Wallace (Wallis) Booth





Rank: -Private

Number: - 9226

Regiment: - Durham Light Infantry 2nd Battalion

Died of Wounds received in action at No13 General Hospital Boulogne.: - 23/10/1914 Age: 30 years

Cemetery: - Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France 111.A.2

Batley News, 7 Nov 1914 (photo)

Family Details

Wallace Booth was born in Leeds in 1884. He had two sisters, Anne born 1877 and Minnie born 1885. His father, also called Wallace, had married his mother Mary Hannah Ball in Leeds in 1873. By 1891 the family were living at Chickenley Lane Top and by 1901 had moved to Dewsbury Road, Ossett. Wallace senior was a shoemaker and his son were a piecer in the local woollen mill.

When Wallace junior enlisted in 1905 in Dewsbury, he gave his name as Wallis and his occupation was that of a warehouseman. He had 2 tattoos, crossed flags on his left wrist and a heart and crossed hands on his right forearm. He left for Lucknow in India in 1905 and returned in 1909. He was exceedingly popular with his comrades, as an athlete. He won medals and awards for long distance running, boxing and swimming. He contracted malaria in 1912 and left the service on the 28th February 1913. His records show he was an excellent soldier in every way. He married Laura Parkin of Hanging Heaton on the 6th December 1913 at Hanging Heaton Parish Church. His sister Minnie was a witness. He was now working as a warehouseman at J Fitton, rag merchants, Ossett. The couple made their home at 33, Lucas Buildings, Commonside, Hanging Heaton.

Service Details

On mobilisation in 1914 Wallace left home at once. He received his papers in the morning post and was on his way to Newcastle by noon. After a two weeks stay in England, during which time he was stationed in both Newcastle and Cambridge, he was drafted across the sea and his later activities were never definitely intimated by him or the authorities. After leaving England he only sent one letter and that showed him to still remain enthusiastic under trying conditions. He stated that the men had plenty of marching and whilst occasionally snatching an hour or two's sleep they were awakened either to go into action or resume their march. Laura received a separation allowance of 12 shillings and 6 pence per week. She was now pregnant with their first child.

She gave birth to a son on the 21st October 1914 and named him Wallace. Two days later his father died of his wounds in Boulogne General Hospital, never seeing his son. Laura received his belongings in 1915 and was awarded 15 shillings a week pension for her and her baby Wallace who lived to be 90 years old.

He is remembered with honour in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery as Sgt. Wallace Booth 9226 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry. His name appears on Soothill Upper Memorial and Batley War Memorial.

He was awarded the 1914—15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.



Researched by
Susan White, Batley History Group