

Lance Corporal Charles Edward Hall©

Regimental Number: 27749

1st Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry

born: 4 January 1898 - died: 22 May 1918

Lance Corporal Charles Edward Hall was the eldest son of Walter and Eliza Hall.¹ He was born on 4 January 1898 and was baptized a month after his birth, on 4 February 1898 in Wellington, Somerset. His father Walter (born about 1869 in Hillfarrance, Somerset) was the son of Isaac and Sarah Ann Hall² and Eliza was born Eliza Ann Vickery in 1872 in Wellington, Somerset.³ They were married in Wellington in 1893⁴ and had eight children. Their first child, Florence May, was born the following year.⁵ A second daughter, Ethel Mary, was born in 1896, but died at the age of 2.⁶ Their first son, Charles Edward, was born in 1898,⁷ just months after the death of his sister. There followed three more sons and two more daughters: Frederick William Vickery (born 1900),⁸ Helen Marjorie (born 1903),⁹ Walter Stanley (born 1905),¹⁰ Victor Frank (born in 1909)¹¹ and Lydia Mary (born in 1912).¹²

Walter was a millwright and the family was living at 35 Martin's Buildings, Wellington in both 1901 and 1911.¹³

Charles enlisted in Wellington, Somerset¹⁴ as a private in the Prince Albert's Regiment (Somerset Light Infantry).¹⁵ The 1st Battalion served in France during all of World War I.¹⁶ At some point during the war, he was promoted to Lance Corporal.

A history of the 1st Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry during World War I noted, "The expectation of a German attack remained throughout the summer [1918], with the result that the method of defence was not altered, and all three battalions of each front Brigade were in the line. ... On the whole this period was a fairly pleasant one, though somewhat strenuous. The thought of a German attack in force was always present, and its extreme probability gave rise to some anxiety. Extra vigilance was therefore imperative, and elaborate defence schemes came into being. Above all else, work was the order of the day, and every man had to toil to the full extent of his capabilities. ... The enemy, on his part, on the whole adopted a policy of keeping his guns quiet by day and showing considerable artillery activity by night. The Canal and its crossings in particular were regularly shelled during the hours of darkness. He also made free use of gas shells, mustard gas being the most commonly employed."¹⁷ It was perhaps during one of these night raids that Lance Corporal Hall was wounded near Censé de la Vallée in the Pas de Calais.

He was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with gun shot wounds to his chest on 22 May 1918. He died and was buried the same day in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 1, Row F, Grave 35). He was identified as a member of the Church of England and the chaplain, J. K. Tibbits, presided over the burial. His mother, who was then living at 18 Holyoak Street, Wellington, Somerset was notified of his death.¹⁸ His father received the monies the army owed to Charles upon his death.¹⁹

On 22 May, 284 soldiers were admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, bringing the total number of patients to 543.²⁰ In the whole month of May, there were 115 deaths at this CCCS – more than in any of the other three and a half months that No. 1 CCCS was in Pernes. The Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when the No. 1 and No. 4 CCCS came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.²¹

Charles was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²²

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¹ "Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1914," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 November 2016), entry for Charles Edward Hall

² "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Walter Hall, FHL Film Number: 1526638, Reference ID: 86

³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Eliza Ann Vickery, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 379

⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Eliza Ann Vickery, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 494

⁵ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Florence May Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 293

⁶ "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 17 November 2016) entry for Hall, Ethel Mary, Volume 05C, Page 292; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 November 2016), entry for Ethel Mary Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 198

⁷ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Edward Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 283

⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Frederick W. V. Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 274

⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Helen Marjorie Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 260

¹⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Walter Stanley Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 259

¹¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Victor Frank Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Inferred County: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 249

¹² "GRO online index," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 17 November 2016) entry for Hall, Lydia Mary, Volume 05C, Page 478

¹³ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Hall, Registration district: Wellington (Somerset), Sub-registration district: Wellington, ED, institution, or vessel: 05, Piece: 2271, Folio: 28, Page Number: 21, Household schedule number: 151; "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Edward Hall, Registration district: Wellington, Registration District Number: 304, Sub-registration district: Wellington, ED, institution, or vessel: 6, Household schedule number: 324, Piece: 14191 -

¹⁴ "Soldiers died in the Great War 1914-1919," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Hall

¹⁵ "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Hall

¹⁶ "The Somerset Light Infantry: A History," (<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/archives/sli/timeline.htm>: accessed 2 January 2015)

¹⁷ "A History of the 1st Battalion The Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's). July 1st, 1916, To The End Of The War," Major V. H. B. Majendie, D.S.O. (<https://archive.org/details/somersetinfantry00majeuoft>; accessed 2 January 2015), pg 86

¹⁸ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916–10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 and 2014), Record Group 9, series IIIC10, volume 4556, Record number 514

¹⁹ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 19 January 2015), entry for Charles Hall

²⁰ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=HITOFF&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G: accessed 15 December 2014)

²¹ "Pernes British Military Cemetery" *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11600/PERNES%20BRITISH%20CEMETERY>: accessed 13 January 2015)

²² "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 January 2015), entry for Charles Hall