

Albert John HOOPER

Born Dawlish, April 25,1878
Private 10723

Died 25 September 1915, Flanders, aged 37
Devonshire Regiment, 8th (Service) Battalion

Albert John Hooper was the eldest child of William and Mary Hooper and the grandson of John (1808-1876) and Elizabeth Hooper (1815-1896).

Grandparents

John Hooper was born in St Sidwells, Exeter, and is shown in the 1861 census as a Greenwich Pensioner and may have been a naval boatswain. Elizabeth was born in Bodmin. They are likely to have married ca 1840-50 but no record has yet been matched to them. They had lived at Park Hill, Dawlish (later Strand Hill) and it is possible that William Davey Hooper (1852-1885) was their only child. Their address in 1871 was 2 Strand Hill. John died during the following ten years and in 1881 Elizabeth was living in Queens Row on her own and shown as domestic servant, aged 63.

Parents

William Davey Hooper was born in Exeter, and became a journeyman painter.

William married Mary Netting Sleeman (1844-) in Exeter St Thomas in Q1 1878. She had been born Mary Merchant Netting in St Minver, North Cornwall, but an earlier marriage by Mary Netting to (?) Sleeman has not been traced.

She was the daughter of Ann and grand daughter of Richard and Charity Netting, and living with them in St Minver in the 1851 census. In 1861 Richard Netting is described as a Pauper.

The Hooper household in 1881, at 41 High Street, Dawlish, included two children, **Albert**, son, 2, and Annie, a daughter of 1 month.

William Davey Hooper died in the June quarter of 1885 (*transcribed as William Dover Hooper*). The widow Mary was living in 1891 in the High Street with **Albert**, scholar, Annie (1880-1919) and a third child Ethel (1883-1964), and working as a 'laundry mangler'. A blacksmith, George Oliver, was boarding with them.

In time **Albert** went to Dawlish Boys' School.

By 1901 they lived at Truman Court, High Street, when Mary was 53 (*actually 56*), and her family consisted of **Albert**, 22, a shoemaker/bootmaker, Annie, 20, a housemaid, and Ethel, 18.

Ethel married Harold Charles Hutchings (1891-1940) in Plymouth in Q4,1909.

Ten years later only **Albert** is at home, working as a Postman and living with his mother at No 2 Court, High Street.

Mary Hooper is thought to have moved to Plymouth and died there in Q2,1923, aged 79.

Albert John Hooper enlisted at Exeter to join the Devonshire Regiment. He may have joined with John Dew after a local recruiting campaign as their service numbers are only 5 numbers apart – 10723 and 10728. They became part of the 8th (Service) Battalion which suffered huge casualties at the Battle of Loos.

He was listed as Killed in Action, on the first day of the Battle of Loos. He was one of eight soldiers from Dawlish who died on that day.

The Western Times, Friday 29 October 1915

"Official news was received at Dawlish Monday that **Privates B. Hooper**, W.Stevens, and J.Dew had been killed in action. **Private Hooper**, an old Territorial, joined up with the

8th Devons at the beginning of the war. He was 37 years of age, and a member of the staff of the local Postman. He resided with his widowed mother in High Street, and was her only son."

The Dawlish Gazette
SATURDAY, October, 30th, 1915

**DAWLISH MEN IN "BULLER'S OWN."
MORE DEATHS REPORTED**

"Fears for the untimely fate of other local men of the 8th Devons who took part in the fighting of Sept. 25th have been only too sadly confirmed this week.....

Monday, however, brought sad news in three cases, when official notifications were received of the deaths of Ptes. J Dew, **A J Hooper**, (known to his intimates as "Bert") and W H Stevens. The first named leaves a widow and four children. Pte Hooper, a single man, was the only son of Mrs Hooper, of Truman's Court, High Street. He had been a postman for many years, and joined up shortly after the war broke out.....The deepest sympathy is felt with the bereaved families in their sorrow."

Last known address: No 2 Court, High Street, Dawlish

Next of kin: Mary Marchant Hooper, mother.

Death Grants of £1.6.7d paid in equal parts to Mary, mother, Mrs Ethel Hutchings, sister, and Annie, sister. Final War Gratuity paid to Mary of £3.10.0d

Commonwealth War Graves entry: HOOPER, Albert John, Pte, 10723, 25/9/1915, age 37
Devonshire Regiment, 8th (Service) Battalion, panels 35-37 Loos Memorial
Son of Mr & Mrs Hooper of High Street, Dawlish.

Dawlish War memorial inscription: HOOPER A.J. PTE. DEVON REGT.

He is recorded in the Devon Roll of Honour and on the Dawlish Boys' School Roll of Honour.

Devon Heritage site info:

10723 Private Albert John Hooper of the 8th Battalion, the Devonshire Regiment. Son of William and Mary Hooper, of 41 High Street, Dawlish. Born in Dawlish in 1879. Died 25 September 1915 aged 37

References:

Free Birth Marriage Death records

Birth Certificate from GRO

refs via subscription sites:

Census records

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects

Hookway family tree (ancestry.co.uk)