

**Private William Leslie Parnall©**  
**Regimental number: 203005**  
**8th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)**

**born: 1893 - died: 13 May 1918**

Private William Leslie Parnall (probably known as Leslie) was born in 1893 in St Ewe, Cornwall,<sup>1</sup> the eldest son of Richard Henry and Kathleen Parnall.<sup>2</sup> His father was born in 1865 in St Ewe<sup>3</sup> and his mother (the former Kathleen Jacobs), in about 1867 in Tregonay, Cornwall,<sup>4</sup> and baptized in Truro, Cornwall, on 26 November 1869.<sup>5</sup> Richard and Kathleen married on 12 November 1892 in the parish of St Ewe<sup>6</sup> and Leslie was born the following year. A sibling was born every two years after that: Raymond in 1895,<sup>7</sup> Ida Maud in 1897<sup>8</sup> and Norman in 1899.<sup>9</sup>

In 1901, the family was living in Polmassick, near St Ewe, where Richard was a cattleman on a farm.<sup>10</sup> Ten years later, they were living about 20 miles away in Restormel, near Lostwithiel, Cornwall, where both Leslie and his father were horsemen on a farm.<sup>11</sup>

Leslie enlisted in about October 1916<sup>12</sup> and served with the 8th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).<sup>13</sup> In early May 1918, the battalion was on the front line in northern France, near Lens.<sup>14</sup> It moved into the trenches on 5 May, where the conditions were difficult—it had “rained during the night & made the trenches in very bad condition, the soil being chalky.”<sup>15</sup> On 9 May, the battalion was completing preparations for an expected enemy attack. By then the weather was warm and dry. A couple of quiet days followed, but it appears that Leslie was wounded on 13 May. That day the 8th Battalion was relieved by the 1st Royal Fusiliers and returned to billets in Bully Grenay, but Leslie was probably not with his comrades. He was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 13 May with gunshot wounds to his back. He died the same day and was buried the following day in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 2, Row B, Grave 47) with the Canadian chaplain J. K. Tibbits presiding.<sup>16</sup>

This 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>17</sup> Leslie was one of 118 admissions to No. 1 CCCS on 13 May. In that month, a total of nearly 4,000 soldiers were admitted and 115 died.<sup>18</sup>

His mother, who was then living at 9 Parade Square, Lostwithiel, was his next of kin and was notified of his death.<sup>19</sup> His father received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death<sup>20</sup> and requested the following inscription be placed on his gravestone:

FOR HIS COUNTRY'S HONOUR  
HE NOBLY DIED<sup>21</sup>



**Lanlivery war memorial**  
Source: *Cornwall's War History Remembered*

Leslie 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>22</sup> He is remembered on the Lanlivery War Memorial in Cornwall.<sup>23</sup>

Leslie's father Richard died in 1930 and is buried in Lostwithiel<sup>24</sup> but, by then, two of his children had immigrated to Canada. One remained in England. Raymond married Dorothy M Parker in Cornwall in 1925<sup>25</sup> and probably had two children—Una, born in 1929,<sup>26</sup> and Joan, born in 1930.<sup>27</sup> Just before the Second World War, Raymond was living at 9 Parade Square, with his wife and daughter Joan.<sup>28</sup>



**Lanlivery war memorial**

Source: *Cornwall's War History Remembered*

It was Leslie's brother Norman and his sister Ida who moved to Canada. On 18 April 1924 Norman, a farmer, left Southampton and sailed to Canada.<sup>29</sup> Two years later, he was living in Mossley, near London, Ontario, when he married Gladys Evelyn Westall on 4 September 1926.<sup>30</sup> His witness was his sister Ida Maud. She had arrived in Canada a year after Norman—arriving in Quebec City on 17 May 1925.<sup>31</sup> Her parents had paid her way out to Canada. She had £10 in her possession but planned to work as a domestic in Canada. Norman and Gladys had children, including a son, Leslie William, born on 18 August 1927 and probably named after his uncle.<sup>32</sup> Norman died in 1976 and was buried in Saint James Cemetery in Clandeboye, 45 kilometres north of London.<sup>33</sup>

Leslie's mother Kathleen died in 1953 in St Austell.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 February 2018) entry for Parnall, William Leslie, Registration district: St Austell Union, Volume 05C, Page 113

<sup>2</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 16 January 2018), entry for Parnall, William Leslie, Service No: 203005

<sup>3</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for Richard Henry Parnall, Registration district: St Austell, Inferred county: Cornwall, Volume: 5c, Page: 157

<sup>4</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for William L Parnall, Registration district: St Austell, Sub-registration district: Mevagissey, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 5, Piece: 2213, Folio: 62, Page: 6, Household schedule number: 30

<sup>5</sup> "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for Kathleen Roberts Jacobs, FHL film number: 1596289

<sup>6</sup> "Cornwall, England, Parish Registers, 1538–2010," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Richard Henry Parnell or Parnall

<sup>7</sup> "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 February 2018) entry for Parnall, Raymond, Registration district: St Austell, Volume 05C, Page 110

<sup>8</sup> "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 February 2018) entry for Parnall, Ida Maud, Registration district: St Austell Union, Volume 05C, Page 99

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- <sup>9</sup> "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 2 February 2018 ) entry for Parnall, Norman, Registration district: St Austell Union, Volume 05C, Page 104
- <sup>10</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for William L Parnall
- <sup>11</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Leslie Parnall, Registration district: Bodmin, Registration district number: 293, Sub-registration district: Lanlivery, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 1, Household schedule number: 55, Piece: 13665
- <sup>12</sup> Based on "War Gratuity Calculator" (<https://wargratitude.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>: accessed 18 May 2018); "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for William Leslie Parnall
- <sup>13</sup> "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 February 2018), entry for William L Parnall
- <sup>14</sup> UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), Regiment or unit: Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment, Sub-unit: 8th Battalion, Division: 24th Division, Diary dates: 1915 August–1919 April, Piece description: Piece 2213/2: 8 Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) (1915 August–1919 April), Piece number: 2213
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>16</sup> "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 16 January 2018), entry for Parnell, [sic] W. L.
- <sup>17</sup> "Pernes British Military Cemetery," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11600/PERNES%20BRITISH%20CEMETERY>: accessed 13 January 2015)
- <sup>18</sup> "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=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](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=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G): accessed 15 December 2014)
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup> "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for William Leslie Parnall
- <sup>21</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 16 January 2018), entry for Parnall, William Leslie
- <sup>22</sup> "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 February 2018), entry for William L Parnall
- <sup>23</sup> "Lanlivery War Memorial," *Cornwall's War History Remembered* (<http://www.cornwallswarhistory.co.uk/maps/war-memorials-2/lanlivery/>: accessed 11 February 2018)
- <sup>24</sup> "Cornwall, England, Parish Registers, 1538–2010," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Richard Henry Parnall
- <sup>25</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for Raymond Parnall, Registration district: Bodmin, Inferred county: Cornwall, Volume: 5c, Page: 109
- <sup>26</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for Una Parnall, Registration district: Bodmin, Inferred county: Devon, Cornwall, Scilly, Dorset, Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 78
- <sup>27</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 9 February 2018), entry for Joan Parnall, Registration district: Bodmin, Inferred county: Devon, Cornwall, Scilly, Dorset, Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 74
- <sup>28</sup> "1939 Register," *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Raymond Parnall, Ref: RG101/6694G/016/36 Letter code: WALB
- <sup>29</sup> "UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Norman Parnell [sic]

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<sup>30</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1936," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Normal Parnall

<sup>31</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Ida Maud Parnall

<sup>32</sup> *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39557692>: accessed 7 February 2018), entry for Leslie William Parnall

<sup>33</sup> *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com>: accessed 06 March 2018), memorial page for Norman Parnall (1899–1976), Find A Grave Memorial no. [182125712](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/182125712), citing Saint James Cemetery, Clandeboye, Middlesex County, Ontario, Canada; Maintained by Cheryl Clarridge (contributor [47667766](https://www.findagrave.com/contributor/47667766))

<sup>34</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 January 2018), entry for Kathleen Parnall, Registration district: St Austell, Inferred county: Cornwall, Volume: 7a, Page: 132