

**Private Albert Norman Norrish©**  
**Regimental number: 334988**  
**1st Brigade, Canadian Garrison Artillery**

**born: 11 February 1898–died: 2 October 1918**

Private Albert Norman Norrish was born on 11 February 1898 in Wellington County, Ontario, the son of Thomas Andrew Norrish and his wife Catherine, née McIntyre.<sup>1</sup> Albert's parents were both born in Ontario—Thomas on 21 July 1861<sup>2</sup> and Catherine on 8 September 1862.<sup>3</sup> They married on 7 September 1887 in Wellington<sup>4</sup> and had seven children, all born in Wellington County.

In 1891, Thomas and Catherine were living in Guelph, Ontario, with their young son William George (born on 13 August 1890).<sup>5</sup> Thomas was a teamster. Catherine's mother and sister were also living with them. Ten years later, the Norrish family included five more children<sup>6</sup>—John Thomas (born in 1893),<sup>7</sup> Mary Ann (born on 14 November 1894),<sup>8</sup> Arthur Elias (born on 23 August 1896),<sup>9</sup> Albert and Laura Emlyn (born on 5 December 1899).<sup>10</sup> Their last child, Harland Easterbrook, was born on 26 February 1905.<sup>11</sup> In 1911, the family was living at 72 Bedford Street in Guelph.<sup>12</sup>

Just over three years later, on 4 August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany. Canada, as a member of the British Empire, was automatically at war also. There were five sons in the Norrish family—three enlisted to service in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. There is no evidence that their eldest son John served, and their youngest son Harland was too young to enlist.

The first to enlist at the very beginning of the war was the eldest: **William**. He was living at 97 Surrey Street in Guelph with his wife, Dorothy, when he enlisted on 25 Sept 1914 in Valcartier, Quebec.<sup>13</sup> William had married Dorothy Clarke on 31 July 1911 in Toronto, Ontario. It is not known why they married in Toronto—Dorothy was born in England and, just two months before they married, both William and Dorothy were living in Guelph. However, their marriage certificate includes a note to state that “The reason for procuring the marriage to be solemnized in the City of Toronto is not in order to evade due publicity or for any other improper purpose.”

William, a labourer in an iron foundry, enlisted in Guelph as a driver (regimental number 43759) in the 11th Canadian Field Artillery (CFA). He sailed for England in October 1914 and went to France in February 1915 with the 3rd Brigade, CFA. He remained in France until February 1918, but he was not well. In November 1918, when he was being assessed by a medical board in London, Ontario, he stated “. . . that he has been nervous and shaky ever since Oct. 1917, following concussion from shell fire. Now complaints of shakiness, unsteadiness, headaches, chronic cough of some years standing, shortness of breath and palpitation.” In March 1918, he was treated for shell shock and chronic bronchitis in a military hospital in London, England; then in May he was given a furlough back to Canada. He was eventually discharged from the military on 27 November 1918 as being “medically unfit for further general service.”

Albert's older brother **Arthur**, the next to join up, was nearly 20 years old and a clerk when he enlisted as a gunner (regimental number 334887) on 8 May 1916 in Guelph.<sup>14</sup> He went overseas with the 64th Depot Battery, CFA, arriving in England in August 1916. He went to France the following November and served with the 7th and 5th Brigades of the CFA, being appointed an acting bombardier on 21 October 1918. Arthur remained in France until mid-April 1919, returned to Canada on 19 April and was discharged on 29 April.

The last to sign up was **Albert**—six months after Arthur. He enlisted on 13 November 1916 in Guelph as a gunner with the 64th Battery, CFA.<sup>15</sup> He had been employed as a spinner in the cotton industry and was 5' 5½" tall, with a medium complexion, blue eyes and brown hair.

Albert left Canada on 29 April 1917 and arrived in England on 7 May. He went overseas to the Front in France with the 7th Canadian Siege Battery on 17 November 1917. His unit was absorbed into the 1st Brigade of the Canadian Garrison Artillery in March 1918; however, he was still identified as being with the 7th Siege Battery in the No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station chaplains' journal.<sup>16</sup> He was admitted to No. 1 CCCS on 2 October with shrapnel wounds to his chest, back and right arm. He died the same day and was buried on 3 October in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 8, Row A, Grave 70) with the Canadian chaplain W. Fisher presiding.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, France. The first burials in the cemetery took place in March 1917.<sup>17</sup> No. 1 CCCS arrived at the beginning of September 1918 and was stationed near Duisans for two months. As a result of the serious and urgent nature of the cases admitted to No. 1 CCCS, the death rate was high in October—a total of 83 deaths occurred during the month.<sup>18</sup>

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

Three of Thomas and Catherine's sons had gone overseas—only two returned. A few years after the war, in 1921, Albert's parents were still living at 72 Bedford Street.<sup>19</sup> Their unmarried son Harland was living with them; so too were two married sons, Arthur and William, without their wives.

**Arthur** had married Annie Mabel Reid on 12 May 1920 in York, Ontario.<sup>20</sup> However, when the census was taken in 1921, Arthur was with his parents and Annie Mabel (known as Mabel) was enumerated at her parents' home: 26 Albert Street in Guelph.<sup>21</sup> Arthur is shown as being married, but Mabel as being single. In 1935, they were living at 101 Surrey Street in Guelph, where Arthur was a truck driver.<sup>22</sup> Arthur died in 1965 and is buried in Memory Gardens, in Breslau, Ontario. Mabel died in 1990 and was buried with her husband.<sup>23</sup>

Thomas and Catherine's eldest son **William** was also living with them, as were his two sons—William (born in about 1915) and Thomas John (born in about 1919).<sup>24</sup> Their mother Dorothy had died a few months earlier. She died on 3 September 1920 at the Ontario Hospital in Hamilton of nephritis, chorea and pregnancy, with septicemia as a contributing condition.<sup>25</sup> This is an unusual combination of causes, but it is possible that she had complications of pregnancy that resulted in a kidney infection and septicemia (nephritis), which affected her brain function, leading to a movement disorder (chorea).<sup>26</sup> She was just 28 years old. William died in 1946 of trauma and a fractured skull—he was murdered. He probably died about 20 March 1946 in Guelph, but his body was only found on 17 August.<sup>27</sup> His killer, William Callahan, was convicted of manslaughter in September.<sup>28</sup>

## Find Body Of Missing Man Buried In Cellar

GUELPH, Ont., Aug. 17—(P)—City police today announced they had discovered the body of 54-year-old William Norrish, missing since March 20, last midnight. They said the body was buried under three feet of earth in the cellar of a Devonshire Street house where Norrish, a First Great War veteran, had been a roomer.

Police Chief Harold Nash said the owner of the house, William Callahan, 45, was arrested following discovery of the body. He is being held on a charge of vagrancy pending further investigation, the chief stated.

*The Lethbridge Herald*, 17 August 1946

Albert's youngest brother **Harland**, who was too young to serve in the war, married Doris Mary McMaster on 18 January 1929 in Guelph.<sup>29</sup> Like his father, Harland was a teamster. It is not known when he died—in 1972 he and Doris were still living in Guelph<sup>30</sup>—but he was buried in Woodlawn Memorial Park in Guelph.<sup>31</sup>

**John**, a dairy driver, married Kathleen Helen Reynolds on 1 October 1935 in York, at the age of 45.<sup>32</sup> In 1945, he and Kathleen were still living in Guelph.<sup>33</sup> It is not known when he died.

Albert's sister **Mary Ann** married Frederick John Templeman on 24 June 1914 in Guelph.<sup>34</sup> Nothing is known about his sister **Laura** after 1911.

Albert's parents both died in Guelph and were buried in Woodlawn Memorial Park—Thomas on 30 November 1939<sup>35</sup> and Catherine on 8 May 1945.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 13 April 2020), entry for Albert Norman Norrish

<sup>2</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 14 April 2020), entry for Thomas Andrew Norrish

<sup>3</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Catherine Norrish

<sup>4</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Thomas Norrish

<sup>5</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Wm George Norrish

<sup>6</sup> "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 1 April 2020), entry for Albert N Norris [sic], Province: Ontario, District: Wellington (South/Sud), District number: 126, Sub-district: Guelph (City/Cité), Sub-district number: 18

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Mary Ann Norrish

<sup>9</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Arthur Elias Norrish

<sup>10</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Laura Emlyn Norrish

<sup>11</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Harland Easterbrook Norrish

<sup>12</sup> "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 March 2020), entry for Albert Norrish, Province: Ontario, District: Wellington South, District number: 134, Sub-district: 46–Guelph, Sub-district number: 46

<sup>13</sup> "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>: accessed 11 April 2020) entry for Norrish, William George, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992–93/166, Box 7372 - 3, Item number: 550532, Digitized service file - PDF format: B7372-S002. Unless otherwise specified, all information about William's military service comes from this source.

<sup>14</sup> "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>: accessed 11 April 2020) entry for Norrish, Arthur Elias, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992–93/166, Box 7372 - 3, Item number: 550532, Digitized service file - PDF format: B7372-S002. Unless otherwise specified, all information about Arthur's military service comes from this source. There is some inconsistency in his CEF

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personnel service file about his date of enlistment and when he went to England. These dates seem consistent with other details of his service.

<sup>15</sup> "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>: accessed 11 April 2020), entry for Norrish, Albert Norman, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7372 - 3, Item number: 550532, Digitized service file - PDF format: B7372-S003. Unless otherwise specified, all information about Arthur's military service comes from this source.

<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 24 February 2020), entry for Norrish, A. N.

<sup>17</sup> "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org); accessed 7 October 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/>; accessed 17 June 2015)

<sup>19</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 13 April 2020), entry for Thomas Norrish, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Wellington South, District number: 140, Sub-district: Guelph (City), Sub-district number: 34, City, town or village: Guelph

<sup>20</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1937," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Arthur Elias Norrish

<sup>21</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Mabel A. Reed, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Wellington South, District number: 140, Sub-district: Guelph (City), Sub-district number: 34, City, town or village: Guelph

<sup>22</sup> "Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Arthur Norrish in 1935, Electoral district: Wellington South, Reference Number: M-4746

<sup>23</sup> "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Annie Mabel Norrish

<sup>24</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Thomas Norrish, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Wellington South, District number: 140, Sub-district: Guelph (City), Sub-district number: 34, City, town or village: Guelph

<sup>25</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1947," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Dorothy Pickthell Norrish

<sup>26</sup> Personal communication from physician

<sup>27</sup> "Find Body of Missing Man Buried in Cellar," *The Lethbridge Herald*, 17 August 1946 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 13 April 2020)

<sup>28</sup> "Highlights in the News," *The Lethbridge Herald*, 20 September 1946 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 13 April 2020)

<sup>29</sup> "Ontario, Canada, County Marriage Registers, 1826-1937," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Harland Esterbrooke Norriel [*sic*]

<sup>30</sup> "Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Harland Norrish in 1972, Electoral district: Wellington South, Reference Number: M-6170

<sup>31</sup> "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Harland Easterbrook Norrish

<sup>32</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1937," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for John Thomas Norrish

<sup>33</sup> "Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for John Y Norrish in 1945, Electoral district: Wellington South, Reference number: M-4809

<sup>34</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1937," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 April 2020), entry for Mary Ann Norrishe [*sic*]

<sup>35</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1947," entry for Thomas Andrew Norrish

<sup>36</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1947," entry for Catherine Norrish