

More than just a name...

Some of the possessions of **Wilfred Birchall** are still kept in his family after a century.

His work at Old Hall Farm meant he was in a 'Reserved Occupation' but a sense of duty prompted him to volunteer.

He joined the Gloucestershire Regiment which went to

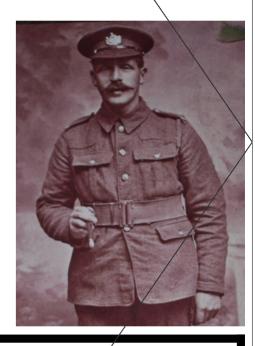


Sidney Allen
was killed in
Flanders - as a
stretcher-bearer
carrying wounded
comrades.

It happened in February 1916 to the 20 year old from Cross o'th' Hill. He was a farm worker at Low Cross Hill when he joined-up in September 1914.

France in March 1916 and his death occurred two years later when it suffered heavy losses in the final German offensive of the war.

He was shot in the stomach and died from the wounds, leaving his wife Alice, their 12 year old son John and daughter Lucretia, aged 10.



MALPAS.
PTE. JOHN MERCER-DIED AT SEA.

It has been announced by the War Offic that Pte. John Mercer has died at sea, 13th February, while on a voyabe to India. The details were not given in the official message received last week. He was attached to the South Wales Bonderers, and had been at Kinmel Park, and was sent out with a draft to India on 18th January last. He was popular with the Malpas people, and his death is much regret by all. Prior to leaving home he spent several years as a draper in the service of Mrs. Latham, Malpas, whose eldest daughter he married later and settled down in Sandbach, as manager to Mr. Wardle, where he won general esteem just as he had done before in his native town. As a member of the Malpas Institute he was appointed sec. retary to the Rifle Club in connection with / and which he filled with every satisfaction, inducing many men to join. He inaugurated shooting competitios for prizes kindly given by lades and gentlemen in the district, and which were keenly competed for. Added to his personal interest was his ability to shoot straight himself, and in this connection he carried off many prizes. He took quite a keen interest in horticulture, and was fond of competing in the local shows and not always without success. He was the roungest son

This is how the news of the death of **John Mercer** was reported.

His wife, the former Lillian Lathom whose family had a draper's business at The Cross, was widowed after only 15 months.

The couple had married at St Oswald's in November 1915 and moved to Sandbach for him to begin a new job.