

**Albert Percy Walker**  
**Private**  
**1<sup>st</sup> (& then 3<sup>rd</sup>) Battalion Suffolk Regiment**  
 Service no. **19104**



Date of birth	Date died	Age
Oct – Dec qtr 1895	15 May 1919 (pneumonia)	23

### Background: Albert P. Walker

Albert's mother was **Mary Elizabeth Fotherby** née Adams (1870-1955) of 44 Smith Street, New Balderton. Newark. His father, Albert Snr, died in 1895 aged 30, a few months before Albert was born. At the time of the 1901 Census, Mary was visiting her parents in Coddington:

**1901 Census:** Well Green. Coddington.

Alfred Adams: Maltsters Labourer. Aged 51yrs.

Elizabeth: Wife.

**Daughter Mary E Walker:** Widow. Visitor Domestic Cook. 31 yrs. b. Coddington

Alice L Walker: Granddaughter of Head of Household. 8 yrs b. Nottingham c. 1893

**Albert Walker:** Grandson of Head of Household. 5 yrs b. Coddington 1896

In 1902, Mary married Charles Frederick Fotherby (1875-1949) and had two further children. By the 1911 Census, 15-year-old Albert was a House and Garden Boy, living in Winthorpe (two doors from the suffragist Miss Josephine Gilstrap of Winthorpe House) with his mother, step-father Charles Fotherby, half-brother Charles Alfred (1903-1980) and half-sister Lillian May (1909-1998).

It was probably during Albert's time at Winthorpe that he joined the choir at St Stephen's Church Brough, thus forging a connection to South Collingham Parish.

At the time of enlistment in Sept. 1914 he was a labourer in lodgings in Coddington (according to his Attestation Paper). By 1915 his mother's address had changed from Home Farm, Ossington to Thorpe Grange, Boston Spa, Yorkshire, where she was perhaps working as a domestic(?) Her last known address was Smith Street, Balderton, Newark.

Mary Fotherby died in 1955 aged 85.

## Military History: Pte. Albert P Walker

**Service number:** 19104

**Volunteered:** 4 September 1914 at Derby

**Physical Appearance:** 5'5 ¼" height, 115 lbs weight, dark hair and hazel eyes

**Posted to France:** 29<sup>th</sup> June 1915

Albert's service record shows he enlisted with the Corps of Hussars (of the line) but later he transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Suffolk Regiment. Some four months later, on 18 January 1915, they landed at Le Havre as part of the British Expeditionary Force. The Division concentrated in the area between Bailleul and Hazebrouck, being joined by additional Territorial units. In 1915 they were in action in The Second Battle of Ypres and The Battle of Loos.

### LOOS

It is at the Battle of Loos, a large scale British offensive between 25 September and 18 October 1915, that Albert was wounded at Vermelles on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1915.

From there began a nightmarish time for the 20-year-old. He was transferred to the No 6 Casualty Clearing Station in Rouen where he was treated for a GSW (gunshot wound) to his right lung and spine. On 2<sup>nd</sup> November he was transported by hospital train and then boat back to England.

He was initially placed in the Lord Derby War Hospital in Warrington, then to the Royal Star and Garter Home, Richmond in Middlesex on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1917. The Home was established in 1916 to provide a "*permanent haven for paralysed and severely disabled men of the King's Forces.*" The average age of residents admitted in 1916 was 22 years.

You can read about its interesting history here: <https://starandgarter.org/about-us/history/>



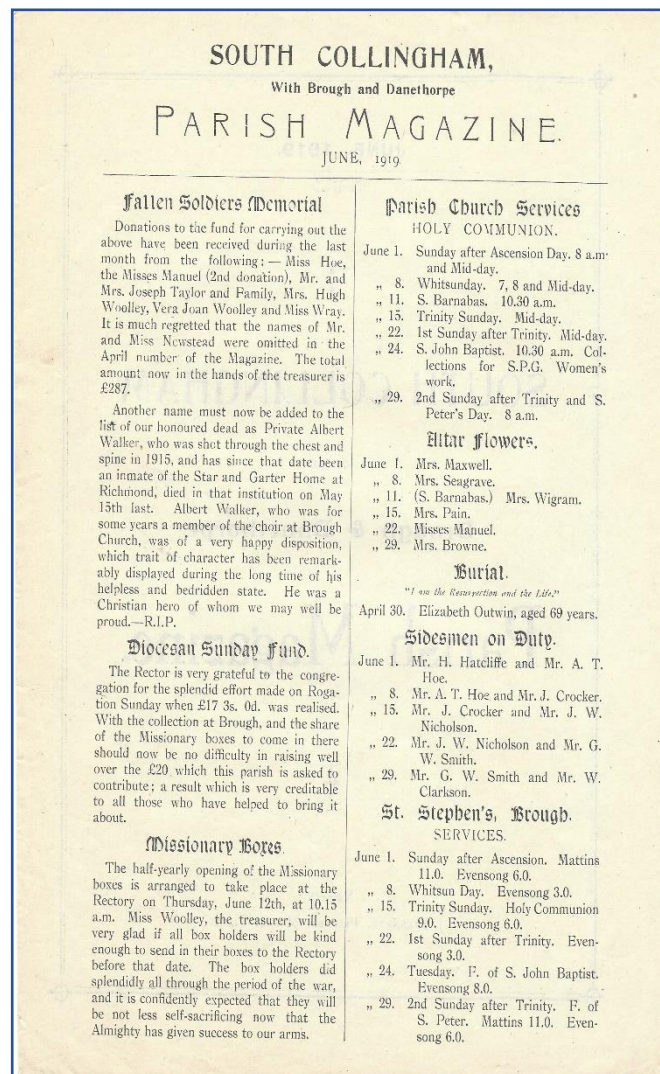
Above: Image of severely injured soldiers recuperating at the Richmond Star and Garter Home c 1916 with kind permission of © The Royal Star and Garter Homes.

Albert's condition was described as 'paraplegia' (paralysis of the lower body). His hospital report, now available to read online via Ancestry.co.uk, revealed the full extent of his wounds. The bullet was removed on January 6<sup>th</sup> 1916 but by then it was too late. Albert had complete paralysis of the lower extremities as well as deep bedsores on his heels, buttocks and hips, muscle wastage to his calves and thighs and double incontinence. How the young soldier held on until 1919 is a testament to his willpower, faith and the nursing he received. Albert died at the Star and Garter Home on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1919, of pneumonia. Albert's weakened state would have made him particularly vulnerable to chest infections. The Spanish Flu pandemic was sweeping Europe at the same time.

## TRIBUTES

Albert Walker's entry in the South Collingham Parish Newsletter by Rev. A Maxwell, June 1919 (right) reads:

*'Another name must now be added to the list of our honoured dead as Private Albert Walker, who was shot through the chest and spine in 1915 and has since that date been an inmate at the Star and Garter Home at Richmond, died in that institution on May 15<sup>th</sup> last. Albert Walker, who was for some years a member of the choir at Brough Church was of a very happy disposition, which trait of character has been remarkably displayed during the long time of his helpless and bedridden state. He was a Christian hero of whom we may well be proud. RIP.'*<sup>1</sup>



Albert's choir membership and work as a gardener locally might explain why Albert was included on the South Collingham Memorials as there is no evidence either he or his family lived here.

<sup>1</sup> Newsletters in CDLHS Archives Ref EC/B/51

**Pte. A P. Walker is buried in St Giles' Churchyard, Balderton, Newark and remembered on:**

**Balderton - St. Giles Church War Memorial as A P WALKER Pte. Suffolk Regt. Row 6**

**Newark Cemetery War Memorial as A P WALKER**

**South Collingham - St John the Baptist's Church – Parishioners' War Memorial as A P WALKER Private 1st Btn. Suffolk Regiment**

**South Collingham Roll of Honour as Albert WALKER**

*Right: Photo of Albert P Walker's grave in St Giles' Churchyard, Balderton. His mother's address on the grave registration was Smith Street, Balderton.*

*Source: Courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council Roll of Honour online database.*

*Photo by Murray Biddle*



## Sources:

*With thanks to Jeremy Lodge for his research 20 Aug 2104*

Sources Accessed by JL:

- ⦿ <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/rollofhonour/People/Details/21062>
- ⦿ <http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2750182/> : CWG Grave Registration Document, Graves Registration Report Form
- ⦿ <http://www.1914-1918.net/suffolks.htm> Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ <http://www.1914-1918.net/bat13.htm> Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ <http://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/324/suffolk-regiment/> Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ Private Correspondence with the Royal Star and Garter Homes

- ⦿ [http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/suffolk.gov.uk/Libraries%20and%20Culture/Suffolk%20Record%20Office/2011-09-06%2012%20SUFFOLK%20REG\\_B&W.pdf](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/suffolk.gov.uk/Libraries%20and%20Culture/Suffolk%20Record%20Office/2011-09-06%2012%20SUFFOLK%20REG_B&W.pdf) Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ <http://armyservicenumbers.blogspot.co.uk/2009/07/suffolk-regiment-1st-2nd-battalions.html> Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ <http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/suffolkregiment1-gw.php#sthash.ZSVEIYkm.dpuf> Accessed 20/08/2014
- ⦿ [https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=1st+battalion+suffolk+regiment+1915&espv=2&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=nKb0U4\\_oN8riO\\_KVgYgD&ved=0CGEQsAQ&biw=1002&bih=535](https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=1st+battalion+suffolk+regiment+1915&espv=2&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=nKb0U4_oN8riO_KVgYgD&ved=0CGEQsAQ&biw=1002&bih=535) Accessed 20/08/2014

#### Additional Information 2018

- ⦿ Ancestry.co.uk (census returns for details of Mary Walker's second marriage to Charles Fotherby and Pte. Walker's military service history and medical records) Please note Ancestry.co.uk is free to access for Inspire Nottinghamshire library members at Collingham and Newark Library
- ⦿ South Collingham Parish Newsletters held in Collingham and District Local History Society Ref: EC/B/51
- ⦿ Nottinghamshire County Council Great War Roll of Honour website
- ⦿ Thanks to Dan at British Military Medals for permission to use the Suffolk's cap badge image
- ⦿ Thanks to Cally Madden, Marketing & Communications Manager, The Royal Star & Garter Homes, for permission to use the image of the recuperating soldiers 1916



