# Joseph King




**Rank: -** Private

**Number: - 10707**

**Regiment: -** King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 2nd Battalion

**Died of Wounds, wounded 2/11/1914 and left leg later amputated: -** 12/12/1914 Age: 20 years

**Cemetery: -** Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France 111.B.61

Batley Reporter, 18 Dec 1914, 24 Dec 1914

## Family Details

Joseph was born in Westtown, Dewsbury on the 17th March 1895 but was registered as Joseph Patrick Burns but shortly after his birth Mary Burns married Ellam King on the 25th May 1895 at St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury.

The couple had eight other children, Annie was born in 1897, followed by Mary Ellen 1900, Lily 1903, Margaret 1905, Elam 1907, George 1910, Eveline 1913 and Norman in 1916.

When the 1901 census was taken Elam and Mary along with their two eldest daughters were living in Rotherham where Batley born Elam was a coal miner hewer.

In 1911 Joseph was living with his parents and five of his siblings in a two roomed home at 20, Parker Road, Dewsbury. He was working as a dresser at a coal mine whilst his father was a coal miner hewer.

Before Joseph enlisted the family had moved to live at 34, Albert Street, Batley Carr.

## Service Details

Joseph enlisted at Dewsbury and disembarked in France on the 8th October 1914. The Battalion had left Ireland and landed at Le Havre on the 16th August 1914 fighting at: -

The Battle of Mons and subsequent retreat, including the Action of Elouges ( 23-23 August)
The Battle of Le Cateau and the Affair of Crepy-en-Valois (26 August)
The Battle of the Marne (7-10 September)
The Battle of the Aisne (12-15 September)
The Battles of La Bassee and Messines 1914 ( 10th October -2nd November)

Joseph was wounded and wrote to his mother: -

*"Dear Mother, I now take the pleasure in writing to tell you that I am severely wounded, but I am going on quite well. I got wounded on Monday November 2nd and the bullet went through my leg and broke it, but cheer up, because I am hoping to be better soon and able to get home for Christmas. Tell all the boys I got wounded and am going on well."*

In a letter from the Base Hospital in Boulogne the Rev. E F Nugent, chaplain, wrote to his mother: -

*"I am writing to tell you that your son, Joseph, has been obliged to have his left leg amputated as far as the knee. They did their best to save it, but in order to save your son's life they had to lose his leg. Of course, he is feeling very weak today, because it was done yesterday. But he will be alright, I think, in a few days. He wanted me to write to tell you all about it. He is very brave and patient."*

He sent another letter dated 14th December 1914: -

"*My Dear Madam, --I grieve to tell you that Private King died here on December 12th. We so hope he was getting better, but he suddenly had a turn for the worse and died. I am sure he was prepared to go. I visited him several times and got to know him well. Everything was done for him to save him and he had his leg off hoping that it would save his life. He will be buried with military honours tomorrow morning. God bless and comfort you."*

Joseph wrote his last letter home to his sister*: -*

*"Dear Sister, Thanks very much for your postcard which I received yesterday. I'm sorry I haven't answered it sooner but I've felt a bit bad in myself for the last two or three days. I've not yet received the paper you said you had sent. I shall probably be here about a week longer then they will send me to a hospital in England near my home, probably Leeds or thereabouts. Today we had the pleasure of a visit from H.M. King George V and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Sir John French and a crowd of other officers. The King enquired how I was getting on and then passed on to the other lads. Give your chum my best respects. Give my love to mother, father and all at home and tell them I expect to see them soon. Don't forget that I shall be pleased to receive a present from you at Christmas. "*

Joseph was awarded the 1914 Star + Clasp, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.He is remembered with Honour on Batley and Dewsbury War Memorials and St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group