

62: James Mellor

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: J. Mellor

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 20th Bn. The King's (Liverpool Regiment)

Service Number: 23113

Date of Death: 05 June 1917 Age at Death: ?

Buried / Commemorated at: Railway Dugouts Cemetery [Transport Farm], Ypres (Ieper), West Flanders, Belgium

Additional information given by CWGC: None

James Mellor was the last of the fourteen children of Neston fisherman Lemuel and Ann Mellor of Neston.

Fisherman Lemuel Mellor married Ann Williams at Neston Parish Church on 2 May 1869; Lemuel's father was also Lemuel and also a fisherman, and Anne's father was collier William Williams of Neston. Lemuel signed the register but Ann made her mark.

In the census of 1871, some twenty years before James's birth, Lemuel and Ann were living on Neston High Street:

Lemuel Mellor	Head	Mar	22	Fisherman	In Gr. Neston
Ann Do	Wife	Do	22	~	Do Do
Betsey Do	Serv	Do	1	~	Do Do

1871 census (extract) – High Street, Neston

Lemuel Mellor	22	fisherman	born Great Neston
Ann	22		born Great Neston
Betsey	1		born Great Neston

In 1881 the family was living on Cross Street, Neston:

Cross St	(B)	Name	Relationship	Age	Sex	Occupation	Place of Birth
1		Lemuel Mellor	Head	35	Male	Fisherman	Neston, Cheshire
		Ann Do	Wife	35	Female		Do Do
		Betsey Do	Serv	11	Female	Scholar	Do Do
		William Do	Son	9	Male	Do	Do Do
		George Do	Son	5	Male	Do	Do Do
		Emily Do	Serv	3	Female	Do	Do Do

1881 census (extract) – Cross Street, Neston

Lemuel Mellor	35	fisherman	born Neston
Ann	35		born Neston
Betsy	11		born Neston
William	9		born Neston
George	5		born Neston
Emily	3		born Neston

By 1891 they had moved to Pykes Weint, the narrow alleyway off Neston High Street, facing the Parish Church:

Lemuel Mellor	Head	m	43	Fisherman			X	Neston Cheshire
Ann	Wife	m	43					
William	Son	s	19				X	
Lemuel	Son	s	9					
George	Son	s	16					
Ellen	Daughter	s	13				X	
Fanny	Daughter	s	5					
John	Son	s	2					

1891 census (extract) – Pykes Weint, Neston

Lemuel Mellor	43	fisherman	born Neston
Ann	43		born Neston
William	19	fisherman	born Neston
Lemuel	9		born Neston
George	16	fisherman	born Neston
Ellen	13		born Neston
Fanny	5		born Neston
John	2		born Neston

Lemuel died, aged 51, when he drowned at Parkgate in the early evening after setting his fishing nets and was buried at Neston 11 June 1900. He had, in 1897, on more than one occasion, been fined at Neston Petty Sessions for raking under-sized mussels from the sandbanks in the estuary.

In the 1901 census the family was still living on, or close to, Neston High Street:

Ann Mellor	Widow	51	Housekeeper	Worker	"	do	do
William Mellor	Son	28	Fisherman	"	"	do	do
George Mellor	Son	25	Fisherman	"	"	do	do
Lemuel do	Son	20	Fisherman	"	"	do	do
John do	Son	12	at School	"	"	do	do
James do	Son	9	do	"	"	do	do
Florence do	Daughter	14	do	"	"	do	do

1901 census (extract) – High Street, Neston

Ann Mellor	51	widow, housekeeper	born Neston
William	28	fisherman	born Neston
George	25	fisherman	born Neston
Lemuel	20	fisherman	born Neston
John	12		born Neston
James	9		born Neston
Florence	14		born Neston

By the time of the 1911 census James Mellor, following in the family tradition, had also become a fisherman:

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 274
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection)

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 — Write "Single," "Married," "Widowed," or "Widow," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)	Personal Occupation	Industry or Service with which worker is connected			
Ann Mellor	Widow	69 yrs	Widow	4-7-78			Neston, Cheshire	English	
George Mellor	Son	35	Single	14	fisherman on own account	at Home	Neston, Cheshire	British	
John Mellor	Son	21	Single		fisherman on own account	at Home	Neston, Cheshire	British	
James Mellor	Son	19	Single		fisherman on own account	at Home	Neston, Cheshire	British	

(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 entered the names and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have entered their ages with the total number of persons.
(3) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule with regard to the persons, and I have entered the names of the persons who are not at home on the day of the Census.

Initials of Enumerator: *W. W.*

Total: Males 3, Females 1, Total 4

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

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.

Rooms: 5

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Ann Mellor*
Postal Address: *Pykes Weint, Bridge St, Neston, Cheshire*

1911 census (condensed) – Pykes Weint, Bridge Street

Ann Mellor	64	widow	born Neston
George	35	fisherman on own account	born Neston
John	21	fisherman on own account	born Neston
James	19	fisherman on own account	born Neston

Ann Mellor had 14 children of whom eight had survived.

Some details are known for all fourteen of the children of Lemuel and Ann Mellor:

Betsy	born 14 November 1869 baptised 3 December 1869	married collier John William Smith, 21 (born 21 March 1870) of Little Neston at Neston Parish Church on 19 July 1891. John's father, William Smith, was a sawyer. In the 1939 Register they are recorded as living at 12 Cottage Close, off the Burton Road. Betsy was recorded as being incapacitated and John was a general labourer. With them was unmarried son Lemuel ((born 26 June 1899, market gardener's labourer). Betsy may have died in Neston in 1947.
William	baptised 7 April 1872	nothing known beyond 1901.
Mary	baptised 13 February 1874	buried 27 November 1874 aged 9 months.
George	baptised 12 March 1876	he may have married Louisa Peers at St Bartholomew's Church, Thurstaston, in mid-1929 and may have died in the Stockport area in early 1954 aged 78.
Emily	baptised 24 May 1878	married collier Charles Callow, 21, of Neston at Neston Parish Church on 25 December 1897. Charles's father, John Callow, was a painter.
Mary	baptised 2 July 1880	buried 19 September 1880 aged 11 weeks.
Joseph	baptised 2 July 1880	buried 24 December 1880 aged 6 months.
Lemuel	baptised 11 September 1881	married Ann Leadbetter of Wigan at Our Lady & St. Nicholas & St. Anne in Liverpool in mid- 1903. Lived in Neston until about 1908 (he had 3 children here and possibly worked at the colliery) and in 1911 was recorded as a collier with his family at Sutton Oak, St Helens. His date of death is uncertain.

John	born 14 June 1889 baptised 14 July 1889	married Georgina Smith, 20 (born 19 November 1899), of New Street at Neston Parish Church on 21 February 1920 when he was a labourer, 30, of High Street. Georgina's father was stonemason Miles Smith. In the 1939 Register they were recorded as living at 'Fryer's Bungalow', Liverpool Road, and John was a builder's labourer. They may have had five children and, in 1939 (one line of the entry is redacted), two were still at home: John M (born 19 August 1920), iron foundry labourer; William (born 17 February 1933). John died in mid-1957 aged 67.
James	baptised 20 May 1892	died of war injuries 5 June 1917 - the subject of this account.

James' Service Record shows that he was single, 5ft 7½ins tall, weighed 130lb (9 stone 4lb / 59kg), had a fresh complexion, grey eyes, brown hair and was of good physical development. Possibly because of his Neston accent his birthplace was mis-recorded as being Leicester, although it was shown correctly in later records.

The 20th (Service) Battalion (4th City) was raised in Liverpool on 16 October 1914 by Lord Derby, in the old watch factory at Prescott near the Derby estate. The battalion, the last of the four Liverpool Pals battalions to be formed, was part of Kitchener's New Army and they moved to Tournament Hall, Knotty Ash to train and then to the new training camp at Knowsley Park, built on Lord Derby's estate. Whilst at Knowsley, on 26 March 1915, James went absent without leave for two days. For this offence he was confined to barracks for two days but he failed to learn from this experience, being indicted for the same misdemeanour on at least two further occasions.

On 30 April 1915 the battalion came under the orders of the 89th Brigade, 30th Division, and the troops moved to the temporary Belton Park Camp at Grantham, Lincolnshire. The 30th Division was made up almost entirely of battalions from Manchester and Liverpool and comprised volunteers who had enlisted soon after the start of the war in August 1914. Whilst at Grantham James Mellor again went absent without leave, this

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Form
B. 120
24

REGIMENTAL CONDUCT SHEET.

Army Form B. 120.

AB *10/11*

Number of sheets (in words) _____
 Signature of C.O. or Adjutant *W. P. Gillich*
 Regiment of *1st Bn. Buffs*
 Regiment. _____

Attested _____ 19 ____ Joined _____ 19 ____

Regimental Number and Name _____

Place	Date of Offence	Rank	Regt. No.	OFFENCE	Names of Witnesses	PUNISHMENT awarded	Place of award, or reference with trial	By whom	Date of Commence-ment	Date of Expiration	REMARKS
<i>13th</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1st Lt.</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>Absent from 1st Bn. until 19.10.18 and 1st Bn.</i>	<i>1st Bn. Buffs</i>	<i>10 Days L.D. suspended 4 days pay</i>	<i>17th</i>	<i>1st Bn. Buffs</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1st Bn. Buffs</i>

time being missing from 10pm on 13 August 1915 until 2.50am on 17 August. For this 4-day absence James was confined to

barracks for 10 days and forfeited 4 days' pay. In September the troops were moved to Larkhill Camp on Salisbury Plain for additional training and here, again, James was absent without leave (from 10pm on 2 October until 3.50pm on 3 October); for this 2-day absence he was confined to barracks for 4 days.

In early November 1915 the whole of the 30th Division began the initial stages of embarkation from Folkestone and Southampton; although James Mellor sailed on 7 November it is unclear where he embarked although it is known that the troops landed at Boulogne and concentrated at Ailly le Haut Clocher north-west of Amiens before being moved to the Somme. Before moving to France James had served for 362 days in Britain.

On 14 February 1917 there is intimation that James either suffered an injury or illness, or returned to the camp at Head Quarters, as it is noted that he re-joined his unit on 21 April. It was whilst fighting in the field at the Messines Ridge on 4 June 1917 that James received gunshot wounds to his head and chest that caused him to die the following day. This would have been a localised action leading up to the commencement of the main offensive starting on 7 June; the War Diary entry for 4 June records 'Hostile artillery fairly active all day' but, until 7 June, the entries concentrate on the various activities of working parties:

JOURNAL of the SERVICES of No. 23113. Name <i>J. Mellor</i>						
including recruit training, other special courses of training, Annual Training, and when mobilized, etc.						
Corps	Unit	Promotions, Reductions, Casualties, &c.	Rank	From	To	Signature of Officers certifying correctness of Entries
		Service towards engagement reckons from <i>Liverpool 10/11/14</i>				
	<i>2nd Bn</i>	<i>2nd Bn</i>	<i>Pte</i>	<i>10/11/14</i>	<i>27/1/15</i>	<i>J. Mellor</i>
	<i>K.R.</i>	<i>must pay for absence from 10pm 12-8-15 to 2-50 am 14-8-15 (4 Days)</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>26/1/15</i>	<i>27/1/15</i>	<i>H. Braeken</i>
		<i>rejoined 4 Days pay from 10pm 14-8-15 to 2-50 am 17-8-15 (4 Days)</i>				<i>H. Braeken</i>
		<i>must pay for absence from 10pm 2-10-15 to 3-50 am 3-10-15 (2 Days)</i>				<i>H. Braeken</i>
	<i>20</i>	<i>Head of Lane de</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>5-17</i>		<i>Haughm</i>
	<i>21</i>	<i>Head of de la Haye</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>5-17</i>		<i>Haughm</i>

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.			WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.		Army Form C. 2118.
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information		Remarks and references to Appendices
YPRES. (Ref. Map BELGIUM, Sheet 28 NW. 1/20,000).	1st.		Battalion found numerous working parties for the carrying of ammunition to forward dumps, work on light railway, Town Major's fatigues, and R.E. fatigues. The total available strength of Battalion was utilised. Infantry Barracks were shelled intermittently all day until 9 pm, when the shelling increased in violence, LILLE GATE, the RAMPARTS, GAS WORKS, INFANTRY BARRACKS and ASYLUM being the chief targets. Owing to the intensity of the bombardment, working parties were compelled to suspend their duties, and returned to billets. Total casualties were 1 O.R. killed.		
do	2nd.		Working parties again supplied. Enemy artillery much quieter all day. There was no deliberate bombardment at night.		
	3rd.		Further working parties supplied, totalling 7 Officers and 387 O.R. Enemy artillery quiet all day. At 9.15 pm. Boche bombarded the town heavily with lacrimatory gas shells, a considerable number of these falling in and around the Barracks. No casualties were caused, and the bombardment quietened at 2.30 am.		
	4th.		Hostile artillery fairly active all day. Usual working parties supplied.		
	5th.		At 4 am, YPRES was shelled with gas shells, but no damage was done. Battalion provided further working parties. Major C.N. Watson and Lieut. J. Beavan rejoined from leave to ENGLAND. Enemy shelled the town heavily at night.		
	6th.		Working parties sent out as usual.		
	7th.		At 3.10 am. troops on our right attacked enemy positions on MESSINES RIDGE. Operations were preceded by the simultaneous explosion of many mines along front and under HILL 60, and a very intense artillery bombardment. The explosion of the mines was felt considerably in the region of the Barracks. Our bombardment continued till 9 am, when news was received that all objectives had been gained, including a number of prisoners and guns. At 3.30 pm, A Company moved into trenches (WELLINGTON CRESCENT), and at 7.30 pm. D Company took up position in RITZ STREET. No enemy retaliation on YPRES.		
	8th.		In accordance with 89th. Infantry Brigade Operation Order No. 109 Battalion was relieved in YPRES Reserve - B and C Companies in the Barracks by two Companies of 2nd. Battn. Yorks. Regt, and A and D Companies in their positions by two Companies of 2nd. Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers.		O.O. 143 App. 818

NESTON.

SOLDIERS MISSING.—Mrs. Mellor, of High-st., has received news from the War Office that her son, Pte. J. Mellor, is missing. He joined the 13th Cheshires, and had been wounded twice. This is the second son Mrs. Mellor has lost in the war. The sympathy of the district is extended to her.—The parents of Pte. John

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 8 June 1918

Following the report of the death of James Mellor in the *Chester Chronicle* of 30 March 1918, this somewhat confused report appeared some nine weeks later. In addition to reporting that he was missing - in fact he died on 5 June 1917 - it states, incorrectly, that James had joined the Cheshire Regiment. The report states also that Ann Mellor lost another son in the war although no evidence has been found of this.

James' war grave headstone, together with many others, in the Railway Dugouts Cemetery is inscribed at the top: 'Known to be buried in this Cemetery' because, especially in the summer of 1917, a considerable number of the burials were obliterated by shell fire.

Although James Mellor was, according to the newspaper reports in July 1917, known to

have died, it appears that his mother wasn't *officially* notified of his death until March 1918 - this being some 8 months later!

NESTON SOLDIER FALLS IN ACTION.—Mrs. Mellor, of High-st., Neston, has been notified of the death of her son in action. This young soldier, who was only 25 years of age, enlisted in the King's Liverpool at the outbreak of war. He was wounded on June 4th at Messines Ridge, and died on June 5th. A memorial service was held at the Parish Church in memory of the above soldier, the curate, the Rev. H. Harris, conducted the service. The Shepherds Club, of whom deceased was a member, walked to the Church, with their crooks draped in black as a tribute to their fallen comrade.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 30 March 1918

TOLL OF THE WAR.—A recent battle has brought sorrow to several Neston homes, especially to that of Mrs. Dayas, whose youngest son, Richard, has laid down his life. Mrs. Ann Mellor has also heard of the death of her youngest son, James Mellor, though this is not official. The news was conveyed in a letter from a friend, who stated that he saw him killed and helped to bury him. Both of these young men were exceedingly well known in this neighbourhood, and were among the first to offer their services to their King and country. Pte

Cheshire Observer - Saturday 23 June 1917

The Battle of Messines (7 - 14 June 1917) was an offensive conducted by the British Second Army, under the command of General Sir Herbert Plumer, on the Western Front near the village of Messines in Belgian West Flanders, south of Ypres. The Nivelle offensive in April and May had failed to achieve its more ambitious aims and this had resulted in the demoralisation of French troops and the dislocation of the Anglo-French strategy for 1917.

The offensive at Messines forced the German Army to move reserves to Flanders from the Arras and Aisne fronts, which relieved pressure on the French Army. The tactical objective of the attack at Messines was to capture the German defences on the ridge, which ran from Ploegsteert ("Plugstreet") Wood in the south through Messines and Wytschaete to Mt. Sorrel, to deprive the German Fourth Army of the high ground south of Ypres. The ridge commanded the British defences and back areas further north, from which the British intended to conduct the "Northern Operation", to advance to Passchendaele Ridge, then capture the Belgian coast up to the Dutch frontier.

Campaign :— **1914-15.** (A) Where decoration was earned.
(B) Present situation.

Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Roll on which included (if any)
(A) MELLOR.	Lpool R	Pte.	23113	H/2/213/273.
(B) James.				
Action taken	MEDAL	ROLL	PAGE	Deceased.
	VICTORY	H/2/102	1238 B	
	BRITISH	—	—	
	STAR	—	—	
THEATRE OF WAR.	(1) France			
QUALIFYING DATE.	4/11/15			

(6 34 46) W234—HP5500 503,000 4/19 HWV(P240) K608 [OVERL.

British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

CWGC headstone commemorating James Mellor at the Railway Dugouts Cemetery [Transport Farm], Ypres, Belgium [Photo: CWGC]



I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the
 Mrs Ann Mellor High St Neston
 in respect of the service of No. 23113
 James Mellor
 in 1917
 Date July 9 1919
 Signature A. Mellor
 KING'S LIVERPOOL REGT.

Ann

Effects—Form 118A.

MEMORANDUM FOR
 The Officer in charge of **Infantry Officer Records,**
War Office, London.

Any further communication on this
 subject should be addressed to:
 The Secretary,
 War Office,
 Park Buildings,
 St. James's Park,
 London, S.W. 7.

and the following number quoted.
 E. 1444.137/1 (Accounts 4.)

WAR OFFICE,
 Park Buildings,
 St. James's Park,
 LONDON, S.W. 7.
 5th December 1917.

Will you please note that any articles of personal property now
 in your possession or subsequently received by you belonging to the late
 No. 23113 Private James Mellor 2nd Battalion
 Liverpool Regt.
 should be despatched to:
 Mr. Ann Mellor
 High Street
 Neston

Any medals granted to the deceased that are now in your
 possession or that may hereafter reach you should be disposed
 of to:
 the same person

RECORDED
 15 DEC 1917
 ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

38 I hereby acknowledge the receipt of a
 granted in respect of the service of No. 23113
 James Mellor
 Date 15/12/21
 Signature Ann Mellor
 LIVERPOOL REGIMENT

Mellor, James' mother, appears to have died
 in late 1927 aged 80 having outlived her
 husband and at least seven children.