

Albert Wanklin DCM (Wagon Repairer) 1882 - 1918

The Lickey Rail Group has an ongoing project to find more about the lives of Bromsgrove Railway Workers who served in World War One, 1914 - 1918. This is the story of Albert Wanklin.

Albert's paternal Grandparents were Sidemoor Nailmakers John Wanklin and Maria Lammas.

John was born 1830.

The 1841 census finds him age 10 living in Sidemoor and already working as a nailmaker.

Maria was born 1831. The couple were married 8 Apr 1849 at St John the Baptist, Bromsgrove.

The 1851 Census finds them Working as Nailers at 112 Church Lane, Sidemoor with a daughter Elizabeth age 4 months.

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=16.5&lat=52.34043&lon=-2.07118&layers=168&b=GoogleSat&o=100&marker=52.338569,-2.068841>

The 1861 census finds them both working as Nail Makers, Living on The Pleck, Sidemoor with 3 children -Elizabeth age 12, John 7 & William 4.

The 1871 Census finds them working as Nail Makers, Living on Sidemoor allotments with John 18, William 16, Joseph 9, Ann Mariah 6, Albert 3 & George 6 months.

By 1881 Maria has passed away. John had moved the Merthyr Tydfil and was remarried to Elizabeth Williams He was still working as a nailmaker, Albert then age 13 is also living in Merthyr. Elizabeth has 3 daughters Ann 16, Esther 11 & Maggie 7.

Albert's parents, John Wanklin Jnr. born 1852 (Q3 6C 230) and Mary Dipple born C1852. were married in Bromsgrove 24 Dec 1877 (Q3 6C 667)

The 1881 census finds them living at the Allotments, Sidemoor, working as Nail Makers with 3 daughters Maria & Mary age 2 plus Sarah H age 6 months.

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=16.7&lat=52.34309&lon=-2.06949&layers=168&b=GoogleSat&o=100&marker=52.341539,-2.069822>

The 1891 census finds them still making nails at sidemoor, allotments. They now have 8 children Maria & Mary age 12, Sarah H 10, Albert 8, Lizzie 6, William 4, Leonard 2. There is also a boarder Albert Nickless , Nail Maker age 34.

The 1901 census finds them still making nails at 41 Melbourne Road Sidemoor. There are 9 children - Maria & Mary age 22, Albert 19 (Carpenter), Elizabeth 16, William 14, Leonard 12, Harry 9, Beatrice 5 and Rhoda 3.

The 1911 census finds them still making nails at 42 Melbourne Road with William 24, Leonard 22, Harry 19, Beatrice 15 and Rhoda 13.

Albert was born in 1882 (Bromsgrove Q1 6C 381)

On 11 Aug 1896 Albert began at the Aston Fields Wagon Works as a Wagon Repairers Boy, on a wage of 5 shillings per week.

Albert was married in 1906 to Ellen Clara (Nellie) Laughner (Bromsgrove Q3 6C 740).

The 1911 census finds them living at 33 Melbourne Road, both age 29, with no children. Albert is working at the Aston Fields Wagon Works as a Wagon Repairer (The Works Employment Record shows he was earning 24/- per week).

In 1912 a son Clarence Albert was born in Bromsgrove.

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In 1915 Albert was called up. On 1 Apr 1915 he joined the 8th Worcestershire Regiment and after training, went to France in 1916.

Albert was killed in Action 5 Oct 1918.

Albert's remains were interred at the British Cemetery, Beaurevoir, Departement de l'Aisne, Picardie, France. The UK, Army Register of Soldiers' Effects, records that back pay of £48,12/- plus a war Gratuity of £22, 10/- was paid to Nellie Wanklin.

1919 Probate records record that Albert left an estate of £217 4/-, 1d the Ellen Clara Wanklin.

His name is recorded on a War Memorial Plaque in the church of St John the Baptist, Bromsgrove.



He was awarded the Victory Medal and the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

The record reads:

240026 Sgt. A. Wanklin, Worc. R. (Bromsgrove) (LG 21 Oct. 1918)

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty and consistent ability on many occasions when in command of his platoon in action. He has always volunteered for patrols, and his courage, cheerfulness and fine example have had a most inspiring effect on all with him.



In 1920 Nellie married her former brother in law Leonard in Birmingham (Q4 6D 823).

The 1921 Census shows Nellie at 33 Melbourne Road, Sidemoor, with Leonard, age 30 and Clarence (her son by Albert) age 8.

Prior to August 1921 a marriage to your brother's widow was not valid in law.. The Deceased Brother's Widow's Marriage Act 1921 was not passed until July 1921 finally legalising such marriages. It addressed administrative problems regarding war widows' pensions and helped relieve the problems of many widows and children struggling to survive. However, the couple's prior marriage in 1920 would still have been invalid. It seems that shortly after 1921 Nellie, Leonard and Clarence emigrated to Canada and later lived in USA.