

Lance Corporal Samuel Whittaker

Regimental number: 2493

12th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

born: about 1892 - died: 16 April 1916

Lance Corporal Samuel Whittaker was born in about 1892 in Alsager, Cheshire,¹ the son of Samuel and Sarah Whittaker.² Samuel was born in about 1837 in Hassall, Cheshire and Sarah (probably the former Sarah Ann Jones) was born in about 1856 in Hixon, Staffordshire.³ Samuel and Sarah probably married early in 1878 near Stockport, Cheshire.⁴ They had five children, all of whom survived childhood.⁵ However, unfortunately, Samuel's father died in 1893⁶ - just a year after Samuel was born. Samuel had four siblings: Elizabeth (born in about 1880), Frank (born in about 1881), George (born in about 1884) and Myra (born in about 1889).⁷

Initially, after the death of her husband, Sarah worked as a dressmaker, working for herself.⁸ In 1911, Samuel, aged 19, was a commercial clerk for a fruit company. He and his family were living on Lawton Road in Alsager.⁹

Samuel enlisted in Stoke-on-Trent in the London Regiment.¹⁰ The 12th Battalion of the City of London Regiment, also known as the Royal Fusiliers, was formed in September 1914 and first landed in France in September 1915. Samuel joined the Battalion in France on 6 October 1915. Just six months later, he died of wounds received on the Front. In the spring of 1916, the 12th Battalion was station at Beaufort-Blavincourt in northern France.¹¹ The period leading up to Samuel's death was quite quiet for the Battalion.

Samuel died on 16 April 1916 at the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,¹² which was then stationed at Bailleul, about 85 kilometres away from Beaufort-Blavincourt.¹³ A total of 45 patients died at the 1st CCCS in April 1916.¹⁴

He was a member of the Church of England and was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Plot II, Row D, Grave 191).¹⁵ Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several Casualty Clearing Stations, including the 1st Canadian, were quartered there for considerable periods. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918, and occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when graves were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.¹⁶

The chaplain sent a letter to his mother, notifying her of his death.¹⁷ She was then living at Grove Villas in Alsager. Samuel had made a will, with probate to his mother. He left £329 16s 11d.¹⁸ His mother received the monies owing to him from the army after his death.¹⁹

Samuel was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914-15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).²⁰

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¹ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 15 July 2015), entry for Sam Whittaker, Registration district: Congleton, Sub-registration district: Sandbach, ED, institution, or vessel: 6, Piece: 3352, Folio: 17, Page Number: 26, Household schedule number: 161

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- ² "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Myra Whittaker, Registration district: Congleton, Hythe, ED, institution, or vessel: 6, Piece: 2847, Folio: 102, Page Number: 14
- ³ "1891 England Census," entry for Myra Whittaker; "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker, District: Stockport, County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 57
- ⁴ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," entry for Samuel Whittaker,
- ⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker, Registration district: Congleton, Registration District Number: 448, Sub-registration district: Sandbach, ED, institution, or vessel: 6, Piece: 21739
- ⁶ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker, Registration district: Congleton, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 233
- ⁷ "1881 England Census," entry for Myra Whittaker; "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Myra Whittaker, Registration district: Congleton, ED, institution, or vessel: 6, Sub-registration district: Sandbach, Piece: 3352, Folio: 17, Page Number: 26, Household schedule number: 161; "1911 England Census," entry for Samuel Whittaker 21739
- ⁸ "1901 England Census," entry for Sam Whittaker
- ⁹ "1911 England Census," entry for Samuel Whittaker 21739
- ¹⁰ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker
- ¹¹ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 August 2015), Regiment or Unit: London Regiment, Sub Unit: 12th (County of London) Battalion (The Rangers), 4th (City of London) Battalion (Royal Fusiliers), Division: 56th Division, Diary Entry Start Date: 1915, Diary Dates: 1915 Nov - 1919 May, 1916 Feb - 1918 Jan, Piece Description: Piece 2954: 168 Infantry Brigade (1915 - 1919) Piece Number: 2954
- ¹² "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 56
- ¹³ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁴ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁵ "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Whittaker, Samuel, Service No: 2493
- ¹⁶ "Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000047/Bailleul%20Communal%20Cemetery.%20Nord>; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁷ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 56
- ¹⁸ "England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966." *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker
- ¹⁹ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 July 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker
- ²⁰ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2015), entry for Samuel Whittaker