

CHARLES, Joel Francis - killed in action – 27 September 1918 aged 37

Joel Francis Charles was born in Membury on 22 May 1881. . His parents were Francis Charles, a labourer (born in Membury in 1828 and died in 1886) and Mary Jane (b 1850 in Stockland nee: Rockett) . His father died the year will Joel was 5, leaving his mother with 5 children.

1891 the Charles family were living in spring Cottage, Playstreet, Membury, *and* Mary had reverted to her maiden name (no marriage certificate could be found). Mary worked as a laundress as did the oldest sister Martha (18), and John (12), Joel (10), Ellen (8) and Albert (5) went to school.

However on the 1901 census, she called herself Mary Charles, living at Heath Common, but by 1911, she had reverted back again to Mary Jane Rockett, still living at Heath Common, Membury.

In 1901 Joel aged 19 was a butcher and living with Samuel Harris (43) a butcher on broad Street, Lyme Regis, and Emma Harris (38) and their 6 children + other workers.

In 1911 Joel (aged 29) was in the 1st Battalion, Devonshire Regiment (No 7683). He was living in barracks at Lucknow, North Tidworth, Andover.

When war was declared Joel was in Jersey and had married. As a member of the regular army he was probably one of the first to go across to France.

He survived 4 years of war, only to be killed within 2 months of the end. He was killed in action on 27 September 1918 and is buried in France at Lebuquiere Communal Cemetery Extension, 8 kilometers from Bapaume, Northern France. There are limited military records which show that he was Warrant Officer Class 2, the Company Quarter Master Serjeant.

When he was killed, his wife was living at 2, Melbourne Place, Bagot, St Saviour's Jersey.