Ernest Pollard





Rank: - Private

Number: - 20728

Regiment: - Labour Corps

Died: - 17th February 1919 at Stanley Royd, Wakefield

Cemetery: - Birstall (St. Peter's) Plot A 1549

Family Details

Ernest was born in Birstall on 10th July 1881, the son of Fred and Hannah Mary Pollard (nee Scott). He was baptised at St. Peter's, Birstall on the 12th November 1893 on the same day was his brothers Alfred (1883) and Hiram (1887) and also his cousin Jesse Harold (1893). Their father was a greengrocer in Birstall where the business had been started by Hannah Mary.

The couple had married at St. Peter's Church, Birstall on the 22nd October 1863 and Fred's occupation was given as a cloth finisher. Walter Scott was born the following year. He was followed by Arthur in 1865, Harry 1867, Wilfred 1869 and Sarah in 1871.

The 1871 census shows that Fred was born at White Lee, Batley and was still working as a cloth finisher but Hannah Mary who came from Birstall was a greengrocer. The family was living at High Street, Birstall.

John James was born in 1873 followed by Mary Emily in 1875, Clara 1877, and Willie 1879.

The family was still at High Street in 1881 but the greengrocery business must have been prosperous because Fred had taken over the business and described himself as a greengrocer and farmer of 22 acres, employing one labourer. Thirteen-year-old Harry was helping him. Mary Emily was born in 1875 but sadly died in October 1876. Walter Scott Pollard was working in Leeds as an assistant at his Uncle William's provision shop. Alfred was born in 1883 followed by Byron 1886-May 1886 Hiram 1887, Hubert 1889-1889 and Annie Lizzie 1890-November 1890.

In 1891 Fred is shown as a gardener/fruiterer and Ernest born in 1881, Alfred 1883 and Hiram 1887 are also on the census with their parents but the older children had left home or died.

In 1901 Fred states he was a fruit merchant and Ernest was working as a fruit salesman. His brothers who were still at home were working in the mills. Fred died in November 1904 and Ernest continued with the business.

In 1911 Ernest was living at 53, Blackburn Road, Birstall with his mother and a live-in housekeeper, Sarah Boothroyd. The census shows that he actually had 15

siblings but eight had died. Hannah died in October 1913 and is buried in plot A 1549 at St. Peter's, Birstall. There is no headstone.

Ernest married Dora Lee on 4th August 1914 at Dewsbury Registry Office and Mary Emily was born the same year followed by Jessie in July 1916.

The family lived at 144, Jesmond Dene, Purlwell Lane, Mount Pleasant, Batley.

Service Details

According to his attestation papers Ernest enrolled in the army in December 1915 and called up for service on 3rd October 1916 but later that month the Batley News reported that he had been to a tribunal because he was the sole proprietor of a wholesale and retail fruiterer business. He said he would be ruined if his application was refused, because his two employees had joined the Colours and he was left with two men and a boy. He did have six brothers but only two were eligible for service and they were working in the mills and he understood they would be called up.

He was given grace until 1st January 1917.

He was re-enrolled at Pontefract in the K.O.Y.L.I. Depot and posted to the Labour Corps at Catterick for training. He embarked from Folkestone to Boulogne on 7th March 1917 serving in France until 16 January 1918 when he was evacuated to England. He was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital at Nestley the following day suffering from general paralysis, transferring to Dykebar War Hospital, Paisley on the 26 January. He was examined by doctors from Chelsea on 28 February 1918 and discharged from the army on 21st March 1918.

Whilst on active service his records show him" went absent without leave "from 5 pm on 19th November 1917 until reprimanded by the Military Police at 11.25 am at Bethune the following day He was improperly dressed. He was sentenced to 10 days and forfeited 2 days pay.

He transferred to the 35th Labour Company, Private 20728 on 14th May 1917.

He was discharged on 21st March 1918 at Nottingham aged 36 years and 9 months. His discharge papers describe him as being of fair complexion, blue

eyes, and light brown hair. He was a fruit merchant by trade. His military character was good but according to the King's Regulations was very good. His disability was aggravated by active service.

Ernest was taken to the Wakefield Asylum on 11th April 1918 where he died on 17th February 1919 and was buried at St Peter's, Birstall on 20th February 1919 in the same grave as his mother.

He left his wife £255.2s.1d. in his will.

On the 18th February 1920 the following memorials were in the Batley News,

Pollard – In loving memory of my dear husband, Ernest Pollard, who died 17th February 1919.

Years may wipe out many things
But this they'll wipe out never,
Memories of the days gone by,
When we were all together.
Anchored by love that death cannot sever
Sadly, we miss him and shall do for ever.

From his loving wife and two children.

Pollard---In loving memory of our dear brothers, Wilfred Pollard who died February 18th 1917; also, of Ernest Pollard, who died February 17th 1919.

One by one earth's ties are broken,
One by one they're linked above,
Soon there'll be a sweet reunion
In the land of Light and Love
Time passes but memories clings.

From Willie and Emily.

In 1921 the following memorials appeared in the Batley News: -

Pollard. In loving memory of my dear husband, Ernest Pollard, who died February 17th 1919

Years may wipe out many things,
But this they'll wipe out never,
Memories of the days gone by,
When we were altogether.
Anchored by love that death cannot tether,
Sadly we miss him, and shall do forever.

From his loving Wife and 2 children

The same memorial as the previous year also appeared from Willie and Emily.

Ernest is remembered with Honour at Batley and Birstall War Memorials.

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group