

## **Private William Borthwick Hiddlestone<sup>©</sup>**

**Regimental number: 357042**

**Z" Company, 1st/10th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment)**

**born: 7 August 1897 - died: 28 May 1918**

Private William Borthwick Hiddlestone was born on 7 August 1897 at 4:30 a.m. at 5 Charlotte Street, in Langholm, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. His parents—John Hiddlestone and Davina Borthwick—had married in Langholm on 4 November 1892.<sup>1</sup> When their son's birth was first registered, he carried only the name William. Two months later, his middle name Borthwick—his mother's maiden name—was added to the registration.<sup>2</sup>

Both his parents were both born in Dumfriesshire—his mother in Langholm in about 1871 and his father six miles away in Canonbie, a year before—and all their children were born in Langholm or Canonbie.<sup>3</sup> The year after their marriage, John and Davina had a son, William.<sup>4</sup> Sadly, he died within the year.<sup>5</sup> Their next child was a daughter, Helen McKendrick (born in 1895). When their second son was born three years later, he was given the name of his late brother, William.

In 1901, William and his parents were living on the High Street in Langholm, where his father was a tailor.<sup>6</sup> His sister Helen was living with Davina's parents, William and Margaret Borthwick, at 5 Charlotte Street, which is where William was born.<sup>7</sup>

In the following years, John and Davina had three more children—Margaret (born on 1 April 1901),<sup>8</sup> James (born in 1904)<sup>9</sup> and Amelia (born in 1906).<sup>10</sup> By 1911, the family had moved to England and were all living at 66 William Street, in Hoole, Cheshire.<sup>11</sup>

Four years later, just over a year after war was declared, William enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force. He enlisted in Liverpool<sup>12</sup> in about November 1915.<sup>13</sup>

William served with the 10th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment)<sup>14</sup> and, at the beginning of May 1918, the battalion was in camp near Vaudricourt, in northern France. On 2 May, the battalion moved into the trenches. Four days later, it was relieved and returned to support positions in the vicinity of Le Preol. Four days later, the battalion was back in the trenches. Over the following weeks, the battalion, alternating between days in the trenches and days in support, saw periods of intense enemy activity and of relative quiet. The battalion commander was injured and evacuated to hospital on 13 May. William's final tour in the trenches began on 20 May, when the battalion relieved the 1st/7th King's Light Infantry. There were four direct hits by German "minnies" (trench mortar),<sup>15</sup> heavy gas shelling and firing from low-flying enemy aircraft until the battalion was relieved on 24 May. However, the shelling continued even in the support positions. On 25 May, there was heavy shelling during the day but, the following day, only one point—Lone Farm—was shelled and the rest of the Front was quiet.<sup>16</sup>

It is not known how William was injured, but he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 26 May with gunshot wounds to his left thigh. He succumbed to his wounds two days later and was buried the next day in Pernes British Military Cemetery France (Plot 2, Row D, Grave 9) with the Canadian chaplain R. K. Lambert presiding.<sup>17</sup>

Pernes Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.<sup>18</sup> William was one of 86 admissions to No. 1 CCCS on 26 May but, in

the whole month of May, a total of nearly 4,000 soldiers were admitted to this station and 115 died.<sup>19</sup> He was one of 41 soldiers in his battalion who were wounded or killed in May.<sup>20</sup>

William's father, who was still living in Hoole, was his next of kin and was sent a letter to notify the family of his son's death. William was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).<sup>21</sup>

Most of William's siblings appear to have stayed, for the most part, in Cheshire after the war:

- Helen married Robert Hugh Williams on 25 October 1918 in Hoole;<sup>22</sup>
- Margaret married Herbert Walton in 1927 in Chester;<sup>23</sup> and
- Amelia married Albert E Wilkins in 1938 in Chester. <sup>24</sup>

William's mother probably died in 1925 in Chester.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, William Borthwick, Reference: 839/58, Registration district: Langholm or Staplegorton

<sup>2</sup> "Statutory Registers–Corrected Entries," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, William Borthwick, Reference: 839/00 001 156

<sup>3</sup> "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 23 March 2018), entry for William Hiddlestone, Enumeration district: 5, Household schedule number: 18, Line: 23, Roll: CSSCT1901\_433

<sup>4</sup> "Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, William, Reference: 839/59, Registration district: Langholm or Staplegorton

<sup>5</sup> "Statutory Registers–Deaths," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, William, Reference: 839/31, Registration district: Langholm or Staplegorton

<sup>6</sup> "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 23 March 2018), entry for William Hiddlestone

<sup>7</sup> "1901 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 18 May 2018), entry for Ellen Mckendrick Hiddleston [*sic*], Registration district: Langholm, Archive reference: RG13, Piece: –, Folio: –, Page: –

<sup>8</sup> "England, Cheshire, School Records, 1796-1950," *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FG7Y-248>: 7 December 2017), entry for Maggie Hiddlestone, 01 Jun 1909; citing Chester, Love Street School, Record Office, Chester; FHL microfilm 2,299,119

<sup>9</sup> "Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, James, Reference: 814/25, Registration district: Canonbie

<sup>10</sup> "Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 17 May 2018) entry for Hiddlestone, Amelia, Reference: 839/65, Registration district: Langholm or Staplegorton

<sup>11</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 5 January 2018), entry for Bruno Whittle, Registration district: Chester, Registration district number: 450, Sub-registration district: Chester Cathedral, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 12, Piece: 21882x

<sup>12</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 30 April 2018), entry for William Borthwick Hiddlestone

<sup>13</sup> Based on "War Gratuity Calculator" (<https://wargratiuity.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>: accessed 18 May 2017); "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 30 April 2018), entry for William Borthwick Hiddlestone

<sup>14</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 30 April 2018), entry for William Borthwick Hiddlestone

