

Albert's story

Albert Henry Humphries (1858 - 1926) had over 40 years' service as a Railway Signaller. He was born into a farming family in Gloucestershire and spent his early years living with elderly grandparents. We don't know what happened to his parents but at some point, Albert joined the Midland Railway and moved away from his rural community.

Albert married Georgiana Amy Palser (Amelia) at Sheffield Cathedral in April 1885. *Possibly rather grandly, he stated that his job was that of "railway inspector" and she was the daughter of a "gentleman" (deceased).* By 1891, Albert was working as a Railway Signaller and living in Handsworth, Sheffield with his wife and 2 children. The couple moved to South Wingfield sometime before 1896. Albert then worked as a Signaller until his retirement from the L.M.S. Railway in 1925.

Albert's wife died in 1901 at the young age of 36 and was buried at South Wingfield. The couple had 3 children.

Their older daughter Florence became very well known locally because she worked as a teacher at South Wingfield Board School. In 1915, Florence volunteered as a Red Cross Nurse and worked at the [South Wingfield VAD Hospital](#) and at Bagthorpe Hospital (Nottingham) before serving "with honour" as a military nurse in Egypt 1917 - 1919. *In December 1917, the transport ship HMT Osmanieh taking nurses into Egypt was torpedoed and sunk at Alexandria. Florence was on board but was rescued to the relief of the people of South Wingfield although 8 other military nurses died in the attack.*

In 1920, Florence married Articled Clerk, Shirley Harold Wright, at St Anne's, Westminster and they moved to Kent. After he died in 1935, Florence lived on "her own means" and in

1939, she provided room in her home for Mrs Marguerite Rayner who was from an aristocratic family and had recently returned from living in Australia.

Their younger daughter Pamela Georgina married Arthur Smickersgill *in London in 1916. Arthur served as a Corporal in the Scots Guard in WW1. They moved to Chesterfield where Arthur worked as a Railway Goods Shunter. After Albert retired, he went to live in Chesterfield with his daughter.*

Their son Lancelot (Lance) served in WW1 in the Machine Gun Corps but was injured in battle in 1918. He later worked as a Railway Clerk in the Tamworth area.

Albert was a churchwarden at All Saints' Church, South Wingfield and a Sunday School Superintendent. He was Vice Chairman of the Parochial Church Council, a religious inspector at the South Wingfield Council Schools and member of the Parish Council. *He died in July 1926 and was buried at South Wingfield. A number of the local station staff including Stationmaster William Watts were present at his funeral.*