

Private 1st Class Matthew Lamb[©]

Regimental Number: 57749

5th Squadron, Royal Air Force

born: 1892 - died: 18 November 1918

Private 1st Class Matthew Lamb, born in St Antony's, Newcastle upon Tyne in 1892¹ into a very large family. He was the son of Matthew and Jane Lamb of High Hill Farm, St. Anthony's.² His father, a farmer, was born in about 1841 in Allendale, Northumberland and his mother, the former Jane Craig,³ was born in about 1853 in Wooler, Northumberland.⁴

Matthew senior was born as Matthew Lamb, but his mother married James Hudspeth in 1850.⁵ Immediately after her marriage, Matthew was probably living with his grandparents⁶ but, in 1861, he was living, as Matthew Lamb, with his mother and step-father in Allendale, Northumberland.⁷ Ten years later, he had moved away from home, but his future wife, Jane Craig, was working as a farm servant for his parents.⁸ Matthew senior, now using the name Hudspeth, was farming at St Anthony's High Pit in Byker, near Newcastle with his step-brother and step-sister.⁹

Matthew senior and Jane were married in 1873 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne¹⁰ and had fifteen children, eleven of whom survived to 1911.¹¹ Their children were probably: James (born in 1873),¹² Margaret Ann (born in 1875, but probably died at the age of 5, in 1880),¹³ Elizabeth (born in 1877),¹⁴ Jane (born in 1878),¹⁵ Matthew (born in 1880, but probably died a few months later),¹⁶ Margaret (born in 1881, but probably died the following year),¹⁷ Annie (born in 1884, but probably died at the age of 23, in 1909),¹⁸ Isabella (born in 1885),¹⁹ Polly (born in 1886),²⁰ Laura (born in 1888),²¹ Matthew (born in 1889, but probably died a few months later),²² William (born in 1891),²³ Matthew (born in 1892),²⁴ John (born in 1895)²⁵ and Ellen (born in 1897).²⁶

In 1881, Matthew senior (known again as Lamb) and Jane were farming and living at High Pit Farm, Alma Terrace in Byker, where they stayed for at least three decades.²⁷ By 1901, the family had reverted to the Hudspeth family name.²⁸ In 1911, the Hudspeth family was still farming at High Pit Farm and now their son Matthew, age 18, was also working on the farm.²⁹

Four year later, Matthew married Lilian Mayson on 2 October 1915 in Byker, Northumberland.³⁰

A year later, at the age of 24, he enlisted in 4th Battalion, A Company, 2nd platoon of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, as a Batman (Officer's Servant) for the duration of the war.³¹

When he enlisted on 8 September 1916, he was a "plater's helper" and worked for Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. Ltd., a company building armaments, ships, locomotives, automobiles, and aircraft.³² He was 5' 6¼" tall. His wife, living at 47 Canterbury Street in Byker, was identified as his next-of-kin.³³

On 9 October 1916, Matthew was transferred to the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and then on 23 January 1917, he was again transferred, this time to the Royal Flying Corps. He went to France on 3 March 1917, just days after the birth of his son, Matthew, on 1 March 1917.

In the Royal Flying Corps he served as a batman and was quickly moved around, first to 5 Squadron in March 1917, then to 16 Squadron in April 1917 and finally back to 5 Squadron five days later. He

transferred to the Royal Air Force when it was formed by the merger of the Royal Flying Corps with the Royal Naval Air Service on 1 April 1918.

On 14 November 1918, Matthew was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.³⁴ He died there four days later of influenza. He was buried the same day in the British Military Cemetery in Auberchicourt (Grave 18, Plot 1, Row B). The Canadian chaplain, W O'Neill Fisher presided and notified his wife of his death.

Sixty-seven people (soldiers and civilians) died at No. 1 CCCS in November 1918.³⁵ The work of the Centre had shifted from being primarily surgical to medical, to deal with the influenza pandemic. Influenza accounted for most deaths at No. 1 CCCS after the Armistice. In spite of the horrific number of soldiers killed in World War I, the influenza pandemic, which affected the whole world and scourged Europe in 1918-1919, killed more people than the war itself.³⁶

Auberchicourt, a village about 12 kilometres to the east of Douai, was occupied by Commonwealth troops in October 1918.³⁷ The Auberchicourt British Cemetery, which is just west of the village, was set up at the end of October and was used until February 1919 while No. 6, No. 23 and No. 1 CCCS were located nearby.

Matthew was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).³⁸

Matthew's father was called Matthew. He and his wife Jane had three sons whom they named Matthew. The first two sons died a few months after birth. Their third son Matthew lived to marry and have his own son Matthew, before giving up his life in the Great War.



M Lamb in Auberchicourt Cemetery
(Source: Author)

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¹ "British Royal Air Force, Airmen's service records 1912–1939," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 25 March 2015), entry for Matthew Lamb, Archive reference: AIR 79/534

² "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 25 March 2015), entry for Lamb, M., Service No: 57749 –

³ There are a variety of different spellings of her maiden name in the birth records of her children—Craig, Craige, Craigs and Craggs.

⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 March 2015), entry for Matthew Hudspith [*sic*], Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Registration District Number: 558, Sub-registration district: Byker, ED, institution, or vessel: 21, Piece: 30677.

⁵ "England & Wales Marriages 1837–2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 20 November 2016), entry for James Hudspeth, District: Hexham, County: Northumberland, Volume: 25, Page: 267

⁶ "1851 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 May 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Hexham, Archive reference: HO107 Piece umber: 2415, Folio: 96, Page: 10

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- ⁷ "1861 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 6 May 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Hexham, Enumeration district: 6, Archive reference: RG09, Piece: 3861, Folio: 71, Page: 10
- ⁸ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 20 November 2016), entry for Jane Craigo [sic], Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Sub-registration district: Byker, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Household schedule number: 248, Piece: 5107, Folio: 82, Page: 47
- ⁹ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 20 November 2016), entry for Matthew Hudspeth, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Sub-registration district: Byker, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 9, Household schedule number: 29, Piece: 5107, Folio: 33, Page: 6
- ¹⁰ "England & Wales Marriages 1837–2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 18 November 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, District: Newcastle upon Tyne, County: Northumberland, Volume: 10B, Page: 144
- ¹¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 26 March 2015), entry for Matthew Hudspith
- ¹² "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, James, Volume 10B, Page 144
- ¹³ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Margaret Ann, Volume 10B, Page 132; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 November 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 79
- ¹⁴ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Elizabeth, Volume 10B, Page 142
- ¹⁵ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Jane, Volume 10B, Page 144
- ¹⁶ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Matthew, Volume 10B, Page 132; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 November 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 110
- ¹⁷ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Margaret, Volume 10B, Page 134
- ¹⁸ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Annie, Volume 10B, Page 128; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 November 2016), entry for Annie Lamb, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 39
- ¹⁹ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Isabella Craigs, Volume 10B, Page 121
- ²⁰ Polly [sic] "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Polly, Volume 10B, Page 136
- ²¹ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Laura, Volume 10B, Page 129
- ²² "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Matthew, Volume 10B, Page 164
- ²³ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, William, Volume 10B, Page 172
- ²⁴ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Matthew, Volume 10B, Page 147
- ²⁵ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, John, Volume 10B, Page 157

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- ²⁶ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 18 November 2016) entry for Lamb, Ellen, Volume 10B, Page 185
- ²⁷ "1881 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 8 May 2016), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Archive reference: RG11, Piece: 5069, Folio: 70, Page: 33
- ²⁸ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Matthew Hudspith [*sic*], Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Sub-registration district: Byker, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 34, Piece: 4792, Folio: 94, Page: 21, Household schedule number: 131
- ²⁹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 26 March 2015), entry for Matthew Hudspith
- ³⁰ "British Royal Air Force, Airmen's service records 1912–1939," entry for Matthew Lamb; "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 25 March 2015), entry for Matthew Lamb, Registration district: Newcastle upon Tyne, Inferred County: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 51
- ³¹ "British Royal Air Force, Airmen's service records 1912–1939," entry for Matthew Lamb. Unless otherwise specified, all information about his military career comes from this record.
- ³² "Armstrong Whitworth," *Wikipedia* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armstrong_Whitworth; accessed 25 March 2015)
- ³³ "British Royal Air Force, Airmen's service records 1912–1939," entry for Matthew Lamb
- ³⁴ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916–10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 and 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 722. While the 1st CCCS journal reports that he was admitted on 14 November, his army service records indicate that he was admitted on 11 November.
- ³⁵ "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)
- ³⁶ "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918," (<https://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>; accessed 3 February 2015)
- ³⁷ "Auberchicourt British Cemetery," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/59509/AUBERCHICOURT%20BRITISH%20CEMETERY>; accessed 3 February 2015)
- ³⁸ "British Royal Air Force, Airmen's service records 1912–1939," entry for Matthew Lamb