William Charles D. Parkinson





Rank: - Private

Number: - 21321

Regiment: - King's Own Scottish Borderers 7th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 11th May 1916 aged 20 years

Memorial: - Loos Memorial, Pas-de- Calais, France Panel 53-56

Family Details

William Charles Demure Wentworth Fitzwilliam was born in Wakefield in July 1895 the son of Harry and Clara Parkinson (nee Heald). He was given these Christian names after the Earl Fitzwilliam because he was born on the same day as when the Earl was returned to Parliament by the Wakefield electorate in July 1895. His father was a staunch Conservative and worked for the party on the day Earl Fitzwilliam was victorious and His Lordship visited the home the day he was born.

Although born in Wakefield the family went to live in Fort Ann Road, Soothill shortly after his birth and he attended Mill Lane School and St. Luke's Mission Church.

The family which comprised of Harry, Clara, Harry (1884), William, Charles (1896), James Kershaw (1898) later went to live at 1, Oaks Road, Soothill. The 1911 census shows that seven children had been born alive to the couple but three had died in infancy.

Before the war he worked as a twister and tier- on at Messrs. John Fenton and Sons, Batley Carr.

Service Details

William enlisted in early August 1915 and went to France in December 1915 with the King's Own Scottish Borderers.

The Battalion had fought at the Battle of Loos in September 1915 before William arrived in France.

Private Joe Asquith of Lady Ann Road wrote to his parents: -

"*As friends Charles and I came out together so it was little as I could do to write you in reference to him. He was one of a party who were buried in a dug-out by a shell that fell on the doorway and completely blocked the entrance. When they were got out it was found Charles and another had passed away. It was a very sad thing to have to witness these affairs in fact we can hardly realise it has happened and in the dark hours which the affair has brought upon you let me say how sorry I feel for you who mourn the loss of a loved son. It will be a great blow but there is a grand knowledge that he died a death which leaves behind it*

a glorious name, one which will live forever. I hope you will have the strength to bear the sorrow and though the clouds seem dark around you may you find a streak of sunshine to cheer you up."

Joe Asquith also wrote to a friend, Joseph Brook of Thornhill Lees: -

"I cannot make you realise what it is like. We have lost many pals including George Simmons (Leeds) and our old friend Charlie Parkinson. They were both in a dug out with many more when a shell burst in the doorway and brought down the entrance. They were buried several hours before they could be got out, and it was then found life had gone. Charlie makes the second man who set off from Dewsbury Station in the best of spirits and has now departed from this life after having fought bravely for his country. Just fancy the pals we know so well fighting alongside us one day, and gone the next. It goes to prove more and more that "whilst in life we are in the midst of death".

The other soldier referred to was Fred Jackson who left Dewsbury at the same time and died of wounds on 7th February 1916.

These letters were received before official confirmation.

At the time of his death William's brother Harry was a farrier in the Army.

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

William is remembered with Honour at St. Luke's Church, St. Paul's Church Hanging Heaton, Hanging Heaton War Memorial and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group