Willie Fletcher





Rank: - Private

Number: - 5966

Regiment: - Royal Warwickshire Regiment 1st/5th Bn (Territorial)

Died of Wounds: - 27/07/1916 Age: 33 years

Cemetery: - Puchevillers British Cemetery, Somme, France 11.B. 27

"LOVED IN LIFE REMEMBERED IN DEATH HERBERT, ALICE AND NEPHEW SYDNEY"



Family Details

Willie was born in Dewsbury on the 5th February 1883, the son of Thomas (Tom) and Annie Maria Fletcher nee Ayres and baptised at Dewsbury Parish Church on 4th April 1883 when his father gave his occupation as a publican. The couple had married at St. Matthew's Church, Rastrick on 22nd August 1878.

In 1891 he was living with his family at 11, Alfred Place, Dewsbury. James Herbert was born in Rastrick in 1879 and Ethel Amelia in Dewsbury in 1885. Thomas who came from Hunslet was working as a labourer at a logwood mill.

His mother died in February 1896 when the family was still living at 11, Alfred Place, Dewsbury. It would appear the family went their separate ways after her death and in 1901 Willie was working as a waiter at an inn in Leeds and living as a boarder at the home of Mary Ann Davies of 8, Leeming Square, Leeds. Ethel Amelia was a boarder at Bramley, Leeds before she married and James Herbert also lived in the Armley/ Bramley area of Leeds.

Service Details

His service details have not survived and we have to date found no details in local newspapers but we do know he served in the 1/5th Battalion of Royal Warwickshire Regiment which from the 13th May 1915 was attached to the 143rd Brigade in 48th (South Midland) Division.

In 1916 they fought on the Somme at: -The Battle of Albert in which t*he Division held the line between the 56th (London) and the 31st Divisions, both of which were heavily engaged at Gommecourt and Serre respectively on 1 July 1916. Two of the Warwickshire battalions of the Division attacked on that day and suffered heavy casualties in assaulting the Quadrilateral (Heidenkopf))* (1st -13th July) The Battle of Bazentin Ridge in which the Division captured Ovillers (14-17 July) The Battle of Pozieres Ridge (23rd July-3rd September).

It is not known when Willie was wounded but a Casualty Clearing Station was set up nearby just before the start of the battles and it may have been at this last battle where he was wounded.

Willie is remembered with Honour at Batley Co-operative Society Roll of Honour and Batley War Memorial.





Researched by members of Batley History Group