

Andrew Alec SELLEY

Born 8 March 1896, Kenn
Officer's Steward, 1st Class

Died Gibraltar 4th April 1918, aged 22
Service No: L/10925 (Dev) H.M.S.VIVID

Andrew's father, Henry Horrell Selley(Q1 1859 -) was the son of Thomas Selley (1821-) and Hannah, nee Horrell (1821-) who were living in Kenn in 1881.

Henry, an agricultural labourer, married Bertha Gatter (1859-) in St Thomas district Q4, 1880 and in 1891 they were living at 2 Gossamer Cottages, Kenn with five children:

Thomas H	(1881-)
Abraham	(1884-)
John F	(1886-)
Anna R	(1887-)
William Octavius	(1890-)

In 1901 they were at Kenton Bridge, Kenton with four more children:

Anna R	above	dau,	14	born	Kenn
William	"	son,	9	"	"
Percival	(1894-)	son,	7	"	"
Andrew Alic	(1896-1918)	son,	5	"	"
Paulina	(1898-)	dau,	3		Kenton
Howell	(1900-)	son,	10/12		"

Andrew Alic Selley was born early in 1896 (GRO ref St Thomas, 1896, Jan-Mar, vol 5b, p 61). The spelling of his second name varies, Alic/Elec/Alec and the latter is used in this record. (The Naval Service record gives his second name as Alexander, rather than Alec which is the version on the Commonwealth War Graves Record.)

By 1911, Henry and Bertha had moved to Lower Southwood, Dawlish with three of their children, William Octavius, 21, Paulina, 12, and Howell (Horrell?), 10. All of their nine children were still living.

Andrew Elec Selley (sic) is shown at this time as an Under-Butler with six other domestic servants to Edith Annie Morris at Highlands, Ivybridge.

Andrew then joined the Royal Australian Navy at their London Depot on 9th June 1913 where he has given his birth date as 8 March 1892 and his occupation as valet. His Service number was 8223.

His R.A.N. service record show that he served on H.M.S.AUSTRALIA which was the flagship of the 2nd Battlecruiser squadron, also referred to as H.M.A.S. AUSTRALIA.

He was an Officer's Steward, 2nd Class, from 21/6/1913 to 15/5/1915 when he is shown to have been 'invalided following expiration of F.S.(Foreign Service?) Leave 15/5/1915 to 21/7/1915'.

Andrew Selley was made up to Officer's Steward 1st Class on 2nd November 1915.

He then reverted to service in the Royal Navy with the number L 10925.

Andrew's R.N. service was of short periods on the books of H.M.S.VIVID (R.N.base, Devonport) with other attachments to seagoing ships:

First to H.M.S.BENBOW, an Iron Duke Class battleship from 24 March 1917 to 19 April 1917 when the ship was due for a refit.

Dawlish World War One Project

Then to H.M.S.BRACONDALE, a 'Q' ship of 2,095 tons, being a collier converted to anti-submarine work, from 10 June 1917 to 8 August. BRACONDALE was torpedoed on August 5 and then taken in tow but sank on August 7 with the loss of one life.

Selley was then returned to barracks until 10 November when he joined another 'Q' ship, the H.M.S. ARVONIAN of 2,794 tons and he left her on 27 November, avoiding being torpedoed a second time, which was the fate of ARVONIAN on 27 December 1917. She stayed afloat and was taken home and decommissioned and reappeared as the SANTRE on 8 April 1918.

His final seagoing posting was to the sloop H.M.S.CHRYSANTHEMUM from 30 January to 12 March 1918. HMS Chrysanthemum was a Flower Class Sloop launched on 10 Nov 1917.

(In 1938 she was permanently moored alongside HMS PRESIDENT stationed at the Embankment on the Thames as Drill Ship for the London Division RNVR.

Both ships were sold in 1988 when the purpose built Shore Establishment - named HMS PRESIDENT - was built close to Tower Bridge.)

Andrew Alec Selley died in Hospital at Gibraltar from Nephritis on 4th April 1918.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: SELLEY, ANDREW ALEC Officer's Steward 1st Class L/10925 (Dev.) 04/04/1918 Age: 23 Royal Navy H.M.S. "Vivid."

Grave Ref: C. 3841. [Gibraltar \(North Front\) Cemetery](#)

Son of Henry and Bertha Selley, of Week, Dawlish, Devon.

Dawlish War memorial inscription: SELLEY A.A. 1st C^L S^{td} H.M.S.AUSTRALIA

He is shown on the Devon Roll of Honour

Devon Heritage site info:

J/10925 Officer's Steward 1st Class Andrew Alexander Selley of the Royal Navy, H.M.S.VIVID. Son of Henry and Bertha Selley of Week, Dawlish. Born in Exeter 8 March 1892. Died 4 April 1918 aged 26. *(Date of birth and age taken from false Naval record, see above)*

Last known address: Kenton Bridge, Kenton (1901 census)

Next of kin: Henry Selley, father, Week, Dawlish

References:

UK Commonwealth War Graves

Free BMD records

Royal Navy Service Record (N.A.Kew)

Royal Australian Navy record (naa.gov.au)

List of shipwrecks 1917

www.wrecksite.eu

refs from subscription sites:

census data

