

Sidney Thomas ABELL

Born Q3, 1890 Torrington Died 1st February 1919, aged 28
Private 24766 Devonshire Regt, 3rd Battn

Sidney Thomas Abell and Percival Ernest Abell(q.v.) were sons of Thomas Wyborn Abell (1860-1940) and Mary Ann Murrin (1860-1940).

Thomas Wyborn Abell (birth ref Okehampton 1860 July-Sept, vol 5b, p356) was the son of Henry and Sarah Abell who were farming 280 acres at Meeth, a small village about 13.5 km north-west of Okehampton.

Mary Ann Murrin (birth ref Okehampton 1860 Apr-June, vol 5b, p353) was also a daughter of farming parents at Meeth, John and Jane Murrin.

They were both born in Hatherleigh, a short distance from Meeth.

Thomas and Mary married early in 1885 (GRO ref Okehampton 1885 Jan-Mar vol 5b, p 590).

By 1891 census Thomas Wyborn and Mary Ann Abell were living at Down, Winkleigh where he was a farmer.

Sidney Thomas Abell was born at Winkleigh in summer 1890 (GRO ref Torrington, 1890, apr-june, vol 5b, p458).

By 1901 they had moved to Woodcoteswell Cottage, Cullompton where he was a farmhand, and they had three children, **Sidney Thomas**, 10, Jenny, 9 and Percival Ernest, 4.

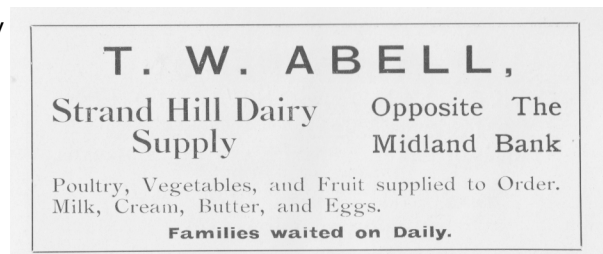
In 1911 census the family had moved to the Strand Hill Dairy, Dawlish with five children:

John Henry Abell	1886-1976	
Sidney Thomas Abell	1890-1919	
Jenny Murrin Abell	1892-1957	
Percival Ernest Abell	1897-1918	died in action 10 April 1918, q.v.
William E Abell	1905 - ?	

The Strand Hill Dairy employed Sidney and Jenny as assistants in 1911 at the time of the census.

The older son, John Henry, had taken work as a blacksmith. Percy was then 14, without an occupation.

(image taken from ca 1923 guide to Dawlish)



Thomas Wyborn Abell died on 1 November 1940 and his wife survived him by eight days to die on 9 November 1940.

There are few notes regarding the service history of **Sidney Thomas Abell**. He is shown to have enlisted on 10 December 1915 (D.A.H.- Disordered Action of the Heart) and was discharged on 16 December 1918 ,M.U. (medically unfit). He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The 3rd Devons were part of the Special Reserve. Once known as the Militia, the Special Reserve consisted of civilians with military training who undertook to attend regular training events with the army and to rejoin it if mobilised for emergency or war. Mobilised at the outbreak of war, the 3rd Battalion took up positions along the South West coastline to defend Britain against invasion.

As more reservists and a tide of new recruits flowed in, the 3rd Devons were overwhelmed with more men than they could possibly train or accommodate. By the end of September 1914 the

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Battalion was three times its proper strength. In these circumstances it became a training and holding unit, staffed by officers and NCOs who had returned from retirement, supplying officers and men to the Regiment's battalions serving in operational theatres. Committed to this role throughout the war, the 3rd Devons never went overseas. In the course of the war they trained 750 officers and more than 13,000 men and despatched them overseas.

This description of the 3rd Battalion role suggests that **Sidney Abell** may have seen service only in Britain, but no service records survived the WW2 Blitz.

Dawlish War Memorial inscription: ABELL. S.T. PTE. DEVON REGT

Devon Heritage site info:

24766 Private Sidney Thomas Abell of the 3rd Battalion, the Devonshire Regiment.
Son of Thomas and Mary Ann Abell of the Strand Hill Dairy, Dawlish; brother of Percy Ernest Abell. Born in Winkleigh in the September quarter of 1890. Died 1 February 1919 aged 29. Buried in Dawlish Cemetery.

Last known address: Strand Hill Dairy, Dawlish

Next of kin: Thomas Wyborn Abell, father

Sidney Thomas Abell is included on the Devon Roll of Honour.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: ABELL, S T Private 24766
01/02/1919 Devonshire Regiment, 3rd Bn.
Grave Ref: 1915. [Dawlish Cemetery](#)

References

Free Birth, Marriage, death records
Devonshire Regiment Museum, Dorchester
refs via subscription sites:

Census records
UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects