



William James (Willie) Benson

1898-1918

Willie was born in Batley on 4th July 1898 and baptised 7th August 1898 at All Saints Church, Batley. His father was George Edward Benson, a Master Finisher born in Batley in 1874 and died in 1939. His mother was Sarah Elizabeth (nee Smith) born in Batley in 1875 and died in 1967. They were married on 8th January 1898 at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Batley.

They also had a daughter, Minnie, born in 1904.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 20, Queen Street, Batley and in 1911 at 18, Clarence Terrace, Savile Town.

Willie was a single man who was educated at St. Mary's School in Savile Town and attended connected the Church and Sunday school; he worked as an assistant to his father George who was a master finisher at Messrs G.H. Hirst and Company, Victoria Mills, Savile Town.

He was called up in February 1917 serving as Private 52753 in the 1st/5th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 1st August that same year. On 21st April 1918 he suffered a shattered ankle from a gunshot wound and was confined at Bagthorpe Military Hospital in Nottingham, the injury being so severe that it was four months before the doctors dared to operate; he was discharged on 13th September and was transferred to Becketts Park Hospital in Leeds. Whilst visiting his parents on 26th October he complained of not feeling well, upon his return to the hospital he was diagnosed to be suffering from influenza which in turn caused bronchopneumonia (Spanish Flu); he died in Becketts Park Hospital on 4th November 1918 and was buried in Dewsbury Cemetery. Willie was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Willie is commemorated as *Willie Benson* on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and the Batley War Memorial and as *William Benson* on the War Memorial from the now demolished St. Marys Church, Savile Town now displayed in Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

In Memory of

Private

W J Benson

52753, 1st/5th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 04 November 1918 Age 20

Son of George Edward and Sarah Elizabeth Benson, of 18, Clarence Terrace, Savile Town, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Dewsbury Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

