

Mevagissey Stories

Albert Henry Rowe was a private in the 4th Duke of Cornwall Regiment. He was born in 1900 and lived in St Austell. Before the war at a very young age, he worked in the gardens at the Heligan Estate. He enlisted at Truro on 8th November 1918 as he must have turned eighteen. Albert suffered pneumonia like symptoms when travelling to Ireland with the battalion for training and it is likely he succumbed to Spanish flu.

Charles Ball was a private in the 10th Worcestershire Regiment. He was born in 1876 and lived in Gorran Haven. Before the war he worked at the Heligan Estate and had been an agricultural labourer. As an older recruit he won't have enlisted initially, but by 1918 he was in France. On 27th March he suffered severe shell wounds to his chest and arm. He was taken to the Canadian Military Hospital at Etaples, presumably British facilities were already full. Despite initially responding well to treatment he would die on 3rd April. He was forty-two.

Charles Dyer was a seaman born in 1884. Before the war he worked at the Heligan Estate and later as a fisherman working out of Mevagissey. He was a member of the Royal Naval Reserve and in 1915 he was on HMS Charybdis. By December that year he was on a mine sweeper, His Majesty's Trawler Rosa working as part of the Northern Patrol. After this Charles was wounded and moved to a naval hospital at HMS Pembroke, though he then disappeared and was registered as a deserter. Shortly after, on 24th May 1918 his body was discovered in woods. He was removed from the deserters register.

John George Barron was a private in the 1st Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. Before the war he was a gardener at the Heligan Estate and enlisted shortly after the war began. His battalion were held in reserve as the Battle of the Somme began and on 17th July 1916 they moved through the town of Albert and by 19th they marched to Mametz. The next day they faced heavy enemy artillery and suffered several casualties. On 23rd the battalion were ordered to attack the German defences which proved to be disastrous. In an attacking force of over 600 men, 500 had become casualties. Over 300 were missing and would never be recovered, including John.

Leonard Warne was a sapper in the Signal Service Training Centre (Royal Engineers). Leonard was a keen gardener and before the war he worked at the Heligan Estate. By 1911 he was working as an engine turner, but soon after left to live in Canada. He returned to England at the outbreak of the war and joined the Royal Engineers arriving in France on 8th July 1915. During the summer of 1918 he was wounded and returned to the Military Hospital in Devonport. He remained there dying from the wounds received on 21st April 1920.

Percy Carhart was a private in the 1st Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. Before the war he was living at Trevilveth Farm, Caerhays, working as a farm labourer. He enlisted in Truro in June 1916 and his battalion arrived in France on 15th October 1917. On 30th October Percy and his comrades were carrying heavy loads up to the front line. On the way they were shelled with gas and high explosives. Over 70 men were gassed or wounded and eight, including Percy were killed. His body was never recovered. His brother Ernest also enlisted and returned at the end of the war with medals for bravery.

William George Perry was a private in the 7th Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. Before the war he worked at the quarry on the Heligan Estate. On 18th August 1915 he enlisted at St Austell stating that he had been born in Bristol. He died of wounds he received on 23rd June 1918.

William Robins Guy was a corporal in the 1st/5th Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. Born in 1896 he lived in Gorran Haven and worked as a gardener. He also worked part time at the Heligan Estate. He enlisted at the outbreak of the war and his battalion, originally a pioneer corps soon found themselves as a fighting force. At the beginning of the German Spring Offensive of 1918 the battalion were at St Quentin engaged in establishing defences and repairing roads. By 21st March they had been sent to the front lines to help stem the German advances. Following a short rest away from the action they were back in the front line at Calonne and once again faced heavy German assaults. On 17th April 1918 William was wounded twice before he was killed in action, though his body was never found.

William Samuel Hunkin was a seaman born in Mevagissey in 1892. Before the war he worked at the Heligan Estate and was a provisional seaman in the Royal Naval Reserve. On 2nd August 1914 the Reserve was called up and William joined HMS Challenger which sailed around the Cornish coast and took up station in the Bristol Channel. She then headed for the coast of Africa. It was here that William along with over 20 members of the crew were hit by an outbreak of dysentery. On 12th October 1914 William died of the illness.



Charles Dyer

