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 (leper), 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 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:

Tennel Mellor Hens	L Mar 22	Historian	Do Statiston
Olum Do Wife	2 3/4 2	22	Do- Do-
Betsey de Sour	1	/	Dr. Dr.
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:

/ (B) 1	- Amaza mo	Males Females		
Moss St. 1	Jemuel Mellor	Hear man	35	- Fisherman	neston Cheshire
	ann Do	mar	35	- A - A - A	Do Do
	Betzy Do	Dan	/_/_	Scholar	Do Do
	William Do	Por	9	190	130 190
	George Do	Son \	5	Do	130 130
	Comtly Do	Daw	3	. Do	Do Do
,	ct) – Cross Street, No	eston			
Lemuel Mel	lor 35	5 fi	ishermar	า	born Neston
Ann	35	5			born Neston
Betsy	11	L			born Neston
William	g)			born Neston
George	5	5			born Neston
Emily	3	3			born Neston

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

Connel Declen	ttead.	90	V	<u> </u>	Fredun.		×	Greston Chashing
William 50	-			1	970		×	70
Simuel 5	<u> </u>				The same			* ***
George 50			X	_	- Fichesteran		X	77
Dellen 5	- Church	<u></u>		X	Medal			
Red or	Colorado :	,		X 1	- Rholak	_		. 37
Lemuel Mel	lor		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:

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	see 8 20 /s	Lasherfucew_	ч	4	_ di	to
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Sames do S	0 . 1	ut Selveb			de	do
Horaco do Can	11 1	do		_	do	26
buil &	des 3 14	v · /		_	de	to
1901 census (extract) –	High Street, Neston					
Ann Mellor	51	widow, houseke	eper		born I	Neston
William	28	fisherman			born I	Veston
George	25	fisherman			born I	Veston
Lemuel	20	fisherman			born I	Veston
John	12				born I	Veston
James	9				born I	Veston
Florence	14				born I	Neston

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

The contents of the Schedule will be treu	led as confiden	dial. Strict ea	re will be tak	on that no	informa	ition is	disclo	sed with regard than the prepar	to individuation of Sta	cal persons. Ti utistical Tables.	e returns are no	t to be use	d for proof of	age, as in e	connection with Old A	ige Pension	s, or for any o	ther purpose
NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family,	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.	PART	CULARS .	s to MARI	BLACE.				PROPESS. of Persons ag	ION or OCCUPATIO	H wards.			BIRTHPLAC of every pers	E	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Fereign Country.	INFIRMIT
f every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant,	130	For Infante		State, i	for each Ma ed on this S number	chedule,	man the	Per	sonal Occupat	ion.	Industry or Ser which worker is	vice with ronnected.	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account	Whreher Working at Home.	(1) If born in the Undown, write the r County, and Town	nited King-	Sinto whether :	
who (1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or (2) arrived in this dwelling on the menting of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere. to one else must be included. for order of esteting games see Examples on become of Schedals.)	State whether "Head," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other lackative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant,"	unifer one year state the age in months as "unifer one month," cic. Ages of Maios. Femalts.	Write "Single," "Married," "Wilower," or "Wilower," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards,	Completed years the present histrange has lasted. If less than one year write "maler ees,"	Children prese (It no c alive wri Co	born all nt Macris children I te "Nom- lama 7).	laro in	Profession, If engaged in a particular kir made or Man be clearly inc	Trade, Manufa any Trade of d of work du- erial worked licuted.	precise branch of cture, &c. Manufacture, the ne, and the Article or dealt in should Examples on back	This question shally be answered the business car the employer, clearly shown in the question in answered here. We sater people for want in private same if employed by a (Government, Mustate what hely, (See Instruction 9 piles on back of it	n Cal. 10 red not be Demostic Ser- loyment, partice body simpel, etc.)	Write opposite the name of such person engaged in any Trade or Industry, (1) "Employer" (that is respleying persons other than demestic servants), or (2) "Worker" (that is working for as mapleyer), or (3) "Uwen Account (that is neither employing others now working for a more working for a	Write Go needs—An Hone- cipwein the near of each person or carrying on Trade or Industry at Lorne.	(2) If lorn in any of the British Em the name of the I Colony, etc., as Province or Stant (2) If lorn in a Foreig write the name of a (1) If born at sea, write Korr.—In the case born elsewhere than in Wales, state whether "I" "Visitor" in this Count	ber part of pire, write Dependency, and of the a. on Country, the Country. "At Sea." of persons England or Resident or	ge." (2) "Naturalised British sub- ject," giving year of natu- ralisation. Or (3) H of foreign nationalisy, state whether ""French," "Qerman," "Russian," etc.	Deaf," or " and Dumb," (2) " Totally Bit (3) " Lunatic or " Fe, minded," state the infire opposite that son's name, the age at he or she bee
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1911 census (co	_	ed) –	Pyke	s W	eint	t, B	ric	lge Sti	eet					- 1				
Ann Mell	or				64				wid	ow						bo	rn Ne	ston
George					35				fish	erman	on ow	n ac	count			bo	rn Ne	ston
John					21				fish	erman	on ow	n ac	count	<u>.</u>		bo	rn Ne	ston

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 <i>may</i> have married Louisa Peers at St Bartholomew's
J	•	Church, Thurstaston, in mid-1929 and <i>ma</i> y 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.
-	•	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

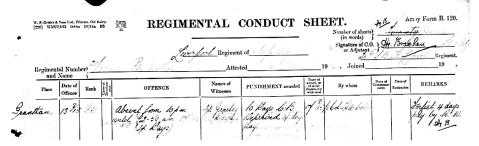
Richard Harry Thomas Florence	baptised 28 November 1883 baptised 28 November 1883 baptised 28 November 1883 baptised 7 May 1886	born 25 November nothing known b	buried 24 August 1886 aged 2.
riorence	Superseu / May 1000	Trocking Kilowit S	Cyona 1301.
John	born 14 June 1889 baptised 14 July 1889	New Street at New When he was a land father was stone they were record Liverpool Road, and have had five entry is redacted 19 August 1920), February 1933).	a Smith, 20 (born 19 November 1899), of eston Parish Church on 21 February 1920 abourer, 30, of High Street. Georgina's mason Miles Smith. In the 1939 Register ded as living at 'Fryer's Bungalow', and John was a builder's labourer. They be children and, in 1939 (one line of the l), two were still at home: John M (born iron foundry labourer; William (born 17 John died in mid-1957 aged 67.
James	baptised 20 May 1892	died of war injur account.	ies 5 June 1917 - the subject of this

James Mellor enlisted for the 20th Battalion King's (Liverpool Regiment) in Liverpool on 10 November 1914 when his age was recorded as 22 and his occupation was given as fisherman.

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 Prescot 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



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

Page | 808

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.

Ste Me	10 fullet 26/2/15	2/3/15	Sylvi.
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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:

				m C. 2118.
Summari and the	es are cor	ntained i nual resp	aries and Intelligence n F. S. Regs., Part II. ectively. Title pages (Erase heading not required.)	
Place	JUNE	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
YPRES. (Ref.Map BELGIUM, Sheet 28 NW. 1/20,000).	lst.		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 10.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 lachrimator 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.	У
-	4th.		Hostile artillery fairly active all day. Usual working parties supplied.	- 34
	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.	The same
	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 objectiv 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.	es
	8th.		No enemy retaliation on YPRES. In accordance with 89th. Infantry Brigade Operation Order No. log 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. Asya, W. Wagraj Morto, 730000 816 D. D. & L. L. E. Form (2.1181).	0.0.143 app. XIX

NESTON.

SOLDIERS MISSING.—Mrs. Mellor, of Highst., 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.

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

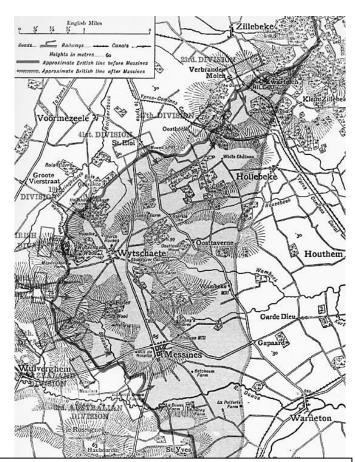
Cheshire Observer - Saturday 23 June 1917

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 30 March 1918

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.

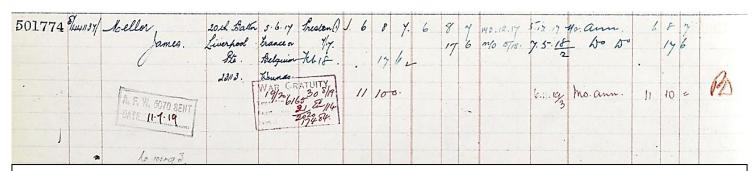
The Second Army contained five corps, of which three conducted the attack and two remained on the northern flank, not engaged in the main operation; the XIV Corps was available in General Headquarters reserve ("GHQ reserve"). The German Fourth Army divisions of *Gruppe Wijtschate* ("Group Wytschaete") held the ridge, which were later reinforced by a division from Gruppe *Ypern*. The battle began with the detonation of 19 mines, which devastated the German front line defences, followed by a creeping barrage 700 yards (640 m) deep, covering the British troops as they secured the ridge, with support from tanks, cavalry patrols and aircraft. The effectiveness of the British mines, barrages and bombardments was improved by advances in artillery survey, flash-spotting and centralised control of artillery from the Second Army headquarters. British attacks from 8 - 14



The Battle of Messines: lines before and after the battle, June 1917. [Source: http://www.1914-1918.net/maps.htm]

June advanced the front line beyond the former German Sehnen (Oosttaverne) line.

The Battle of Messines was a prelude to the much larger Third Battle of Ypres campaign, the preliminary bombardment for which began on 11 July 1917.

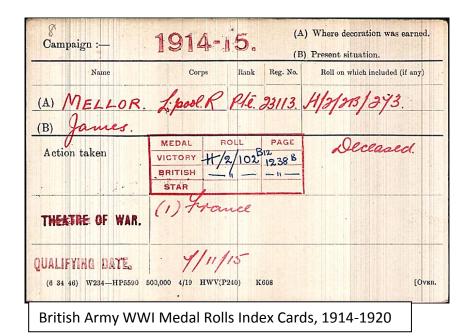


Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

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 James' mother, Ann, received two payments of outstanding wages - £6 8s 7d and 17s 6d – from the army and a War Gratuity of £11 10s. This, a total value of £18 16s 1d, is equivalent to a *labour value* (wages) of around £2900 in 2016.

This form also records that James died of wounds in 'France or Belgium'.

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.



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



Thereby acknowledge the receipt of the meston the Ann Mellor Agh ST Neston Lin respect of the service of 710. 23113

Par Mellow KING'S LIVERFOWL NEWS.

Date July 9 1919

Signuture A. Mellor

The Officer in charge of Palenby Ola Records,

WAR OFFICE,

Price Buttonson,

St. Lindon, S.W., 7

London, S

Ann

granted in respect of the service of 10 23/13

WERFOOD REGIMENT

POSTAL 15/12/21

Vi thout

Vastonine

Signature Ann Mellor

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