

## **Frederick Samuel LUSCOMBE**

Born Highweek, Devon, Q4 1880

Died 10 April 1918, aged 37

Able Seaman, Royal Navy, Service No: 197474 (Dev)

H.M.S.MAGIC

**Frederick Samuel Luscombe** was the grandson of Samuel Luscombe, age 61, a farm labourer and his wife Maria, 59, who in 1881 lived in Moor Park Road, Highweek. Samuel was born in Moretonhampstead and his wife was born in Gidleigh.

Their son, Henry Luscombe, a gardener, was born Lustleigh in 1851 and living next door with his wife Mary Ann, born in Ideford, 1853, with their children, John Edward (1875-1951), William Henry (1878- ) and **Frederick S**, aged 3 months (GRO birth ref 1880 Oct/Dec, Newton Abbot, vol 5b, p 133), all born in Highweek, Newton Abbot.

Henry Luscombe died aged 34 in 1884 (GRO ref Newton Abbot, June, vol 5b, p 91).

In 1891 the widow Mary Ann Luscombe was living at 15 Exeter Road, Highweek, with John, an errand boy, **Fred**, aged 11 and a scholar, and Florence (1883 - ).

**Frederick Samuel Luscombe** joined the Royal Navy as a Boy Seaman in January 1898. He signed on for a 12 year engagement on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1900, supposedly on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. He had given his previous occupation as errand boy and date of birth as 11 May 1882 which is at variance with his registered date of birth. He was recorded in the 1901 census as an Ordinary Seaman aboard H.M.S.HIGHFLYER, a 2<sup>nd</sup> class cruiser and flagship on the East Indies and North America Station.

In Q4 1910 **Frederick** married Beatrice Down (1883- ) in Newton Abbot district. She was a twin daughter of George and Elizabeth Down of Hillhead, Mamhead, where he was a shepherd. The family are shown there in the 1891 and 1901 censuses. Beatrice and her twin Blanche had been born in Kingsteignton. **Frederick** and Beatrice later set up home at 2 Clifton Place, Dawlish. Mr and Mrs G Down later moved to Clifton Place (see *Dawlish Gazette* report in Documents). Blanche was working as a cook to Lucy Beddek at 1 Forde park, Newton Abbot in 1911.

In 1911 **Frederick** was an Able Seaman aboard H.M.S.NEMESIS, a Destroyer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Destroyer Flotilla at Portland. He is shown as married and born in 1883 (*incorrect*) at Dawlish. His character references are all shown as 'VG'.

He appears to have been appointed to a number of shore bases and depot ships to serve in smaller ships, and it was in this context that he was serving in H.M.S.MAGIC in 1918. She was a destroyer of the 'Moon' class, launched in 1915 and brought into service in 1916.

In April 1918 she was steaming off Fanad Head, a northerly point close to Londonderry, when she struck a mine and had bow damage. 25 men were killed in the explosion, including **Able Seaman Luscombe**. It appears from the press report that **A/B Luscombe** was a seaman gunner and he may have been manning a for'ard gun turret when the explosion occurred.

MAGIC was towed and repaired, being eventually sold for scrap in 1921. It is claimed that the mines were laid by Uboat UC.31.

**Frederick Samuel Luscombe** is shown on the Devon Roll of Honour

Dawlish War memorial inscription: LUSCOMBE F.S.

A.B.

H.M.S.MAGIC

## Dawlish World War One Project

Devon Heritage site info:

197474 Able Seaman Frederick S Luscombe of the Royal Navy. H.M.S.MAGIC.  
H.M.S.MAGIC was ordered as a Destroyer under the name of H.M.S.MARIGOLD but was renamed H.M.S.MAGIC before the launch in 1915. Son of Henry and Mary Ann Luscombe; husband of Beatrice Luscombe of 2 Clifton Place, Dawlish. Born in Highweek 11 May 1880. Died 10 April 1918 aged 38. On 10 April 1918 while she was off Ireland there was an explosion aboard which caused casualties. It was believed it was caused when she struck a mine.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: LUSCOMBE, FREDERICK SAMUEL Able Seaman 197474  
10/04/1918 Age: 38 Royal Navy H.M.S. "Magic."

Panel Ref: 27. [Plymouth Naval Memorial](#)

Husband of Beatrice Luscombe, of 2, Clifton Place, Dawlish, Devon.

Last known address: 2, Clifton Place, Dawlish

Next of kin: Beatrice Luscombe, widow, 3 Exe View Cottages, St Thomas, Exeter

References:

uboat.net

Free BMD refs

naval-history.net

refs via subscription sites:

UK Royal Navy and Royal Marines War Graves Roll

BMD and census records

Luscombe family tree(Ancestry).