

# Heswall Methodist Church

## Armistice Centenary 11/11/1918 – 11/11/2018

By Jenny McDonald and Roger Lane



Earlier this year we were contacted by John Crowther, who is a Lay Preacher at Heswall Methodist Church. There is a memorial plaque at the back of the church for those members of the church who lost their lives in the First World War. Poppies have been placed on this memorial every year on Remembrance Day, but not much was known about these men.

John was keen to find more about the lives of the men to include into his address this year. As this is something in which we are very interested, we were able to help. It was fascinating to discover these men's lives before their sudden deaths.

Together with his school friend Trevor Adams and latterly Roger Mylward we managed to find details for all the men, two of whom were brothers. In some cases we found photographs and Trevor managed to visit the war cemeteries and take his own.

John was able to give a clear insight into the lives of these men in his address, especially poignant in this centenary year. He found connections with a couple of the men who are named on memorials in the church. He engaged the help of Scouts and Guides who attended the service and after the details of each man had been read out a poppy was placed in their memory by a Guide or Scout.



**Name: Samuel ANTROBUS**

**Parents/family:** Sam Antrobus was born on 17 September 1879 to William and Harriet (nee Worrall) in Clifton near Runcorn, the eldest of eight children. Of his three brothers, two were also killed in WW1. He married Annie Clarke (who was born in Gayton) in Runcorn on 7 Dec 1907. This photo is the best that we have of any of the men. You can just see an image of his family above his left shoulder. They were recorded in the 1911 census as living in School Hill, Heswall, in a two-roomed house with five children. Ultimately they had five daughters and two sons. Many of these children were baptised right here in this very chapel when their address was given as Boundary Lane. There were only a couple of cottages there then. After the war, Annie and her six remaining children (one son died in infancy), by then living in Milner Road, emigrated to Canada. She died in 1979 aged 96. **Military rank and career:** Sam enlisted in Neston in 1914. He became a Lance Corporal in the Cheshire 13th Regiment.



**Date, place and circumstances of death:** Sam was killed in action on 7 July 1916 aged 37. No details of the circumstances of his death are known but the fact that he is listed on the Thiepval Memorial suggests that he was killed in the Battle of the Somme with no known place of burial.

**Places of burial and commemoration:** He is also commemorated on a family memorial in St Peter's Churchyard as well as the Thiepval memorial.



### THE BARLOW FAMILY

The next two names on the plaque are Joseph (JE) and William (JW) Barlow and it seems that they were brothers. Clearly this photo, downloaded from a Barlow family website, is not of the whole family who lived at Gayton – some of the elder children may have left home by this time. Joseph, we suspect is sitting next to the family dog, was born on 27 Dec 1894, and was the ninth of eleven children (eight sons and three daughters), born to Henry and Sarah, seated in the centre. Henry was a farm labourer. James may be the one standing top left. He was born in June 1882 and was the fourth child. Another brother Thomas, born in 1890, died of Spanish flu in 1918.

**Name: J Edward BARLOW (Joseph)**

**Parents/family:** Joseph Barlow was baptised on 10 Feb 1895, probably at St Peter's. He married May Barlow who moved to West Sussex after his death. A letter written by her suggests that after his death she was left in severe financial hardship.