



George Foster

1878?-1916

George's family background is not known. He gave his age as 35 when he married Clara Smith (born in 1888 and died in 1953) at Dewsbury Register Office on June 9th 1913 which would make his birth year around 1878. His entry in the records of Soldiers Died in the Great War gives his birthplace as Liverpool but no definitive birth record has been found, nor has he been positively identified on any census records.

On his marriage record he gave his address as Manor Road, Westtown, Dewsbury and named his father as George Foster (deceased), he also stated that he was a widower but no details of his first marriage have been found. Clara had a daughter, Annie Smith, born in 1907. After their marriage they lived at 31, Thornhill Road, Dewsbury and later at 38, Middle Road, Westtown; they had two children, Nellie, born in 1913 and Mary, born in 1916 and died in 1916. Clara was remarried to a widower Patrick Kane (born in 1881 and died in 1959) on 23rd February 1918 and they had eight children between 1919 and 1932. They later lived at 120, Middle Road, Westtown.

George worked as an iron puddler at Forge Lane Foundry in Thornhill Lees.

He served as Lance Corporal 14916 in the 6th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; he appears to have been called up as a National Reservist and was sent to the Western Front on 21st May 1915. He had been wounded in Flanders at the Battle of Hooge on 2nd August 1915 but still took part in the next attack. He was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 15th September 1916, the opening day of the offensive which became known as the battle of Flers-Courcelette. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme. George was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He was seen being assisted into a shell hole by his comrades by a Serjeant who subsequently wrote to his widow. The Serjeant had to press on as the company was in all out attack and did not see him again. George was said to be a very popular NCO.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

George is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church.

In Memory of
Lance Corporal
George Foster

14916, 6th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 15 September 1916

Remembered with Honour
Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

FOSTER G.