



Abraham Wolstenholme (Served as Fred Buckley) 1881-1914

Abraham was born in Dewsbury in 1881. His father was Henry Wolstenholme, a Hairdresser born in Dewsbury in 1843 and died in 1924. His mother was Betty/Betsy (nee Buckley) born in Dewsbury in 1844 and died in 1933. They were married in 1866.

Their other children were; Brooke, born in 1869, Louisa, born in 1875, Martha, born in 1880, Mary, born in 1883, Edith, born in 1884 and Addie, born in 1888.

The family lived at 6-8 Princess Street, Westtown, where Henry had a hairdressing business at which Abraham worked after leaving school.

Abraham was married in 1902 to Lydia Pickles (born in 1880 and died in 1942). They had four children; Eva, born in 1903, Marjorie, born in 1910, Betsy, born in 1912 and Nellie, born in 1914 and died in 1914. On the 1911 census Abraham and his family are living at 2, Elms Hill, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, his occupation is shown as a cotton extractor. At the time of his death the family were living at Pitt Street, Dewsbury; Abraham had resumed his work in the family hairdressing business, his father having retired. Lydia was remarried at Broomhill Methodist Chapel, Batley on 9th April 1917 to William Eggleshaw (born in 1891 and died in 1948).

He attested in the Militia at Leeds on 6th December 1903 under the name of Fred Buckley (his mother's maiden name) declaring his marital status as single. According to the newspaper report of his death, he had served for three years as Private 6539 in the West Yorkshire Regiment from 30th January 1904 and was on the Reserve List for a further seven years. At the outbreak of war he was recalled on 5th August 1914 and served in the 1st Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) as Lance Corporal 7385 Fred Buckley and was sent to the Western Front on 10th August 1914. He was killed in action on 20th September 1914 during the Battle of the Marne. His remains were never identified for burial and so he was commemorated as Fred Buckley on the La Ferté-sous-Jouarre Memorial, Seine-et-Marne, France. Abraham was awarded the 1914 Star with Clasp, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. A report in the local newspapers in October 1914 went on to state that Abraham was the first Dewsbury man to be killed in WW1, but in fact six men had died before him whose deaths were confirmed later.

In 2021 his Pension Records became available to view which proved beyond doubt that Fred Buckley was in fact Abraham Wolstenholme and these were forwarded by Dewsbury Sacrifices to the relevant authorities. On 3rd June 2021 his records were amended to show his true name and in due course his name on the La Ferté-sous-Jouarre Memorial will be corrected.

La Ferté-sous-Jouarre is a small town 66 kilometres to the east of Paris, located on the main road running east from Paris. The Memorial is situated in a small park on the south-western edge of the town, on the south bank of the River Marne. La Ferté-sous-Jouarre Memorial to the Missing commemorates 3,740 officers and men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) who fell at the battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne and the Aisne between the end of August and early October 1914 and have no known graves.

Abraham is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Memorial Plaque from Moorlands Wesleyan Methodist Church, now stored in the Resource Centre at Batley Central Methodist Church.

In Memory of
Lance Corporal

Abraham Wolstenholme

7385, 1st Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 20 September 1914

(Served as Fred Buckley)

Remembered with Honour
La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

