

Lance Corporal Herbert Walter Helm[©]

Regimental number: 5/107A

New Zealand Army Service Corps

born: November 1881–died: 29 July 1917

Lance Corporal Herbert Walter Helm was born in November 1883 in Bristol, Gloucestershire,¹ one of five children born to Walter Stott Helm and his wife, the former Louisa Monk. They were married on 11 March 1875 in the parish church in Altham, Lancashire.² At the time of their marriage, Walter was living in St Mary's Newington Parish, London, and working for the civil service. However, he grew up in Lancashire—he was born in Padiham, Lancashire, in about 1852.³ Louisa was also from Lancashire, born in Burnley in about 1853.⁴

Walter returned to Lancashire and, in 1881, he and Louisa were living in Garstang with their three eldest children—all the births were registered in Garstang:⁵ Louisa Maud (born in 1876),⁶ Henry Monk (born on 29 August 1877)⁷ and Nora Stott (born on 17 December 1879).⁸

Walter was a “ride officer”—an official who patrolled the coasts looking for smugglers on behalf of the Inland Revenue department.⁹ His job may have required him to move around, because the Helm's next child, Herbert, was born in Bristol, Gloucestershire,¹⁰ and their last child, Walter Samuel, was born on 19 April 1885¹¹ in Waterloo, Liverpool, in Merseyside.¹² The family was in Great Crosby, Liverpool, in 1891 and Walter was a 1st class officer with Inland Revenue.¹³

In 1901, Walter was living at 2 Barlow Road in Keighley, West Yorkshire. He had moved there in about 1897 and was still at that address until at least 1913.¹⁴ By 1911, Walter had become a 1st class supervisor with the Customs & Excise department.¹⁵ All their children had left home by then.

Herbert immigrated to New Zealand, arriving in 1906.¹⁶ It is not clear where Herbert was living when he enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, but it may have been Whanganui, about 200 kilometers north of Wellington on the North Island. He was a farmer, 5' 7¾" tall with a dark complexion, blue eyes and black hair.¹⁷ He joined No. 1 Company of the Army Service Corps (ASC). The ASC provided food, equipment and ammunition to the troops, collecting goods from central depots, transporting them to the front lines and distributing them to the various units. It also helped evacuate the wounded.¹⁸

Herbert left Australia for the war on 11 December 1914. His company was part of the Gallipoli campaign at the beginning of the Great War and remained in Gallipoli and Egypt until March 1916, when it joined the Western Front.

During the company's time in the Middle East, Herbert was injured and sent to hospital in Ismailia, Egypt, on 4 February 1916. He returned to his unit just over a month later. Just nine days later he was injured again and sent to No. 2 Australian Casualty Clearing Station.¹⁹ He rejoined his unit just the day before the company embarked for France.

In May 1916, Herbert was promoted to lance corporal and, on 5 March 1918, was attached to the New Zealand Field Artillery as a driver. It is not clear where he was serving at the time but, on 24 July 1917, he was wounded by enemy aircraft and admitted to 91st Field Ambulance. From there he

was transferred to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with a bomb wound to his face.²⁰ No. 1 CCCS was stationed in Adinkerke, Belgium, just across the Franco-Belgian border, when Herbert was one of 604 soldiers admitted that day.²¹ He died of his wounds five days later and was buried in Coxyde Military Cemetery (Plot II, Row A, Grave 7) with the Canadian chaplain J. Tulley officiating.

Herbert was awarded posthumously 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). His death is commemorated on the Auckland Museum online cenotaph.²²

A letter was sent to his mother at "Holme Lea," Arnold Avenue, in Blackpool.²³ His father had already died—on 28 February 1916 in Blackpool. His mother died in Wellington, Shropshire, on 1 June 1933.

Little was discovered about the life of Herbert's eldest sister Louisa. In 1901, she was the only child at home with her parents and an art student, specializing in painting. Beyond that, nothing could be confirmed.

Herbert's older brother Henry also immigrated to New Zealand. He arrived in or before 1910 because he married Dorothy Grace Parker that year.²⁴ He does not appear to have served in the Great War, but he was enlisted in the army reserve in 1917, when living in Wanganui [*sic*] East, about 200 kilometers north of Wellington on the North Island.²⁵

At some point before 1936, Henry and Dorothy moved to Pangatotara, west of Nelson on the South Island. He was farming there when Dorothy died on 4 May 1936.²⁶ Henry died 20 years later, dying on 1 September 1956.²⁷ Both Henry and Dorothy are buried in Wakapuaka Cemetery in Nelson. They left four sons—Leonard, Herbert, Robert and Bryan.²⁸

Herbert's second sister, Nora, graduated from the University of London in 1898 with a B.Sc.²⁹ She was an assistant mistress in high schools in Durham, Liverpool, Shrewsbury and Loughborough, until she became a mathematical mistress in Wellington.³⁰ After the war, she was still teaching in Wellington and living at 45 Regent Street, with her niece, Dorothy, the daughter of Nora's brother Walter.

In 1939, Nora had retired, but was still living in Wellington, Shropshire. At some point in the following years, Nora went out to New Zealand to join her brother Henry in Wakefield, near Nelson.³¹ She returned to England in 1946³² and died in Malvern, Worcestershire, on 26 April 1980.³³

Herbert's younger brother, Walter, was a clergyman. He was educated at the Leeds Clergy School and ordained as a deacon in Carlisle in 1909. Six years later he obtained an M.A. at the University of Durham. Over the course of his career, he served mostly in parishes in Cumbria and Lancashire.³⁴ He married Dorothy Darling on 9 April 1913 in the parish church in Keighley, Yorkshire,³⁵ and they had two daughters—Dorothy and Elizabeth.³⁶



Gravestone of Lance Corporal H. W. Helm

Source: Auckland Museum

¹ “New Zealand army service records,” *DigitalNZ* (<http://www.digitalnz.org/>: accessed 16 May 2024), entry for Herbert Walter Helm. Unless otherwise noted, all information about Herbert’s military service comes from this source.

² “Lancashire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754–1936,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2024), entry for Walter Stott Helm, Register type: Parish register

³ “1881 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 May 2024), entry for Walter Stott Helm
Registration district: Garstang, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 4260, Folio: 18, Page: 29

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ “GRO online index (birth),” *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 May 2024), entry for Helm, Louise Maud, Registration district: Garstang, Volume 08E, Page 729

⁷ “Australia and New Zealand, Find a Grave Index, 1800s–Current,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Henry Monk Helm

⁸ “1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Nora S Helm, Schedule number: 271, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Oine, Registration district: 3551

⁹ “Roots Chat,” <https://www.rootschat.com/forum/index.php?topic=791973.0>: accessed 11 May 2024

¹⁰ “1891 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 May 2024), entry for Walter S Helm,
Registration district: West Derby, Sub-registration district: Crosby, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 3, Piece: 2982, Folio: 66

¹¹ “1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Walter S Helm, Line number: 18, Schedule number: 111, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Ntyk, Registration district: 473-1

¹² “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 May 2024), entry for Walter Stott Helm, Registration district number: 492, Sub-registration district: Keighley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 26, Piece: 26090

¹³ “1891 England Census,” *Ancestry*, entry for Walter S Helm

¹⁴ “West Yorkshire, England, Electoral Registers, 1840–1962,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2024), entry for Walter Stott Helm, entries for 1897, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1913

¹⁵ “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 May 2024), entry for Walter Samuel Helm, Registration district number: 4861, Sub-registration district: Dalton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 09, Piece: 25634

¹⁶ “UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890–1960,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 April 2024), entry for Herbt W Helm

¹⁷ “New Zealand army service records,” *DigitalNZ*, entry for Herbert Walter Helm.

¹⁸ “Supply and Administrative Units Page 2 – Army Service Corps,” *New Zealand History* (<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/supply-and-administrative-units/army-service-corps>: accessed 16 May 2024)

¹⁹ A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who did not soon die or could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital. (Casualty Clearing Station,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station: accessed 2 May 2020)

²⁰ “Search Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 September 2024), entry for Helm, Wm

²¹ “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/war-diaries.aspx>: accessed 26 March 2023)

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- ²² "Online Cenotaph," Auckland War Memorial Museum(<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com>: accessed 10 June 2024), entry for Herbert Walter Helm
- ²³ "Search Name Index," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*, entry for Helm, Wm
- ²⁴ "New Zealand, Marriage Index, 1840–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Henry Monk Helm, Folio number: 4389
- ²⁵ "New Zealand, World War I Army Reserve Rolls, 1916–1917," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 16 May 2024), entry for Henry Monk Helm
- ²⁶ "Australia and New Zealand, Find a Grave Index, 1800s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 May 2024), entry for Dorothy Grace Helm
- ²⁷ "Australia and New Zealand, Find a Grave Index, 1800s–Current," *Ancestry*, entry for Henry Monk Helm
- ²⁸ "Collections Search, Archives New Zealand," (<https://collections.archives.govt.nz/>: accessed 16 May), entry for Helm, Henry Monk, Code: R20145518, Box number: 151, Record number: 6034
- ²⁹ "UK, University of London Student Records, 1836–1945," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Nora Stott Helm
- ³⁰ "Teachers' Registration Council Registers 1914–1948," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 19 May 2024), entry for Nora Stott Helm
- ³¹ "New Zealand, Electoral Rolls, 1853–2010," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Nora Stott Helm, Electoral year: 1946
- ³² "Virginia, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1904–1963," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Nora Stott Helm
- ³³ "England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Nora Stott Helm
- ³⁴ "Search newspapers," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 16 May 2024), entry for Walter S. Helm, *Burnley Express and Clitheroe*, 14 November 1931
- ³⁵ "West Yorkshire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 May 2024), entry for Walter Samuel Helm
- ³⁶ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 May 2024), entry for Walter S Helm, Schedule number: 111, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Ntyk, Borough: Clitheroe, Registration district: 473-1