



Joseph King 1895-1914

Joseph was born in Westtown, Dewsbury on 17th March 1895 and baptised at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church on 14th April 1895; his birth and baptismal names were both recorded as Joseph Patrick Burns. His mother was Mary Burns, born in Dewsbury in 1874 and died in 1927. His father was Elam King, a Coal Hower born in Batley Carr in 1874 and died in 1941. They were married on 25th May 1895 at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church.

Their other children were; Annie, born in 1897, Mary Ellen, born in 1900, Lily, born in 1903, Margaret, born in 1905, Elam, born in 1907, George, born in 1910, Eveline, born in 1913 and Norman, born in 1916.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 8, Brimsworth Lane, Rotherham, in 1911 at 20, Parker Road, Thornhill Lees and later at 34, Albert Street, Batley Carr. Elam King volunteered for Army Service at the age of 46 and was accepted into the Labour Centre Northern Command on 2nd June 1919, he was demobilised on 2nd May 1920.

In 1911 Joseph worked as a Hurrier in Shaw Cross Coal Mine.

He served as Private 10707 in the 2nd Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 10th August 1914. He fought in the battle of Mons and the retreat from there and further battles at; Elouges (23rd-24th August), Le Cateau and the Affair of Crepy-en-Valois (26th August), the Battle of the Marne (7th-10th September), the Battle of the Aisne (12th-15th September), and the Battles of La Bassee and Messines (10th October-2nd November). He was wounded in the left leg on 2nd November 1914, complications set in and it was necessary to amputate below the knee; his mother received two letters from a Chaplain, the Reverend E.F. Nugent; the second of which informed her of his death on 12th December 1914 at the Allied Forces Base Hospital in Boulogne. He was buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France. Joseph was awarded the 1914 Star with Clasp, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His last letter home read: *"Dear Sister, Thanks very much for your postcard which I received yesterday. I'm sorry I haven't answered it sooner but I've felt a bit bad in myself for the last two or three days. I've not yet received the paper you said you had sent. I shall probably be here about a week longer then they will send me to a hospital in England near my home, probably Leeds or thereabouts. Today we had the pleasure of a visit from H.M. King George V and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Sir John French and a crowd of other officers. The King enquired how I was getting on and then passed on to the other lads. Give your chum my best respects. Give my love to mother, father and all at home and tell them I expect to see them soon. Don't forget that I shall be pleased to receive a present from you at Christmas. "*

Boulogne was one of the three base ports most extensively used by the Commonwealth armies on the Western Front throughout the First World 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. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery contains 5,577 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. Unusually, the headstones are laid flat in this cemetery, 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 War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church and on the Memorial Plaque in St. Joseph's R.C. Church, Batley Carr and on the Batley War Memorial.

In Memory of
Private
Joseph King

10707, 2nd Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 12 December 1914 Age 19

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Elam King, of 34, Albert St., Batley Carr, Batley, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Boulogne Eastern Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

