

A memory from World War 1

GEORGE STEPHEN DICKINSON ALDRICH

Born in 1888 in Cambridge.



George Aldrich was the third child of Alfred and Jane Aldrich, and as a child, lived in Chapel Street, Duxford, just outside Cambridge. After leaving school, Mr. Aldrich began an apprenticeship to a Pharmacist in Cambridge and after studying pharmacy, he took his final exams with the Pharmaceutical Society in London. Whilst searching through pharmaceutical journals, he realised that working hours in Evesham were shorter than anywhere else. He worked in Evesham as an assistant pharmacist, and in 1911, aged 23, he was lodging in Vine Street, Evesham, with the Marsh family.

It was whilst in Evesham, that he met Hilda Cull of Badsey, and they were married in 1915 in Epsom.

Mr. Aldrich volunteered to join the armed forces and was posted to a Military Hospital in London. Whilst serving in the Military Hospital, Sergeant Aldrich had a pet monkey, but his wife Hilda hated his pet. During the zeppelin air raids on London, Sergeant Aldrich witnessed seeing some zeppelins catching fire through being shot down.

Then, in June 1916, Sergeant Aldrich was sent with a military Expeditionary Force, on a troop ship, to Arkangel in Russia. The troop ship's crew were Lascar Indians and totally unprepared for the intense cold experienced on board ship. Many of the crew died whilst on board, as a result of not wearing adequate clothing.

Whilst in Arkangel, the military kept themselves warm with wood burning stoves that, owing to the chimney design, were able to burn large tree trunks.

An officer arrived one day, in a little boat, with his batman. It was bitterly cold weather and the officer ordered his batman to stay in the boat overnight to look after his belongings. With no preparation to keep warm, the batman died in the night, from the cold. Sergeant Aldrich had, in the meantime, been promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He complained about the officer's attitude toward his batman.

The next thing Staff Sergeant Aldrich knew, he was posted off to the dangerous front line fighting in Murmansk, as a result of this complaint. However, soon after arriving at the front line, all fighting ceased but a flu epidemic hit the base from where he had been posted, virtually wiping out the whole base.

On his return from war, Mr. Aldrich became a leading member of the British Legion. He had seen such neglect of many ex-servicemen and felt driven to assist in putting measures into place to help them. He was involved in the Evesham British Legion and he helped a great deal, along with other stalwarts such as George Crisp and Bert Brazier, in the opening of Badsey British Legion. The Badsey British Legion opened in 1928.

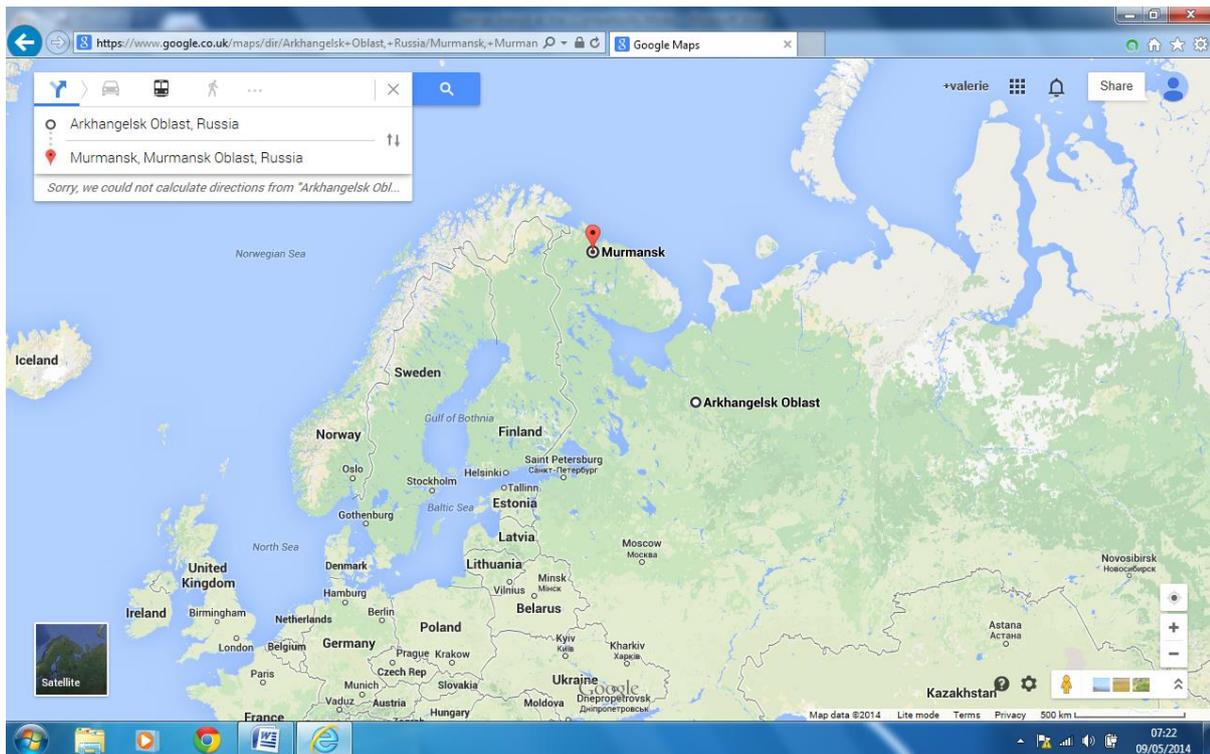
Mr. Aldrich



Remembrance Parade in Badsey ca. 1920
Mr. Aldrich at the front.

Like so many soldiers who came home from the war, they involved themselves in the British Legion activities.

Note: In the morning of Armistice Day, Mr. Aldrich's father in law, Mr. Cull, received the news, that his son, Jack Cull, had died in Basra. Jack is remembered on the World War 1 Memorial Board in Badsey Church.



Mr. Aldrich and his wife lived for a time in Badsey after the war. One of the houses they lived in was Hollywood House that was knocked down in the 1980s. Mr. Aldrich followed his career as a pharmacist and purchased Elliott's, a chemist shop in Evesham. For two consecutive years, 1949 to 1951, he was Mayor of Evesham. Mr. and Mrs Aldrich were living in Sedgeberrow when Mr. Aldrich died in 1972, aged 84.

**Memories of George Stephen Dickinson Aldrich
By his son, George Aldrich, Badsey.**