



Joseph Owen

1864-1918

Joseph was born in Dewsbury in 1864. His father was George Owen, a Mason born in Batley in 1835 and died in 1872. His mother was Mary (nee Dixon) born in Hanging Heaton in 1838 and died in 1905. They were married on 22nd June 1856 at All Saints Church, Batley.

Their other children were; Amos Henry, born in 1858, Allen, born in 1859 and died in 1862, Eliza Ann, born 1861 and James Arthur, born in 1870.

Mary was remarried at All Saints Church, Dewsbury on 27th August 1882 to Abraham Senior (born in 1843 and died in 1904).

On the 1881 Census the family are living at Victoria Road, Dewsbury, Joseph's occupation is shown as a Bobbin Stapler. In 1891 he is a boarder at the Dusty Miller Public House, Foundry Street, Dewsbury working as a Weaver. In 1901 he is working as a General Labourer, lodging at 105, Westgate Street, Gloucester. In 1911 he is a boarder at an Inn on Pitt Street, Boothroyd Lane, Dewsbury working as a Labourer. He was unmarried.

From 1893 to 1913 he served 20 separate terms of imprisonment, mainly for drunkenness.

He served as Private 25191 in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, later as Private 15988 in the Labour Corps and finally Private 40685 in the 12th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment. He died of sickness in a hospital in Boulogne, France on 1st February 1918 and was buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France. Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Boulogne was one of the three base ports most extensively used by the Commonwealth armies on the Western Front throughout the First World War. It was closed and cleared on the 27 August 1914 when the Allies were forced to fall back ahead of the German advance, but was opened again in October and from that month to the end of the war; Boulogne and Wimereux formed one of the chief hospital areas. Until June 1918, the dead from the hospitals at Boulogne itself were buried in the Cimetiere de L'Est, one of the town cemeteries, the Commonwealth graves forming a long, narrow strip along the right hand edge of the cemetery. In the spring of 1918, it was found that space was running short in the Eastern Cemetery in spite of repeated extensions to the south, and the site of the new cemetery at Terlincthun was chosen. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery contains 5,577 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. Unusually, the headstones are laid flat in this cemetery. This is due to the sandy soil.

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 Springfield Congregational Church Memorial Plaque now relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of

Private

Joseph Owen

40685, 12th Bn., South Staffordshire Regiment who died on 01 February 1918 Age 53

Son of George and Mary Owen, of Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Boulogne Eastern Cemetery



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

