



John Willie Armstrong

1884 – 1917

John was born in Westtown, Dewsbury on 2nd July 1884. His father was William Armstrong, a labourer born in 1862 and died in 1946. His mother was Elizabeth (nee Rock) born in 1866 and died in 1898. They were married on 29th September 1883 at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury.

Their other children were; Margaret Ellen, born in 1887, Thomas, born in 1889 and died in 1889, Patrick, born in 1891 and died in 1893, Thomas, born in 1894 and died in 1895, Joseph, born in 1897 and died in 1897 and Robert, born in 1898.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 10, Corrie Fold, Westtown. In 1901 John was a boarder at 40, Ingham Road, Thornhill Lees with the family of Mrs Catherine Coyne; he worked as a taker-in at Messrs Kilner Brothers Glass Bottle Factory in Thornhill Lees.

John was educated at St. Paulinus School and attended the church. He was now a Glass Blower at Kilner Brothers when he was married on 5th February 1910 to Catherine Kenny (born in 1886 and died in 1971). In 1911 they lived at 12, White Row, New Street, Wakefield and later at 12, George Street, Thornhill Lees. They did not have any children.

He attested as a regular on 24th August 1903 into the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry as Private 7782 and was discharged on the 26th August 1906. Recalled as a reservist upon the outbreak of war on 5th August 1914 he was discharged as unfit on 7th November 1914. He re-enlisted in the 2nd Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) serving as Private 24957 and was sent to the Western Front in 1916. Less than a month later he was buried with some comrades when a trench collapsed during an enemy bombardment. He was sent back to a British hospital to recuperate and then to a convalescent camp in Ireland. He was able to spend Christmas at home with his wife but returned to the Front in early 1917. He died of broncho-pneumonia on 8th April 1917 in No 12 Stationary Hospital at St. Pol-sur-Ternoise. He was buried in St. Pol Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas-de-Calais, France, John was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The town of St Pol is about 29 kilometres south-west of Bethune and 34 kilometres west-north-west of Arras. St. Pol-sur-Ternoise was an administrative centre during the whole of the war, taken over by British troops from the French in March 1916; and No.12 Stationary Hospital was posted on the race-course near the town from 1st June 1916, to 1st June 1919. The Extension was made by the French Tenth Army, and in March 1916-April 1918, the British Plot was added in the South-West quarter. There are now over 200, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site.

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

In Memory of
Private

J W Armstrong

24957, 2nd Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) who died on 08 April 1917

Remembered with Honour
St. Pol Communal Cemetery Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

