Willie Stead





Rank: - Sapper

Number: - 167357

Regiment: - Royal Engineers 284th Army Troops Coy.

Died of pneumonia: - 13th November 1918 aged 26

Cemetery: - Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, Pas-de-Calais X.E.17

Batley Reporter, 22 Nov 1918 (classifieds)

Family Details.

Willie was born in Batley Carr in 1892 the youngest son of Jesse and Ann (nee Kilburn). He was baptised at Holy Trinity on 20th July 1892 when Jesse was described as a rag dealer. Jesse and Ann had married at Batley Parish Church on 16th April 1878.

In 1891 the family, consisting of Liversedge born Jesse, Ann, Edith (1879), Bertha (1882), Tom (1884) and Lucy (1889), was living at 30 Wood Hill, Batley Carr and Jesse was described as a warehouse manager. Lucy died in 1894 and before 1901 the family had moved to 44, Wood Hill and Tom was working as a Joiner's apprentice.

In 1911 the family was living at 2, Pickles Fields, Batley Carr and Jesse, who now says he was born in Robertown, was a grocer's warehouseman, Tom was a mill joiner and 16 year old Willie was an apprentice coachbuilder.

On 17th November 1917 at Holy Trinity Church Willie married Eva Grundell.

He was employed as a wheelwright by Mr. Grayson. Willie attended Holy Trinity Church and was well known as a bell ringer.

Service Details

Willie enlisted and was sent to France in 1916. He served there for two years without having even a scratch inflicted upon him.

His job in the Royal Engineers would have been to build camps, hospitals, bridges and supply maintenance to all R E installations also fighting when the need arose.

Without any warning that he was ill his wife, of 15, Naylor Street, Batley Carr received letters from the chaplain and matron of a hospital in Boulogne that he had died suddenly of influenza. He was buried with military honours in a cemetery nearby.

His father, Jesse, had died on March 28th 1918, his brother Tom was killed in action 10th April 1918 and his nephew Norman Renshaw (the son of Louisa Kilburn b. 1872 the illegitimate daughter of Ann) was killed in action on the 1st day of the Battle of the Somme, 1st July 1916.

STEAD—In ever loving memory of Jesse Stead, of Pickles' Field, Batley Carr, who died March 28th, 1918; also of Lance-Corpl. Tom Stead, R.E., who was killed in action in France, April 10th, 1918; also of Sapper Willie Stead, R.E., who died of pneumonia in France, November 13th, 1918 (sons of the above); also of Pte. Norman Renshaw, K.O.Y.L.I., who was killed in France, July 1st, 1916 (grandson of the above).

They pass beyond our touch, beyond our sight;
Never, thank God, beyond our love and prayers.
And even as, out of the darkest night,
Dawn stealeth, unawares,
So from our night of sorrow and distress
We who are left in loneliness below
May catch some vision of the blessedness
Which our beloved know.

—From the Family. 145813

He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

Willie is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group