



William (Willie) Kendall **1896-1918**

Willie was born in Ravensthorpe in 1896. His father was William Kendall, a woollen willeyer born in Birstall in 1840 and died in 1915. His mother was Elizabeth (nee White) born in Shincliffe, County Durham in 1859 and died in 1927. They were married on 17th June 1882 at St. Mary's Church, Mirfield.

Their other children were; Eva, born in 1885, Harry, born in 1887 and served in World War 1, Charley/Charlie, born in 1889, Florence/Florrie, born in 1891, Fred, born in 1893 and died in 1898 and Frieda/Freda, born in 1899.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at Duke Street, Mirfield, in 1901 at Dearnley Street, Ravensthorpe, in 1911 at 20, Garden Terrace, Ravensthorpe and later at 11, Dearnley Street.

Willie was a single man who was educated at St. Saviour's Boys School, and attended Ravensthorpe Congregational Church and Sunday school. He worked as a coal miner (hurrier) at the Three Nuns Colliery, Mirfield.

He enlisted on 15th June 1915 into "A" Company 2nd Battalion Kings Own Scottish Borderers serving as Private 20489 and was sent to the Western Front on 30th September 1915 where he later contracted trench foot and was sent home to recover. He returned to the front and was with the 1st Battalion on 1st July 1916 when he received serious shrapnel wounds to both legs and was hospitalised from July to December 1916. He returned to the front early in April 1918 and in June 1918 he enjoyed a period of home leave and upon his return he secured the post of an officer's servant. He was killed in action in France on 30th July 1918 when he was shot by a sniper; he was buried in Tannay British Cemetery, Thiennes, Nord, France. Willie was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His mother received a letter on the 13th August from Second Lieutenant William McDonald, the officer to whom Willie had acted as servant, telling of how he had been killed and that whilst only serving under him for two weeks, he had grown to like him very much and described him as "*a splendid fellow*" He also enclosed Willie's cap badge.

The village of Thiennes is about 8 kilometres east of Aire-sur-la-Lys, a town found between Bethune and St. Omer. It was not until the German offensive of April 1918, by which time Merville was overwhelmed and the German line had passed along the River Lys nearly as far as St. Venant that Thiennes became a place of British burials. On the 10th of that month the first death occurred in the 13th Field Ambulance (belonging to the 5th Division) during its service at Tannay, and thenceforward until the first week in August, 5th Division units carried out almost all the burials in Tannay British Cemetery which now contains 363 First World War burials.

Willie is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and as *William Kendall* in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and as *William Kendal* on the Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of

Private

Willie Kendall

20489, "A" Coy. 2nd Bn., King's Own Scottish Borderers who died on 30 July 1918 Age 22

Son of Elizabeth and the late William Kendall (late of the Seaforth Highlanders), of Ravensthorpe, near Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Tannay British Cemetery, Thiennes



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph taken by Chris and Jean Cosgrove.
Supplied by courtesy of the "In Memories" Website of Pierre Vandervelden, Belgium.