

Private James Tinckler Whiley[©]
Regimental number: 276838
2nd/7th Battalion, Manchester Regiment

born: 9 January 1896 - died: 31 July 1917

Private James Tinckler Whiley¹ was born on 9 January 1896 and baptized on 31 August of the same year at All Saints Church in West Gorton, near Manchester, Lancashire.² He was the youngest child of James Tinkler and Mary Elizabeth Whiley. James Sr was born on 3 April 1859³ in Manchester and Mary Elizabeth (nee Pickford) in about 1861 in Nottram, Cheshire.⁴ They married on 19 October 1884 in the parish church of All Saint's Gorton⁵ and had four children: William (born in 1885, but died in 1890),⁶ May (born in 1887),⁷ Edith (born in 1889)⁸ and James.

In 1891, the parents, with their two daughters, were living at 4 Block, Hunter's Lane in Gorton.⁹ James Sr was an oil sheet and tent maker. By 1901, James Jr had joined the family and they were all living at 97 Forbes Street, West Gorton. James' 15-year-old sister Mary was an underclothing machinist.¹⁰ The family was still at the same address in 1911 and James Sr still had the same occupation, defined as an "oil sheet maker — i.e. covers made of canvas and made waterproof."¹¹ James Jr, age 14, was an office boy and his sister Edith had joined her sister May as an underclothing machinist.

James Jr enlisted in the Manchester Regiment in Manchester¹² in about January 1916.¹³ Eighteen months later, in the last days of July 1917, the 2nd/7th Battalion was stationed in Nieuport, Belgium. On 26 and 27 July, the battalion was subjected to heavy German shelling. On 28 July, German mustard gas shells shelled its bivouac, with only a few casualties. The shelling continued with the battalion headquarters heavily shelled on 30 July. Two Other Ranks were injured by the gas on the 28th and six on 29th. James may have been one of these, because he died of gas poisoning¹⁴ at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 30 or 31 July 1917.¹⁵

James was buried in Coxyde Military Cemetery (Grave Reference: Plot II, Row B, Grave 12)¹⁶ and his father requested the following inscription on his gravestone:

AT REST

Coxyde Military Cemetery (located near the village of Koksijde in Belgium) was about 10 kilometres behind the front line in 1917. Commonwealth troops had relieved the French forces in the area and the village was used for rest billets. Although the village was occasionally shelled, the cemetery, which had been started by French troops, was reasonably safe. "It became the most important of the Commonwealth cemeteries on the Belgian coast and was used at night for the burial of the dead brought back from the front line."¹⁷ There are now just over 1,500 Commonwealth graves from the Great War in the cemetery.

His next of kin, a friend, Miss D. Smith, who was living at 5 Woodbine Street in Moss Side, Manchester, was notified of his death by the No 1. CCCS chaplain.¹⁸ However, the monies owing to James from the army upon his death were sent to his father.¹⁹

James 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

James' sister May married Harry Eardley in 1911. In 1939, May and Harry were still living in Manchester and her parents, both old age pensioners, were living with them.²¹ James' father died two years later, at the age of 82, and was buried on 10 May 1941 in Manchester.²² His mother probably died in 1949.²³

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¹ James' middle name is spelled Tinckler on his baptismal record, but for his father, who had the same middle name, it was spelled Tinkler.

² "Manchester, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 July 2017), entry for James Tinckler [sic] Whiley

³ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Tinkler Whiley, FHL film number: 2113041

⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2017), entry for James Whiley, Registration district: Chorlton, Registration district number: 464, Sub-registration district: Ardwick, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 56, Piece: 23757

⁵ "Manchester, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1930," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Tinkla [sic] Whiley, Reference number: GB127.M434/1/2/1

⁶ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 July 2017) entry for Whiley, William, Registration district: Chorlton, Volume 08C, Page 797; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 July 2017), entry for William Whiley, Registration district: Chorlton, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 144

⁷ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 July 2017) entry for Whiley, May, Registration district: Chorlton, Volume 08C, Page 677

⁸ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 July 2017) entry for Whiley, Edith, Registration district: Chorlton, Volume 08C, Page 720

⁹ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James T. Whiley, Registration district: Chorlton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 54, Piece: 3173, Folio: 88, Page: 28

¹⁰ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Whiley, Registration district: Chorlton, Sub-registration district: Ardwick, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 089, Piece: 3686, Folio: 115, Page: 33, Household schedule number: 225

¹¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2017), entry for James Whiley

¹² "Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914–1919," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Whiley

¹³ Based on "War Gratuity Calculator" (<https://wargratuity.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>: accessed 18 May 2017); "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Whiley

¹⁴ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for Whiley, J.

¹⁵ The journal of the No 1 CCCS chaplains indicates his date of death as 30 July 1917. Some, but not all, other military records indicate 31 July.

¹⁶ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for Whiley, James, Service No: 276838

¹⁷ "Coxyde Military Cemetery," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 2 May 2017)

¹⁸ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for Whiley, J.

¹⁹ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Whiley

²⁰ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James While

²¹ "1939 Register," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 13 July 2017), entry for James T. Whiley, Ref: RG101/4450D/004/32 Letter Code: NJCN

²² *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=155229708&ref=acom> accessed 2 July 2017), entry for James Linkler [*sic*] Whiley

²³ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 July 2017), entry for Mary E Whiley, Registration district: Manchester, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 10e, Page: 138