in many parts of Ireland. Some bodies were brought to Britain, Canada and the United States for burial. One hundred and forty four military casualties were buried in Grangegorman Military Cemetery in Dublin.

Officially 501 people died in the sinking, making it both the greatest ever loss of life in the Irish and the highest ever casualty rate on an Irish owned ship. Research to date has revealed the names of 529 casualties. [Source (unabridged) : <http://www.rmsleinster.com/sinking/sinking.htm>]

RMS *Leinster* was a vessel, built at Lairds, Birkenhead, operated by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company as a mailboat; its sinking resulted in the greatest single loss of life in the Irish Sea.

Contemporary newspaper and shipping company reports indicate that 256 individuals were rescued, not all of whom survived. Many of the bodies, including that of Arthur Sumner, were never recovered. Of those that were, some were not found immediately, and due to the currents in the Irish Sea they came ashore on all parts of the coast.

It is interesting to note that because the military personnel had only served in Ireland, (not defined as a theatre of war) they were entitled only to a death plaque despite the fact that they were lost due to enemy action. However, the crew of the *Leinster* and their next of kin were eligible for, and did receive, the British War and Mercantile Marine medals as well as plaques.

It is believed that Florry Sumner did not remarry after Arthur's death and that she died in January 1912 at Bucklow, west of Wilmslow.

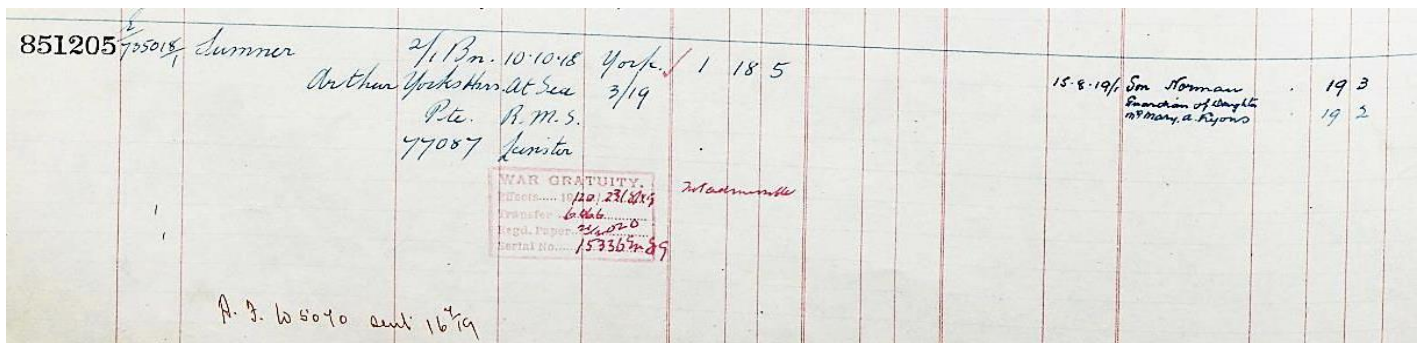
THE LEINSTER CHASED.

The mail boat *Leinster*, which left Holyhead for Kingstown at thirteen minutes past two o'clock on Sunday, was chased for some distance by a German submarine, which was first sighted, when the *Leinster* was about 25 miles east of the Kish Lightship. The captain of the *Leinster* steered his vessel about three miles out of the ordinary course, and the submarine kept up the pursuit for about a mile, but was unable to get within striking distance of the *Leinster* owing to the greater speed of the latter. Eventually the submarine abandoned the chase.

On at least one previous occasion the *Leinster* had encountered a German submarine off the coast of Ireland.

Portadown Express - 15 February 1915

Arthur Sumner's name on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton. This memorial commemorates by name almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports or other vessels torpedoed or mined in home waters.



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 Arthur's son Norman (he would have been about 16) received a payment of outstanding wages of 19s 3d from the army and a further sum of 19s 2d was given to a Mary A. Lyons who was acting as the guardian of Arthur's young daughter, Mary Elizabeth Sumner who would then have been aged about 10. The identity of Mary A. Lyons is unknown but, in 1919, Norman and Mary Elizabeth Sumner were orphans as their mother, Florry, is believed to have died in early 1912. The total amount paid, £1 18s 5d, is equivalent to a *labour value* (wages) of around £300 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 record notes that Arthur was not entitled to a War Gratuity.

Norman Sumner, the son of Arthur and Florry, married Lena Jane Hubball at St Paul's Church, Danebridge, Northwich in mid-1924 and at the time of the 1939 Register (29 September) they were living at 19 Green Avenue, Northwich:

Norman Sumner born 7 September 1902 process worker,
chemical works

Lena J born 4 March 1902
Four lines of the record have been redacted

Norman Coombs born 2 April 1938

Norman Coombs was the son of Lena's sister, Elsie; she had married Harold Coombs at St Paul's Church, Danebridge, Northwich in mid-1925.

It is believed that Norman and Lena had four children: Florry (registered in early-1925) ; Norman (registered in mid-1927) ; Leonard (registered in mid-1932) ; Arthur W (registered in early 1937).

Although it is not known when Norman snr died, Lena Sumner died in the Vale Royal area of Cheshire in early 1978.

Mary Elizabeth Sumner, Arthur's daughter, married Ralph Capper Bostock at a Civil Marriage in Chester in mid-1930 and in the 1939 Register they are recorded as living at 5 sandy Lane, Saltney:

Ralph C Bostock	born 10 April 1906	driver of Chaseside digger ¹ and loader of fertiliser
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Mary E	born 9 June 1907
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A daughter, Pauline Helen Bostock, was registered in the Hawarden district in mid-1947. It is believed that she married Peter J Morris in the Chester district in early 1971.

William Sumner ², Arthur's brother, married Catherine Jones at Our Lady & St Nicholas & St Anne, the Liverpool Parish Church, in mid-1911 and in the 1939 Register they were recorded as living at 2 Liverpool Road, Neston:

William Sumner	born 7 April 1882	gas works mains and surface layer
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Catherine	born 19 August 1889
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One line of the record has been redacted

Norman	born 15 August 1921	single	apprentice painter
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William Sumner died, aged 68, in mid-1950 and Catherine died in mid-1957.

¹ The Chaseside Engineering Company Ltd company was based at Blackburn in Lancashire England and they built some of the earliest loaders and cranes all based on Fordson farm tractors. The company was founded in Middlesex in 1937. The firm also made the Northrop tractor an early UK built high horsepower Four-wheel drive tractor which effectively became the Muir-Hill range when its inventor/designer moved companies. Chaseside was sold out to JCB in 1968, and the brand name was soon dropped. [<http://tractors.wikia.com/wiki/Chaseside>]

² His name was recorded as *Summers*

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"

Not this tide.

"When d'you think that he'll come back?"

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Has any one else had word of him?"

Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim,

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"

None this tide,

Nor any tide,

Except he did not shame his kind -

Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

Then hold your head up all the more,

This tide,

And every tide;

Because he was the son you bore,

And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!



"My Boy Jack"
Rudyard Kipling
(1865 - 1936)

