



Wilfred Ruddlesden

1879 – 1917

Wilfred was born in Dewsbury on 28th October 1879 and baptised at Moorlands Wesleyan Chapel, Boothroyd Lane, Dewsbury on 7th December 1879. His father was Allen Ruddlesden, a Draper born in Gawthorpe, Ossett in 1837 and died in 1893. His mother was Mary Jane (nee Stafford) born in Lepton, Huddersfield in 1845 and died in 1893. They were married on 14th November 1867 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury.

They had another son, Samuel David, born in Springfield, New Connecticut, USA in 1871.

On the 1881 Census the family lived at Marriott Street, Dewsbury, in 1891 at Battye Street, Dewsbury. In 1901 Wilfred was living with the family of a cousin, David Stafford at 8, Camroyd Street, Dewsbury.

Wilfred was educated Eastborough Council School and was married in 1903 to Charlotte Overend (born in 1881 and died in 1965); they lived at 11, New Street, Earlsheaton and had two children; Jenny, born in 1903 and Kate, born in 1913. They later adopted Mary Overend, born in 1908. In 1901 he was listed as a confectioner's assistant and in 1911 as a sugar boiler; he probably worked at the Slade and Bullock sweet factory, which was close to where he lived. Slade and Bullock was where the first stick of lettered rock was made. In 1916 he was employed at the woollen mill of Messrs. J. Fenton and Sons, Batley Carr.

He enlisted in September 1916 serving as Private 242936 in the 1st/5th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. He was killed in France on 4th June 1917 by the bursting of a shell and was buried in Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, Nord, France. Wilfred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Pont-du-Hem is a hamlet situated on the main road from La Bassee to Estaires. The Cemetery was begun in an apple-orchard in July 1915 and used until April 1918. Pont-du-Hem was in German hands from mid-April to mid-September 1918. After the Armistice, more graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefields and from smaller burial grounds. There are now over 1,500, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over half are unidentified.

Wilfred 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 War Memorial in Earlsheaton Park and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church Earlsheaton and on the Memorial Plaque from the now demolished Earlsheaton Highfield Congregational Church relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury and on the Memorial Plaque to the former pupils of Eastborough School.

In Memory of
Private
Wilfred Ruddlesden

242936, 1st/5th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 04 June 1917 Age 38

Son of Allen and Mary Jane Ruddlesden, of Dewsbury; husband of Charlotte Ruddlesden, of 11, New St.,
Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.