Willie Senior





Rank: -Private

Number: - 200855

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1/4th Battalion

Died of Wounds (Gas poisoning): - 5/04/1918 Age: 35 years

Cemetery: - St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France P. IX. P. 7B.

"MAY HIS REWARD BE AS GREAT AS HIS SACRIFICE"

Batley Reporter, 31 Dec 1915. Batley News, 4 May 1918, 11 May 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Willie was born in Batley in c.1882 the son of Seth and Sarah Senior nee Firth who had married on 23rd March 1882 at Batley Parish Church.

Sarah had previously married Thomas Pickup on 7th February 1874 at Batley Parish Church. David was born in 1876, James Herbert 1878 and Miranda 1880 who sadly died February 1883. Thomas died before the birth of Miranda in September 1879 aged 29 years leaving Sarah with three small children.

Seth was a coal miner who came from Whitley and he and his Batley born wife settled in Ward's Hill, Batley. Willie was born in 1882 followed by Ann Elizabeth (Annie) 1885 who sadly died aged 7 years in February 1893 and Clara 1887 who sadly she died in April 1901. In 1891 the family was living at 15, Ward's Hill, Batley. Leah was born on 15th April 1894. Sarah died in December 1900.

In 1901 Seth and his family which were Willie, Clara, Leah and David Pickup were living at 17, Ward's Hill, Batley. Seth and David were coal miners whilst Willie was a trammer at a coal mine. Prior to enlisting Willie worked at Soothill Wood Colliery.

Service Details

Willie enlisted in October 1914 and went to France at Easter 1915 with the first draft of the local territorials.

In 1915 they took part in the Battle of Aubers Ridge (9 May) and the defence against the first Phosgene attack (19 December) where Willie was severely gassed.
His records have not survived so it is not known if he came home but the Division fought in 1916 at: -

The Battle of Albert (1-13th July)
The Battle of Bazentin Ridge (14-17 July)
The Battle of Pozieres Ridge (23 July- 3 September)
The Battle of Flers-Courcelette (15-22 September)
which were phases *of the Battles of the Somme 1916*

In 1917 they took part in Operations on the Flanders Coast (Hush)
The Battle of Poelcapelle (9-12 October)
which was a phase of the Third Battles of the Ypres

The Division was preparing for the Battle of Estaires (9-11th April) when Willie it was reported that Willie had died of gas poisoning the effects of he had never fully recovered from in December 1915.

Willie was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal

He is remembered with Honour on Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group