

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



PERCY BEAUMONT MIDGLEY

KING'S LIVERPOOL REGIMENT

DIED IN RUSSIA 15TH DECEMBER 1918

BORN IN 1893 AT DRAKELOW IN DERBYSHIRE, THE SON
OF HARRY AND KATE MIDGLEY AND HUSBAND OF ANNIE
MIDGLEY (NEE SHUTTLEWORTH)

Midgley Family History

- **1901 census** shows William ‘Harry’ Midgley, his wife Kate and their 4 children living at Drakelow Park in Derbyshire as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
William ‘Harry’ (Head)	36	Game Keeper	Cauldwell, Derbyshire	1864
Kate (wife)	34		Lowestoft, Suffolk	1866
Percy Beaumont	8		Drakelow, Derbyshire	1893 - 1918
William	6		Drakelow, Derbyshire	1895
Cyril	5		Drakelow, Derbyshire	1896
Kathleen	3		Drakelow, Derbyshire	1898

NOTE:

Drakelow is a hamlet in the parish of Church Gresley in South Derbyshire. It is situated on the east bank of the River Trent, two and a half miles south-west of Burton on Trent.

Drakelow means ‘Dragons Mound’ in Anglo Saxon, indicating a burial ground with a guardian spirit. For nine centuries the land was the home of the Gresley Baronets family until the 1930s.

Drakelow Hall, an Elizabethan manor house rebuilt in the 18th Century and the ancestral home of the Gresley’s, was demolished in 1934 following the sale of the estate. Extensive grounds, a deer park and belts of mature woodland surrounded the Hall.



- **1911 census** shows that Harry and Kate had been married for 19 years and that of their 4 children born alive, all 4 were still living. It also shows the Midgley family residing at 3, Holmefield, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Harry (Head)	47	General Mill labourer	Drakelow, Derbyshire	1864
Kate (wife)	45		Lowestoft, Suffolk	1866
Percy Beaumont	18	Apprentice house painter	Drakelow, Derbyshire	1893 - 1918
William	16	Apprentice at iron factory	Drakelow, Derbyshire	1895
Cyril	15	Apprentice Co-op grocery stores	Drakelow, Derbyshire	1896
Kathleen	13	Half school/half worsted spinner	Drakelow, Derbyshire	1898



View of Holmefield

(source: Rachel Simpson & Richard Whiteoak from the Glyn Whiteoak collection)

World War 1



It had been **99 years** since Britain was last involved in a major European conflict following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815

August 4th 1914 Britain declares war on Germany

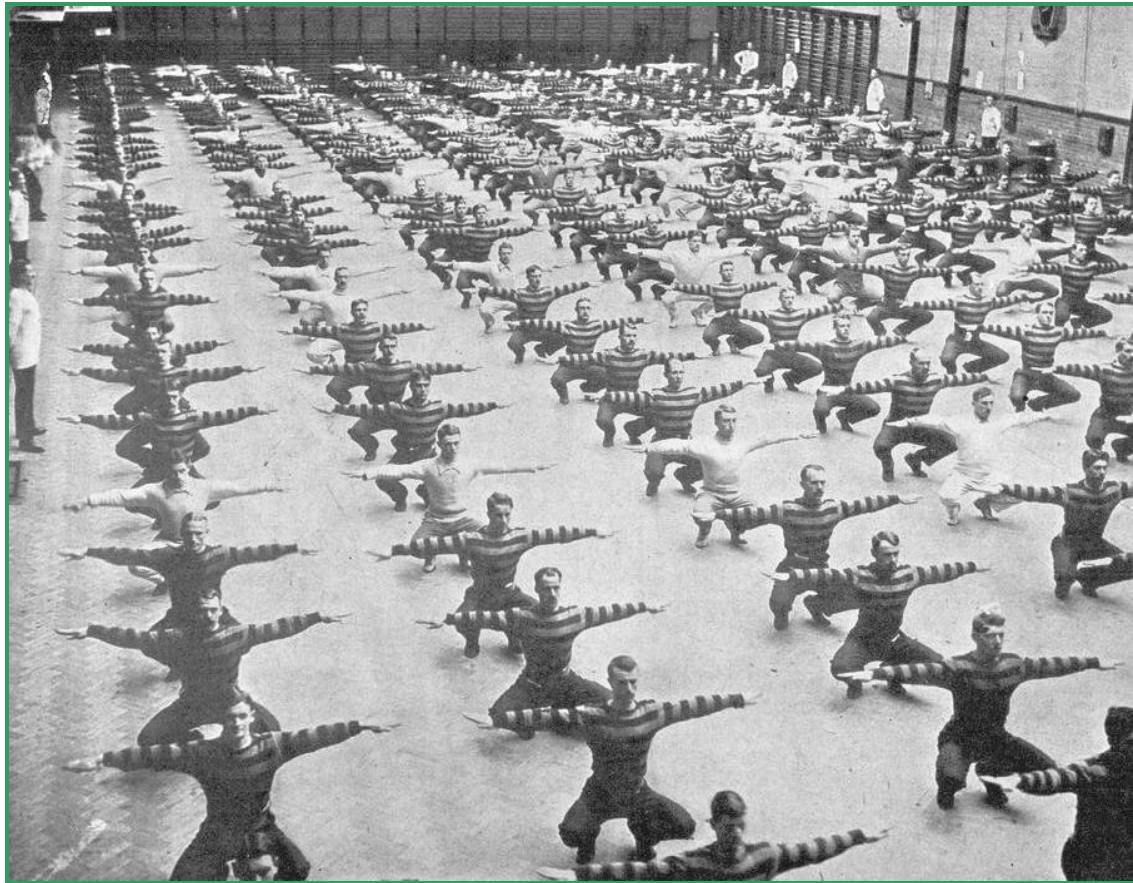
In the autumn of 1914, the young men of the nation came from town and village to take the King's shilling and to offer him their dedicated services in defence of their homeland. From mills and mines, from shops and farms, from office chairs and civic departments, from loom, lathe, bench, plough and counter they flooded into the recruiting centres in answer to their nation's call for young manhood. These new recruits came to be known as 'Kitchener's Volunteers'

The New Armies: "Kitchener's Volunteers"



Earl Kitchener recruitment poster 1914

WW1 Parliamentary Recruiting Committee



British recruits undergoing physical training in a gymnasium (Kitchener's New Army)
(source: *New York Times* 5th July 1916)

Prior to enlistment, Percy Midgley followed his trade as a painter & decorator and was employed by Messrs. R H. Greenwood and Sons, Crosshills.

At the outbreak of the Great War, Percy responded to the call and volunteered to enlist into the armed services, however he was initially rejected. He did however succeed in joining the colours in January 1915.

He was initially recruited into the Northumberland Fusiliers as a Private with the regimental number **48116** and was still serving with the Northumberland Fusiliers at the time of his brother's wedding on the 28th September 1917.

However, Percy Midgley was later transferred to the 17th (service) battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment, again serving as a Private, this time with the regimental number **114275**

Pte Percy Midgley entered the Theatre of War in France sometime after the 1st January 1916

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
MIDGLEY	North d Fus L'pool R	P/O	48116 114 275
Percy. B.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	H/2/102B334517		
BRITISH	do		
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380

MEDAL INDEX CARD for Percy Midgley (source: *The National Archives*)

The **Northumberland Fusiliers** raised a total of 51 battalions during the Great War, based on the original 2 regular, 1 reserve and 10 territorial force battalions. This made it the second largest regiment after the London Regiment.



Northumberland Fusiliers collar badge

The **King's Liverpool Regiment** fielded 49 battalions during WW1 and lost 13,795 officers and other ranks during the course of the war.



WW1 King's Liverpool Regiment collar badges

The Western Front



British troops in a front line trench in France, WW1
(source: www.gwpda.org/photos)

The Western Front was the name applied to the fighting zone in France & Flanders, where the British, French, Belgian and later American armies faced that of Germany.

It was marked by a system of trenches and fortifications separated by an area known as No Man's land. These fortifications stretched 475 miles and precipitated a style of fighting known as trench warfare.

From the moment the German army moved into Luxemburg on the 2nd August 1914 to the Armistice on the 11th November 1918, the fighting on the Western Front in France & Flanders never stopped. Just as there were quiet periods, there were also the most intense, savage, huge-scale battles the world has ever known.

In March 1917, a Craven Herald newspaper article reported that Pte Percy Midgley had been hospitalised in France.



Article Date: 02 March 1917

SUTTON - Local Soldier in Hospital

A field postcard was received last week-end by a friend of Pte. Percy Midgley stating that he had been admitted into hospital in France. Private Midgley was a Derby man and joined up some time ago. His younger brother (Private Cyril H. Midgley) was wounded last year and is at present at Clipstone Camp.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)

In September 1917, Pte Percy Midgley was residing at the Eastbourne rest camp having been invalided back to the UK from France. He made the trip north to Sutton-in-Craven to attend his brother's wedding where he acted as best man.



Article Date: 28 September 1917

SUTTON - KHAKE WEDDING: BARRITT-MIDGLEY

A khaki wedding which aroused considerable interest was solemnised in the Baptist Chapel on Saturday morning last. The parties were Miss Ellen Barritt, only daughter of Mr. and the late Mrs. John Riley Barritt, of Hazel Grove, and Pte. Cyril B. Midgley, Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, youngest son of Mr. and the late Mrs. Harry Midgley.....Pte. Percy Midgley, Northumberland Fusiliers, brother of the bridegroom, acted as best man.....His brother. Pte. Percy Midgley, is at present at an Eastbourne rest camp, having been invalided home.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)

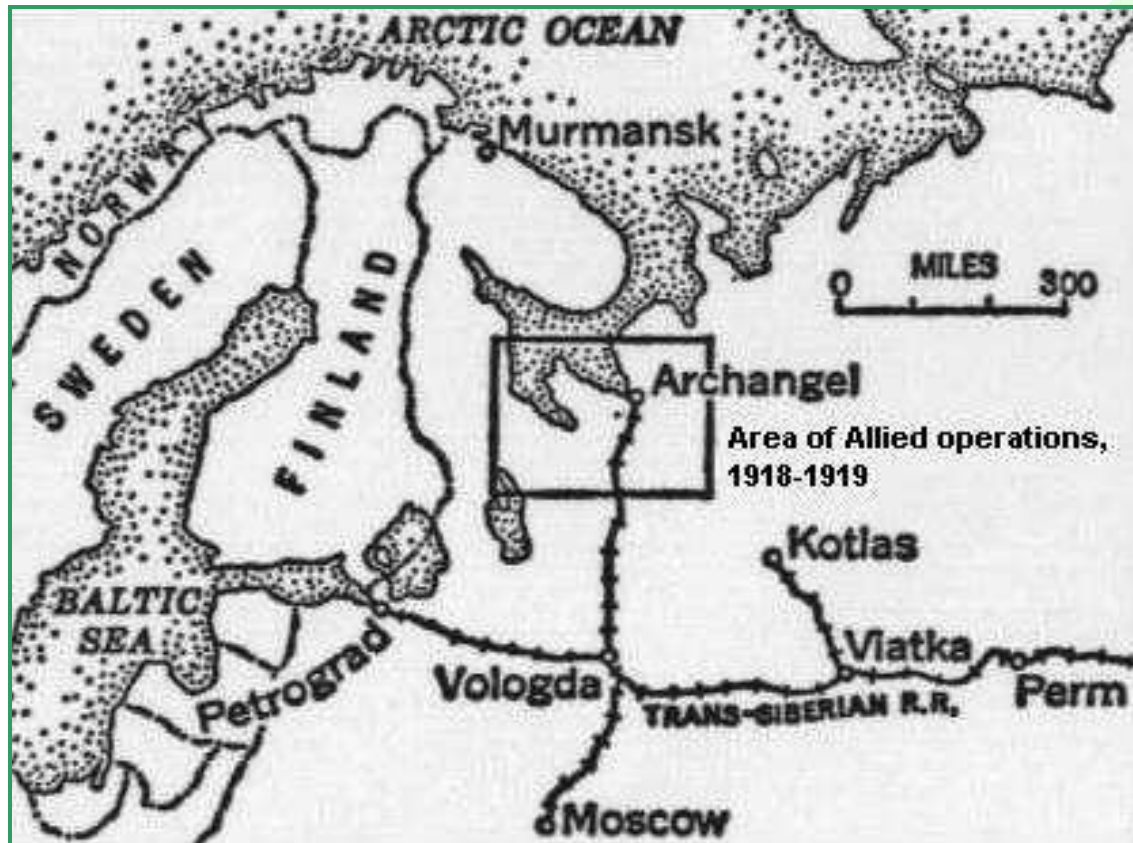
A few months later in early 1918, Percy Beaumont Midgley was himself married to his fiancée Annie Shuttleworth. Their marriage was registered at Skipton in the March quarter of Jan/Feb/March 1918

THE ARCHANGEL CAMPAIGN IN NORTH RUSSIA

Having fought and been wounded on the battlefields of France, Pte Percy Midgley was transferred from the Northumberland Fusiliers to the 17th (service) battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment.

On the 30th June 1918, the 17th battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment returned to England with the 75th Brigade, later to be retitled the 236th Brigade in preparation for service in Russia.

On the 11th October 1918, one month before the Armistice was signed, Pte Percy Midgley set sail from Glasgow with the 17th battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment, bound for Murmansk and then onto Archangel in Russia where the 236th Brigade remained until September 1919.



Area of Allied operations in Russia, 1918-1919

The **Archangel campaign** lasted from the final months of 1918 through to 1919 and was part of an Allied operation that supported Russian forces throughout WW1.

Earlier on the 18th June 1917, a Russian offensive was crushed by a German counteroffensive. The Russian Army was plagued by mutinies and desertions. Allied war material still in transit quickly began piling up in the already well-stocked warehouses of Arkhangelsk (Archangel) and the ice-free port of Murmansk.

The Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin came to power in October 1917 and established a communist government five months later. They signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Germans, which formally ended the war on the Eastern Front. This allowed the Germans to begin redeploying troops to the Western Front where the depleted British and French armies had not yet been bolstered by the American forces.

By mid 1918, the North Russian ports, through which the Allies had assisted Russia with supplies and munitions, were now open to German occupation. The Allies were concerned because the treaty of Brest-Litovsk gave the German army entry into Finland, thus positioning it for marches upon the Russian ports of Murmansk and Archangel, where military supplies from Allied ships had been stockpiled. The Allies also feared that U-boat bases might be established on the North Cape.

Furthermore, in April 1918, a division of German troops had landed in Finland, creating fears that they might try to capture the Murmansk-Petrograd railroad, the strategic port of Murmansk and possibly even the city of Arkhangelsk (Archangel).

Faced with these series of events, the leaders of the British and French governments decided that the western Allies needed to begin a military intervention in North Russia. A small British, French & US expeditionary force under British command was sent to North Russia. Their objective was twofold:

1. To retrieve Allied munitions that had been supplied to the Czarist army & stockpiled in Archangel from falling into German or Bolshevik hands.
2. To resurrect the Eastern Front by defeating the Bolshevik army in the wake of the Russian collapse and revolution of 1917. Thus stopping the rise of Bolshevism, protect Britain's interests and to extend the freedom of the seas.



British supply sled pulled by reindeer in Russia, WW1
(source: www.gwpda.org/photos)

The danger from Finland disappeared in December 1918, with the withdrawal of the German troops and the establishment of a friendly coalition government. However, in the north, the winter was spent repelling determined Bolshevik attacks on the Allied forces at Archangel.



A supply convoy makes its way along a forest trail south of Archangel, January 18th 1919

Withdrawal of British

An international policy to support the North Russian campaign and, in Churchill's words, "to strangle at birth the Bolshevik State" became increasingly unpopular in Britain. In January 1919 the Daily Express was echoing public opinion when it exclaimed, "the frozen plains of Eastern Europe are not worth the bones of a single grenadier".

Significant unrest took place among British sailors in the Baltic. This included small-scale mutinies amongst the crews of HMS *Delhi* and other ships

stationed in Björkö Sound. The causes were general war weariness (many of the crews had already fought in World War I), poor food and accommodation, a lack of leave and the effects of Bolshevik propaganda.

In February 1919, two sergeants from the British Yorkshire Regiment were court-martialed and given life sentences for refusing to fight.

In April 1919, the inability to hold the flanks and mutinies in the ranks caused the Allied governments to decide on an early evacuation of North Russia. The Allies were forced to retreat.

Prior to this on the 15th December 1918, Pte Percy Midgley became sick and **Died of Pneumonia** while serving in Russia.

He was 25 years of age



Article Date: 27 December 1918

Sutton Mill Soldier's Death

Official information has been received by Mr. Harry Midgley, of Wright Street, Sutton Mill, stating that his eldest son, Pte. Percy Midgley, of the King's Liverpool Rifles, has died from an attack of pneumonia at Pless in Russia. Deceased joined the colours in January, 1915, having previously offered himself and been rejected. He served some time in France, where he was wounded. Deceased, prior to joining the forces, was a very active worker at the Baptist Sunday school. His brother, Pte. Cyril Midgley, is at present home on furlough. He was severely wounded in France some months ago and has since been in England. The death of Pte. Percy Midgley has come as a shock to the village, where he was so well-known and respected by everybody. He followed the trade of painter and decorator and was last employed by Messrs. R H. Greenwood and Sons, Crosshills. He was 25 years of age and leaves a widow for whom deep sympathy is felt.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)



Casualty Details

Name: MIDGLEY, PERCY BEAUMONT
Initials: P B
Nationality: United Kingdom
Rank: Private
Regiment/Service: The King's (Liverpool Regiment)
Unit Text: 17th Bn.
Date of Death: 15/12/1918
Service No: 114275
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead
Memorial: **ARCHANGEL MEMORIAL**
(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* www.cwgc.org/)

ARCHANGEL MEMORIAL

Archangel, in the north of the Russian Federation, is a town on the eastern side of the Dvina Estuary on the White Sea. The Archangel Memorial is at the far end of Archangel Allied Cemetery, which is on the north-west outskirts of the town of Archangel.

The **ARCHANGEL ALLIED CEMETERY** contains 224 burials and commemorations of the First World War, including special memorials to 140 officers and men with known burials in cemeteries elsewhere in northern Russia. Two of the burials are unidentified.

The **ARCHANGEL MEMORIAL**, which consists of panels fixed into the east wall of the cemetery, commemorates 219 British officers and men who died during the north Russian campaign and whose graves are not known, including that of Pte Percy Midgley.



Archangel Memorial in the Russian Federation
(source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission www.cwgc.org/)

Pte Percy Beaumont Midgley is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial.



Sutton-in-Craven War Memorial
(source: photo taken by Paul Wilkinson)



Sutton-in-Craven War Memorial
(photo taken by Paul Wilkinson)

Pte Percy Midgley was posthumously awarded the
British War Medal & Victory Medal



Original pair of WW1 medals (source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

A Memorial Plaque inscribed with the soldiers name was also given to the family of those who were killed during WW1



Original WW1 Memorial Plaque (name digitally altered)
Also referred to as a Death Plaque or Dead Man's Penny
(source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

Lest we Forget

CRAVEN'S ROLL OF HONOUR



PRIVATE P. MIDGLEY, South Notts. Hussars, son of Mr. Midgley, Sutton, died of pneumonia in Russia 15th December, 1918.

source: *Craven's Part in the Great War*

(original 1919 copy owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

FOR THE FALLEN

*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE
LEFT GROW OLD*

*AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM, NOR THE YEARS
CONDEMN*

*AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE
MORNING*

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

LAURENCE BINYON, 1869-1943



(Information compiled by Andrew Monkhouse 2011)