Ernest Allen





Rank: -Private

Number: -36330

Regiment: - Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own (Yorkshire Regiment) (Formerly 5218 York and Lancaster Regiment)

Killed in Action: - 04/10/1917 Age: 24 years

Memorial: - Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium Panel 52 to 54 and 162A.

Family Details

Ernest was born on 10th April 1892 in Heckmondwike one of the ten children of John Allen, a Coal Miner of Heckmondwike, and Jane Ann Wigham from Durham. His parents had married on 21st October 1876 at Birstall Parish Church. Ernest was baptised at St Saviour's Church in Heckmondwike on 24th November 1892.

Ernest's father died aged 50 in 1906 and by the time of the 1911 census only six of the children were still living. Ernest was aged 18, working as a coal hurrier and living at the family home at Westfield Terrace, Little Green Lane, Nunroyd, Heckmondwike. His younger brother George was working as a printer's labourer.

Service Details

By 1914 the family had moved to the Kilpin Hill area and it was from this address that Ernest enlisted. At first, he was enrolled as Private 5218 in the York and Lancaster Regiment and he filled out the form for the "informal soldier's will" on 30th June 1916.

The Cleckheaton and Spenborough Guardian on Friday, October 26th 1917 published news of Private E. Allen of Heckmondwike as follows: - "Last Friday Mrs J. A. Allen of 102, High Street, Heckmondwike, received the following letter Second Lieutenant Leslie Martin: -

"*You will have heard officially of the death of your son, Private Ernest Allen. I wish to sympathise deeply with you in your sorrow, and it will be consolation to you to know that he died bravely. He did not suffer, as death was instantaneous*".

As yet, no further communications have been received. Private Allen was 25 years of age, joined the Yorkshire Regiment in February of last year, and had been in France seventeen months. Previous to enlistment he was employed by Messrs. A Rhodes & Co Ltd of Heckmondwike, and was associated with St Saviour's Church. A younger brother, Private George Allen, is now serving with the West Yorkshire Regiment in France. He was wounded in the left arm in November of last year and returned to France five weeks ago."

Ernest's remains were never found and he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial. His mother Jane Allen of 102, High Street, Heckmondwike was the sole beneficiary of his informal will. She lived opposite the Upper Independent Chapel, close to Kilpin Hill. His younger brother George Allen survived the war, although his injuries left him partially disabled.

Ernest was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour Heckmondwike Green Park Memorial and Roll of Honour; St Saviour's Parish Church and St. James's Parish Church Memorials; Batley War Memorial and Batley Town Hall (indoor) Roll of Honour.

Thanks to Spen Valley Historical Society for kind permission to use their research.

