

WILLIAM CAMPBELL TRAINOR



8th January 1916

1863-1916 Aged 53

Private (Acting Corporal) S2SR/04462 Army Service Corps, 363rd Division Unit of Supply.

William Trainor was born in Dublin in 1863. His parents, James Charles Trainor and Eliza Campbell with their six children emigrated to Bradford around 1870. Initially James worked in a wool warehouse, however within ten years he had prospered and was described as a 'manufacturer' and a 'woollen cloth merchant'. William was their third child. He joined the Bradford Grammar School on 14th April 1873, when he was ten. He was thus among the first boys to enter the new School, which had been reformed by the energies of the former mayor Jacob Behrens, a prominent Jewish-German wool merchant, with other prominent citizens who were determined to rescue it from decay and raise it to the first rank. They appointed as Headmaster the dynamic William Hulton Keeling, who would remain head until 1916. Shortly after Trainor entered the School, it moved into the 'new' building, which stood at the bottom of Manningham Lane, in June 1873.

A few months later, Trainor's mother died, possibly in giving birth to her seventh child. William left the School in 1876 aged thirteen, the school leaving age at this time being twelve. In 1878, his father married again to the daughter of a Bradford accountant, and while the family remained together, the two older sons had to make their own ways. William was apprenticed to a boot manufacturer and draper in Liverpool, where he is found in 1881. In 1887, he married Elizabeth Anne Arrowsmith, a milliner and the daughter of a fish-monger. We lose track of William Trainor until the 1911 census, by which time he had been married to Elizabeth for twenty-three years. William was by now an Inspector for the Royal Liver Insurance Company, which had its head office in Liverpool. He worked in the National Health Section which dealt with claims brought under the recently introduced National Insurance Act. This for the first time gave some assistance to many workers when they were unable to work through sickness.



Photo printed in the Bradford Daily Telegraph 6th June 1916

When war came, William Trainor was under no obligation to enlist as he was in his fifties and well over military age. Nevertheless, he was determined to serve and after several refusals, he was accepted into the Army Service Corps. This was not a combat service, although delivering ammunition and supplies to front-line units carried its risks. Trainor was sent to the newly-opened front at Salonika (Thessaloniki) in northern Greece. On 8th January 1916, he left Brindisi, in southern Italy, on the SS 'Citta Di Palermo' with a contingent of 143 British soldiers from several A.S.C. units. At 8.30 a.m., shortly after leaving port, their vessel hit a mine laid by a German submarine. Eighty-four British soldiers were rescued, Trainor was among the fifty-seven who drowned.

His widow only received confirmation of his death in early June. On the 6th, the Bradford Daily Telegraph wrote that he was of *'a bright and genial temperament, he is mourned by his many friends, and, as his age absolved him from any obligation for military duty, his example of patriotism might well be imitated by many considerably younger.'* The couple had no children. At the age of 53, William Trainor was the oldest Old Bradfordian to die in the First World War. His name is on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton. His younger brother, John Charles Trainor, was still living in the Manningham area of Bradford when he died in 1935.



Acknowledgements:

In preparing this biography, the Bradford Daily Telegraph has been indispensable—it is available on microfilm at the Local Studies Library in Bradford. Ancestry was used to locate Trainor in the 1871, 1881 and 1911 censuses. His Medal Index Card shows that he was not entitled to the Victory Medal or the 1915 Star, only the British War Medal. This was because he did not enter a theatre of war.

For the A.S.C., I used <http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/army-service-corps-mechanical-transport-companies/>.

Details of the sinking of the Citta Di Palermo are from <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=102870>.

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 NickHooper13.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
TRAINOR	A.S.C.	Pte	52SR/04462
William G.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY			
BRITISH	A.S.C./101A2	199	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380