



Joseph Arthur Littlewood

1878 – 1916

Joseph was born in Earlsheaton on 20th January 1878 and baptised on 7th December that year at St Peter's Church, Earlsheaton. His mother was Hannah Elizabeth (Annie) Littlewood, born in Honley, Huddersfield in 1859 and died in 1940. She was married to John Senior (born in 1857 and died in 1920) on 26th January 1879 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury. In 1901 John Senior is recorded as publican of the Star Inn, Middlestown near Wakefield and in 1911 he is a barber living at Post Office Row, Ackworth Moor Top near Pontefract.

On the 1881 Census, Joseph and his mother lived with the family of his grandmother Emma Barrowcliffe and her husband William at Middle Road, Earlsheaton. Annie had a son, Fred Senior, born 17th January 1887. In 1891 Joseph is living with his mother at Commonsides, Earlsheaton, his occupation is a warp dresser. Fred Senior is living at Cross Street, Earlsheaton with the family of John Barrowcliffe, the brother of William.

Annie was married in 1891 to a widower with four children, Newsome Rigg (born in 1851 and died in 1915) they had three daughters; Miranda, born in 1894, Elsie, born in 1898 and Lena, born in 1903. In 1901 they all lived at Middle Road, Earlsheaton. Joseph was working as a coal hewer; Fred is recorded as Frederick S. Rigg. In 1911 they lived at The Nook, Low Side, Earlsheaton, but later moved to 10, Blenheim Street, Scarborough and then Aberdeen Walk, Scarborough.

Joseph was a single man who was attached to Earlsheaton Wesleyan Chapel. In 1911 he worked as a coal miner, boarding with a family named Roberts at Ladybalk Lane in Pontefract. Prior to enlistment he worked at the Pildacre Colliery Co. at Earlsheaton.

He served as Private 28973 in the 18th Battalion Welsh Regiment having enlisted in Caerphilly in 1915 and was sent to the Western Front in June 1916. He was accidentally killed on 20th August 1916 whilst taking part in bombing practise when a defective bomb exploded. He was buried in Maroc British Cemetery, Grenay, Pas-de-Calais, France. Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His mother received a letter at her Scarborough home from a Nonconformist Chaplain, the Rev. Evan Mathias telling her of the circumstances of his death and his funeral.

Grenay is a village about 15 kilometres south-east of Bethune. Maroc British Cemetery was a front-line cemetery used by fighting units and field ambulances, and protected from German observation by a slight rise in the ground. The cemetery now contains 1,379 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War.

Joseph is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Earlsheaton Park War Memorial.

In Memory of

Private

Joseph Arthur Littlewood

28973, 18th Bn., Welsh Regiment who died on 20 August 1916 Age 38

Son of Annie Rigg, of 44, Aberdeen Walk, Scarborough, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Maroc British Cemetery, Grenay



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.