Willie Thwaites





Rank: - Gunner (Driver)

Number: - 166396

Regiment: - Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery "D" Battery 88th Brigade

Died of Wounds: - 5th November 1918 aged 21 years

Cemetery: - Batley K 50

Family Details

Willie was born in Batley on 21st September 1897 the son of Henry and Ann Thwaites (nee Trowsdale) and was baptised at Batley Parish Church on 7th November 1897 when the family lived at 52, Queen Street and Henry was a teamer. The couple had married at Batley Parish Church on 28th December 1891.

Lillian was born 13th April 1895 followed by Willie and Jim in c1906.

In 1911 the family was living at 36, Queen Street with Ann's elder sister Mary Elizabeth. Henry was working as a teamster and both Ann and Lilian were weavers.

After leaving school Willie was employed as a twister in and gear drawer at Messrs. Russum and Wilkinson, Anchor Mills.

Service Details

Willie enlisted in August 1916 and went to France nine weeks before he was wounded on 1st June 1917.

His parents received a telegram from a clearing station saying he was dangerously ill suffering from wounds and could not be visited. This was followed by a letter from a Sister at the hospital who said he was seriously wounded in the back but was very bright and cheerful and did not appear to suffer. They later received another letter saying he was improving.

Willie was brought to East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital where he was a year and a half with severe wounds in the spine. He died on November 5th 1918 and was brought to Batley for a funeral on Tuesday 12th November without military honours.

The interment was conducted by Rev. J.E. Rutherford and a few personal friends in the Forces were present. There were wreaths from the family, the workpeople at Anchor Mills, the sister and nurses at the hospital where he died ,the Boys in the Northgate Ward, Uncle Tom and Aunt Dora , Uncle Tom Thwaites , Mr.& Mrs. Sykes, Mr.& Mrs. Trowsdale and Gertie , Mr.& Mrs. Marshall and family, the neighbours, and Mr.&Mrs. C. Hemingway . The Batley Sons of Temperance were also represented.

THWAITES.—On November 5th, 1918, age 21, from wounds received in action June 1st, 1917, Driver Willie Thwaites, beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. H Thwaites, 36, Queen Street, Batley, at the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital. Interment to take place at Batley Cemetery.

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

Willie is remembered with Honour at Broomhill Methodist Church, Batley Working Men's Club and Batley War Memorial



Researched by members of
Batley History Group