

## **Church Street West Methodist Chapel, Macclesfield Stories**

**Albert Barnett** was a Signaller in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion South Wales Borderers. He was born in Macclesfield and enlisted on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1914. He trained as a signaller and spent some time attached to the signalling school before being drafted out to Salonika, Greece in December 1917. At the beginning of 1918, the Allied troops in Salonika were prepared for a major offensive intended to end the war in the Balkans. The final assault began on 15 September 1918, the British being engaged in the Lake Doiran area, fighting the Bulgarians. The main attack started at 5.15am on 18 September after a three-day bombardment. The 7th battalion pushed forward almost a mile with great difficulty but the support to their right and left fell behind and they were exposed to machine-gun fire on both flanks. It is thought that no more than fifty men and one officer from the battalion returned to the British trenches, the remainder being killed, missing or wounded. The Bulgarians surrendered on 30 September 1918.

On 1<sup>st</sup> November 1918 it was reported that Albert was missing. His body was never recovered, and he was eventually presumed by the Army to have lost his life in Bulgaria (probably in Salonika) between 18 September and 15 November 1918.

**Harold Bellfield** was a Gunner in the Machine Gun Corps. He was born in Macclesfield in 1898 and before the war he worked as a doffer at a silk works. Initially Harold enlisted in the Cheshire Regiment (2895) before transferring to the Machine Gun Corps. He died 11<sup>th</sup> April 1917 Mesopotamia (Iraq) and was buried in Amara War Cemetery.

**James Barber** was a Private in the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion South Wales Borderers. He was born in Macclesfield in 1886 and before the war he worked as a silk bobbin carrier. On 31<sup>st</sup> August 1907 he married Mary Finlow at Park Green United Methodist Chapel, Macclesfield. At the time he was employed as a joiner. During World War One he enlisted in Macclesfield in 1916, initially joining the Monmouthshire Regiment (4361). He was killed in action on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1918 and was buried in Wulverghem - Lindenhoeck Road Military Cemetery, Belgium.

**Thomas Pedley** was a Lance Corporal in the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Cheshire Regiment. He was born in Macclesfield on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1894 and before the war he worked as a cotton weaver at Lower Heyes Mill. He was educated at St Paul's National School, attaining Standard V and on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1907 he enrolled at Macclesfield Technical School to further his education. He attended Park Green United Methodist Church and School, and held office in the Independent Order of Rechabites, of which his father had been a member for 42 years and was treasurer for 21 years.

In 1911 Tom joined the 7<sup>th</sup> Cheshire Regiment (Territorial Army) and was mobilised at the outbreak of the war. On the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> August, the battalion arrived off the coast of Gallipoli and the following day landed at 'C' Beach, Suvla Bay. Whilst serving at Gallipoli, Tom suffered two attacks of dysentery. The second proved to be fatal and he died on board the hospital ship HMHS Guildford Castle on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1915. He was remembered in East Mudros Cemetery, Greece.

**Thomas Rose** was a Lance Corporal in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion South Lancashire Regiment. Born in 1893 he worked as a silk dyer at a silk print works before the war. In 1911 his mother died and on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1912 Thomas married Emily Hughes at United Methodist Park Green, Macclesfield. He was working as a silk dyer at that time.

At the outbreak of World War One Thomas enlisted in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion South Lancashire Regiment. They were formed at St Helens on 20th April 1915 as a reserve unit to supply drafts to the other two battalions. They moved to Blackpool in the autumn, and then to Oswestry in early 1916.

On 8 April 1916 it was redesignated the 5th Reserve Battalion, and on 1 September it was absorbed into the 4th Reserve Battalion. In October 1916 the battalion took up front line positions between Wielje and Railway Wood, France. Thomas died on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1916 and was buried Regina Trench Cemetery, Grandcourt, France.

**Thomas Wellings** was a Corporal in the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cheshire Regiment. Born in 1897 he assisted in the family pork butcher business before the war. He enlisted in the Cheshire Regiment and was sent to the Dardanelles in August 1915. Surviving the Gallipoli experience, he was then transferred to the Flanders Offensive; here he was engaged in the attack on the German positions in front of the Houthulst Forest, during the Battle of Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres). Thomas died of wounds received on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1917; he was aged 21 years.

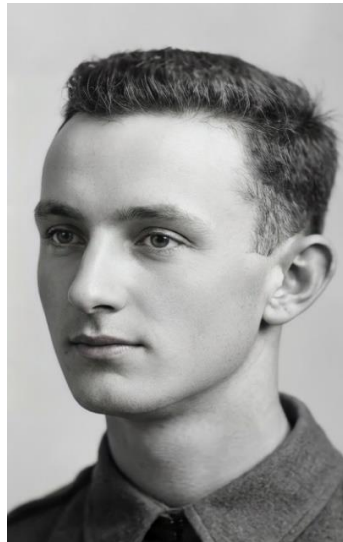
**Wilfred Brereton** was a Private in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Cheshire Regiment. He was born in Macclesfield in 1895. During the First World War Wilfred enlisted in the Cheshire Regiment. As part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, he was stationed on the Western Front. On 15<sup>th</sup> July 1918 the battalion were at Bambecque and on 20<sup>th</sup> July they were transported to Puiseux and on to Longpoint. During the following week the battalion found themselves under heavy shell fire and sniper attack. Wilfred was killed in action 24<sup>th</sup> July 1918 and was buried in Raperie British Cemetery, Villemontoire, France.



**Harold Bellfield**



**Thomas Pedley**



**Thomas Wellings**