

66: Hugh Norman

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Hugh Norman

Rank: Sapper

Battalion / Regiment: 2nd/1st Cheshire Field Coy. Royal Engineers

Service Number: 852

Date of Death: 02 March 1916

Age at Death: 24

Buried / Commemorated at: Cairo War Cemetery, Cairo, Al Qahirah, Egypt

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of Thomas Henry and Martha Norman of Mellock Lane, Little Neston

Hugh ('Hughie') Norman was the son of joiner (Thomas) Henry Norman and Martha of Little Neston and his birth was registered in Wirral in the 2nd quarter of 1892 but he does not appear to have been baptised in Neston.

Henry Norman (he was the son of Neston stonemason Thomas and Catherine Norman) married Martha Garnett at St Mary's Church, Edge Hill, Liverpool, in late 1880. Although Martha had been born in Bunbury, Cheshire, she had moved with her family (her parents were agricultural labourer John and Mary Garnett) to Wirral; in 1861 the family was living at Storeton and in 1871, when Martha was 15, she was working as a servant at Thornton Grange.

Shortly after their marriage, in the 1881 census, Henry (21, joiner) and Martha (25) were living at 1, Newtown, in Little Neston. Walter, their first child, was registered in late 1881 but he appears not to have been baptised.

By the time of the 1891 census five other children had been born (Frank, born mid-1882, was not at home), although no baptismal records have been found:

Henry Norman	Head.	M.	31	Joiner	X	Neston (Cheshire
Martha do	Wife	M	35			Bunbury do
Walter do	Son		9	Scholar		Little Neston do
Frederick do	Son		4	do		do do
Mary do	Daughter		4	do		do do
Catherine do	Daughter		1			do do
Harriet do	Daughter		3 months			do do

1891 census (extract) – Little Neston

Henry Norman	31	joiner	born Neston
Martha	35		born Bunbury
Walter	9		born Little Neston
Frederick	7		born Little Neston
Mary	4		born Little Neston
Catherine	1		born Little Neston
Harriet	3 months		born Little Neston

By the time of the 1901 census the family had further expanded and had moved to Station Road in Little Neston:

Civil Parish of <i>Neston</i>		Ecclesiastical Parish of <i>St Mary & Llandanw</i>		County Borough Municipal Borough or Urban District of <i>Neston</i>		Ward of Municipal Borough or Urban District of <i>Little Neston</i>		Rural District		Parliamentary Borough or Division of <i>Neston</i>		Town			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
No. of Inhabitants	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES				Name and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	Condition as to Marriage	Age last Birthdays of	PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION	Employer, Worker, or Own account	If Working at Home	WHERE BORN		
		In Inhabited House	In Orphan House	With In- firmity	Building										
<i>180</i>	<i>Neston Rd</i>	<i>1</i>					<i>Henry Norman</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>Joiner & Builder</i>	<i>Employer</i>		<i>Neston</i>
							<i>Martha</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>Bunbury</i>
							<i>Walter</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>Joiner & Carver</i>	<i>Worker</i>		<i>Little Neston</i>
							<i>Frederick</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>Bricklayer</i>	<i>Worker</i>		<i>do</i>
							<i>Mary</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Frank</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Catherine</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Harriet</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Hugh</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Ellen</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Elizabeth</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Thomas</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>
							<i>Annie</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>1 mo</i>	<i>✓</i>				<i>do</i>

1901 census (extract) – Station Road, Little Neston

Henry Norman	42	joiner and builder (employer)	born Neston
Martha	45		born Bunbury
Walter	19	joiner/carpenter	born Little Neston
Frederick	17	bricklayer	born Little Neston
Mary	14		born Little Neston
Frank	13		born Little Neston
Catherine	11		born Little Neston
Harriet	10		born Little Neston
Hugh	9		born Little Neston
Ellen	7		born Little Neston
Elizabeth	3		born Little Neston
Thomas	1		born Little Neston
Annie	1 month		born Little Neston

Annie Norman died and was buried, aged 4 months, on 2 August 1901 at Neston Parish Church.

Henry Norman had expanded his business, now being recorded as a joiner and builder employing others, and was now established as a building contractor in Little Neston. It is believed that his building company, employing several close relatives, had been established in 1894; he was listed in Kelly's Directory of Cheshire, 1896, as 'Norman Henry, builder & joiner' in Little Neston. It is understood that his company built the sandstone cottages in Newtown (then Quarry Lane) in Little Neston where the Norman family, some of whom were stonemasons, had a quarry.

Henry and Martha Norman lost a second daughter when Harriet, aged 18, died on 14 March 1909 and was buried on 18 March at Neston.

By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved to Mellock Lane, Little Neston, and James had been born and baptised at Neston 5 September 1902. Hugh was recorded as a plasterer, probably working alongside his father:

1911 census – Mellock Lane

Thomas Henry Norman	51	builder and contractor (employer)	born Neston
Martha	54		born Bunbury
Frederick	27	bricklayer	born Little Neston
Mary	24	housekeeper	born Little Neston
Catherine	21	teacher (C of E school)	born Little Neston
Hugh	18	plasterer	born Little Neston
Nellie	17	Post Office clerk	born Little Neston
Elizabeth	13	scholar	born Little Neston
Thomas	11	scholar	born Little Neston
James	8		born Little Neston

Thomas and Martha had been married for 30 years and it is recorded that 11 of their 13 children had survived. However, the two children who died are known – Annie and Harriet – and only *ten* surviving children of Thomas and Martha are known.

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Walter Norman (born 19 November 1881), the oldest child of the family, had married Annie Pugh (born 18 December 1884) of Willaston at Christ Church in the village in mid-1907 and, in 1911, they were living with their two young children (Marjorie, 2, and George, 6 months - both born in Ness) at River Side in Ness. Nothing further is known of Marjorie or George. Annie was the daughter of farm labourer William and Cicely Pugh.

By 1911 Walter had established himself as a self-employed joiner, possibly contracted by his father in the building trade.

It is believed that Walter and Annie had at least two further children: Lucy (born 22 May 1914) and Annie Cicely (born late 1919 in Neston). At the time of the 1939 Register (29 September) Walter was the licensee and manager of the Wheatsheaf Hotel in Ness - in fact it is known that he ran this establishment from 1925 until his death, aged 65, in 1947. Lucy, unmarried, was living with Walter and Annie at the Wheatsheaf and she was recorded in 1939 as having 'household duties and cleaning at inn'.

Annie Norman snr died in late 1970. Nothing further is known of daughters Lucy or Annie Norman.

On 27 September 1915 builder Frederick Norman (31), Hugh's older brother, married Martha Swift (also 31) at Neston Parish Church. Martha was one of the two daughters of Thomas Bennett Swift, the butcher, and it was Martha's brother, Edward, who had married Mary Norman three years previously. The witnesses were Frederick's brother, Frank, and Martha's younger sister, Hannah Lilley Swift. The two families were now strongly united!

In the 1911 census both Martha and Hannah Swift were recorded as assisting their father in the butcher's shop on Neston Cross; this was located on the corner site which later became the NatWest bank (since closed), adjacent to the newsagency. It is believed that Frederick and Martha had two children, Frederick Maurice (born early 1920) and Vera (born 16 October 1923). Frederick snr died on 16 February 1931, aged 47 (his death was registered in Liverpool) and in the 1939 Register his widow Martha (born 29 June 1884) and unmarried daughter Vera (born 16 October

1923, typist at a soap and glycerine manufacturer) were living at 'Oaktree' on Mellock Lane, Little Neston. This was next door to the Builders Yard where Martha's brother Frank and family were living in 1939.

It is believed that Frederick Maurice Norman remained unmarried and he died on Wirral, aged 42, on 23 August 1962. He is buried in the family grave in Neston Cemetery.

Vera Norman married Arthur Allen Daly at Neston Parish Church on 14 May 1949 and they had a son, Allen Michael Daly, who was born in late 1951 and who died,



aged 40, on 22 January 1992. Arthur Allen Daly died in April 2002 aged 85 and Vera died on 16 August 2002 aged 78.

On 16 October 1912 Mary Norman (born 5 February 1887) became the first of Hugh's sisters to marry when she married Edward Binner Swift (born 1 September 1887) at Neston Parish Church. Edward, the son of butcher Thomas Swift of Neston, was a carpenter - he may have worked for Thomas Henry Norman - and both he and Mary were 25. The witnesses were Mary's sister, Catherine, and her father. It is believed that they had at least three children: Nancy (late 1913), Norman (early 1915) and Sidney Binner (mid-1921).

The 1939 Register records Edward (a joiner, house) and Mary living at 28 Port Causeway, Bromborough Pool. Nothing further is known and it is not known when Edward and Mary died.

On 4 May 1910 brick setter Frank Norman (22, born 10 March 1888, Mellock Lane) married Mary Jane Peers (22, born 24 November 1887, Mill Street) at Neston Parish Church. Mary was the daughter of engine driver Joseph and Mary Peers and, although both her parents had been born and lived most of their lives in Neston, Mary Jane had been born in Heswall. In the 1911 census Joseph Peers was recorded as a jobbing gardener living in Mill Street, Neston.

In 1911 bricklayer Frank and Mary Jane Norman were living in Little Neston with their 4-month old son, Harold (born 13 November 1910).

In the 1939 Register (29 September) Frank (a builder and contractor), Mary and their unmarried children were living at Builders Yard, Mellock Lane, Little Neston. In the household were Harold G (born 13 November 1910, a bricklayer), Frank jnr (born 5 February 1916, a bricklayer) and Joyce (born 2 August 1923), a junior clerk at a builder's. On 10 June 1947 Joyce married George Leslie Hough at Neston Parish Church and it is believed that they had two children, Janet and Roger.

Frank and Mary Jane Norman may have had other children including Elaine (born mid-1914), Eric (early 1920) and Thomas H (born mid-1928). One line of the 1939 Register has been redacted (as of March 2018) - this may be the entry for Thomas. Frank Norman died in early 1959 aged 70 but it is not known when Mary Jane died.

Catherine Norman (32, born 29 May 1889), Hugh's older sister, married Andrew Scott (28, born 16 July 1893) at Neston Parish Church on 3 October 1921. Andrew was recorded as being a coal factor / manager and he was the son of deceased farmer Richard Scott. Thomas Henry Norman, Catherine's father, was recorded as being a contractor.

Richard Scott, Andrew's father, had married Ruth Platt, the second daughter of Neston Colliery manager James Platt in January 1891. On the death of his father, Richard Scott took over as tenant of the 97-acre Ness Colliery Farm but, unable to cope with the responsibility, he committed suicide in June 1895 when he was just 27 leaving his young widow with two small children, Elizabeth (Lizzie) and Andrew.

Marriage solemnized at Neston in the Parish of St. Mary's in the County of Cheshire

No.	Place Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at time of Marriage	Father's Name and Residence	State of Publication of Banns
191	Third	Andrew Scott	26	Bachelor	Coal Merchant	Neston	Richard Scott (deceased)	Farmer
	1921	Catherine Norman	32	Spinster		Little Neston	Thomas Henry Norman	Contractor

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by Walter Platt or after Banns by Miss Platt

This Marriage was solemnized before us, Nellie Norman in the Presence of us, Nellie Norman



The wedding of Catherine Norman & Andrew Scott, 3 October 1921

From left to right:

Ellen (Nellie)
Norman

Ruth Scott
(née Platt)

Catherine
Scott
(née Norman)

Andrew
Scott

Martha
Norman

Elizabeth
Scott
[Andrew's sister]

Thomas Henry
Norman

Walter
Platt (at rear)

Andrew Scott and Catherine had two children one of whom, the late (Reginald) David Scott (born mid-1930), was a well-known Neston artist and local historian.

In the 1939 Register (29 September) Andrew (recorded as a coal merchant and manager) and Catherine, with son Andrew P (born 13 October 1923) are shown living at 'Maplewood', Bushell Road. One line of the entry, presumably with the details of David Scott, has been redacted (as of March 2018).

Andrew Scott died in September 1940, aged 47, and Catherine died on 9 August 1979 aged 90.

Walter Platt, shown in the wedding photograph, was the fifth child, third son, of Neston Colliery manager James and Margaret Platt and the brother of Ruth (Scott).

Walter married Nellie Pritchard, the daughter of Little Neston builder William Pritchard. He ran the Carr Mill Colliery, Lancashire, with his brother William Platt. Ellen (Nellie) Norman (born 17 June 1893) never married and she died on Wirral in early 1969 aged 75. In the 1939 Register she was recorded, as a builder's clerk, living with unmarried Sarah Connett (born 31 August 1881, private means) at 'Birch Hey' in Ness Holt. Sarah may have been born near Cockermouth.

Thomas Norman (born 22 May 1899) married Elsie Pollard (born 16 September 1898) at Christ Church, Willaston, in mid-1926 and it is believed that they had three children: Dorothy (born late 1927 ; John (born 4 August 1929) ; Thelma (born 21 May 1931). In the 1939 Register they are listed as living at 'Rock Cottage', Norman's Cottages, Newtown, Little Neston¹; Thomas was recorded as a building contractor and funeral furnisher.

The 1939 Register notes, in a later amendment, that Thelma Norman married (Barker) on 28 August 1963 although no record of this marriage has been found.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us, the undersigned, Frank Norman and Thomas Norman, carrying on business as Builders and Contractors, at Mellock Lane, Little Neston, Wirral, in the county of Chester, under the style or firm of HENRY NORMAN & SON, has been dissolved by mutual consent as from the first day of March, 1935. All debts due and owing to or by the said late firm will be received or paid by the said Frank Norman; the said Frank Norman will continue to carry on business at Mellock Lane, Little Neston aforesaid, under the name of Henry Norman & Son, and the said Thomas Norman will carry on business in his own name, at Rock Cottage, Little Neston aforesaid.—As witness our hands this 2nd day of March, 1935.

(192) FRANK NORMAN.
THOMAS NORMAN.

The London Gazette, 5 March 1935

James Norman (born 2 August 1902) married Margaret Anyon (born 12 April 1900) at Neston Parish Church in late 1925 and they had a son, Hugh (born 29 July 1926). In the 1939 Register, when James was recorded as a foreman joiner, the family was living at 'The Shop' on Mellock Lane. It is not known when James Norman died but Margaret died in July / September 1975.

Thomas Henry Norman died in March 1922, aged 62, only a few months after Catherine's marriage. Martha Norman died in September 1929 aged 72.

Hugh Norman enlisted in the Royal Engineers in Birkenhead and in 1916 he was in Egypt having moved there from Gallipoli; at the outbreak of WW1 Cairo became the garrison centre for the British army in the country.

Whilst in Egypt, after being in the army for only a year, he was assisting his section in erecting a road blockade when he was shot accidentally by a member of the London Regiment when a machine gun, which was being tested, proved faulty. Shot through both thighs he died whilst being transported to hospital.

¹ The Norman family owned a quarry in the vicinity of Newtown (then Quarry Lane), Little Neston, from around 1869 and members of the family had occupations in the quarrying, stonemason and building trades. Henry Norman's building business was established in 1894 and they used their land at Newtown and at the western end of Badger Bait (then Badger Butt) to build sandstone cottages in Little Neston. It was usual for building businesses to be involved as funeral directors, the carpenters/joiners making coffins.

It is known that Thomas and Frank Norman went into business together, as builders and contractors, trading as 'Henry Norman & Son' and that this partnership was dissolved in March 1935 with both brothers then continuing with their own businesses.

Hugh was serving with the 2nd Cheshire Field Coy. RE, part of the 53rd (Welsh) Division when he was shot and killed.

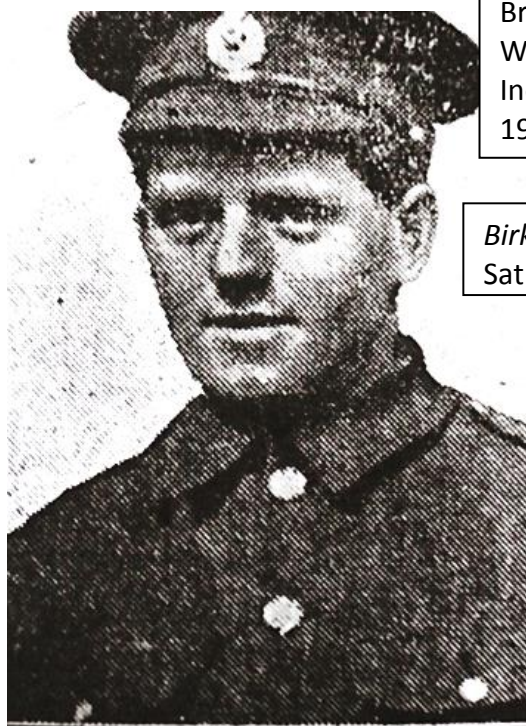
Hugh was amongst the troops who landed at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, on 9 August 1915 after which ill-considered military action and the dreadful blizzard of November had reduced the Division to just 162 officers and 2428 men (about 15% of full strength).

On 11-12 December the Division was evacuated to Mudros and then went on to Alexandria, Egypt, where it began to arrive on 20 December 1915. It was near here, at Minia (Minya - south of Cairo) where Hugh was killed accidentally.

Name.	Rank	Regt. No.
NORMAN	SGT	852
Hugh		
Medal.	Roll.	Page.
VICTORY	RE/10/8157	3683/
BRITISH	RE/10/8157	3683/
15	RE/20/8157	5338
STAR	RE/20/8157	5338
Dup Sub.	RE/21/8157	5422 cancelled. Aut. 6A. RE/21/8157
Theatre of War first served in	26	
Date of entry therein	9-8-15	

British Army
WWI Medal Rolls
Index Cards,
1914-1920

Birkenhead News –
Saturday 25 March 1916



SAPPER HUGH NORMAN.

Young Neston Soldier

Accidentally Killed in Gallipoli.

General sorrow has been felt in Little Neston by the news that Sapper Hugh Norman, of the 2nd Cheshire Field Co. R.E., 53rd Welsh Division, and son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Norman, has been killed through an accident whilst on detachment duty in Gallipoli. In addition to the official War Office intimation announcing his death, the bereaved parents have received the following letter from Major Harold E. Trubshaw:—"It is with the deepest regret that I write to inform you of the death of your son, which, owing to a terribly unfortunate accident, occurred yesterday, and at the same time to tender to you and the family the heartfelt sympathy of all the officers, N.C.O.'s, and men of the company in your sad bereavement. It has, I assure you, been a great shock to me losing one of my men in this way, as, of course, when we are under fire we have more reason to expect it. He was with his section on detachment duty when it occurred. I believe his section officer has written to you to give you more particulars than I can. We buried him to-day in the cemetery of the Greek Church at Minia, there being no Church of England available. It is a very pretty spot, and the English people who live here asked me to-night to tell you that, as long as they are here, they will always look after his grave."

One of the Englishmen referred to in the letter, Mr. Stanley Walker, has written to Mr. Norman giving him a description of Sapper Norman's funeral service and his resting-place. He has also kindly promised to forward two photographs, one of the funeral procession and one of the churchyard.

A more detailed account of the circumstances under which the young soldier met his death has been furnished by Lieut. W. Harwood Moon, who writes:—"I regret to inform you that your son, Sapper H. Norman, met with a fatal accident whilst carrying out his duties this morning. His section is in Minia, engaged in putting the place into a state of defence. The London Regiment were this morning practising the erection of a barricade across the main road, and preparing a machine gun for action. Your son happened to be standing about 50 yards further down the road, outside the barricade. The test had finished, and the man at the gun went through the unloading movements, but owing to the faulty action of the mechanism, a cartridge remained in the breech, and this was accidentally fired. The O/C troops at Saquila, the machine gun officer, and myself were present at the time witnessing the test. The shot hit your son, passing through both thighs. He received first-aid immediately, and everything possible was done for him. . . . Your son could not have suffered much pain, as I gave him morphia tablets at his own request, and the doctor injected morphia again on arrival. He was taken to the station en route for hospital within half-an-hour of being shot, but I regret to report that he passed away during the train journey, due to hemorrhage and shock."

The sympathy of the people of Little Neston goes out to Mr. and Mrs. H. Norman in their loss. Sapper Hugh Norman, who was only 24 years of age, had been with the Army for twelve months. He was very well known in Neston, Birkenhead and district, where he had numerous friends.

The headline in the Birkenhead News, 'Young Neston Soldier : Accidentally Killed in Gallipoli' is incorrect as the reporter was, presumably unaware of the location of Minia (approximately 152 miles south of Cairo on the western bank of the Nile River), and that the troops had been withdrawn from the Gallipoli area some three months earlier.

And have we done with War at last?
Well, we've been lucky devils both,
And there's no need of pledge or oath
To bind our lovely friendship fast,
By firmer stuff
Close bound enough.

By wire and wood and stake we're bound,
By Fricourt and by Festubert,
By whipping rain, by the sun's glare,
By all the misery and loud sound,
By a Spring day,
By Picard clay.

Show me the two so closely bound
As we, by the wet bond of blood,
By friendship blossoming from mud,
By Death: we faced him, and we found
Beauty in Death,
In dead men, breath.



"Two Fusiliers"
Robert Graves
(1895 – 1985)

