



Joseph Windle Barber 1893 - 1917

Joseph was born in Sanford, Maine, USA on 11th April 1893. His father was also Joseph Barber, a Dyer born in Hunslet, Leeds in 1867 and died in 1897. His mother was Sarah Ann (nee Windle, formerly Fewster) born in Earlsheaton in 1867 and died in 1945. They were married in Sanford on 23rd April 1892.

They also had a daughter, Mary Elizabeth born in Earlsheaton in 1897. On the 1901 Census they were living with Sarah's parents at Headland Lane, Earlsheaton.

Sarah was previously married to John Herbert Fewster (born in 1868 and died in 1889) on 31st March 1888 at St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton. She married for a third time in 1903 to Thomas Watson (born in 1857 and died in 1931). They had two children; Mark Watson, born in 1904 and Elizabeth Watson, born in 1906. In 1911 they lived at 60, Walker Street, Earlsheaton.

Joseph was a single man who was educated at Earlsheaton Council School and attended Highfield Congregational Sunday School. He was employed by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company at Horbury and previously as a leather board manufacturer at a paper mill.

He was in camp with the Territorials at the outbreak of war and served in 'D' Battery 311th Brigade. Royal Field Artillery with the Service Number 780053 and rose to the rank of Serjeant. He was posted to the Western Front in January 1917 and was killed in action during the Battle of Arras on 30th April 1917. He was buried in Bailleul Road East Cemetery, St. Laurent Blangy, Pas-de-Calais, France. Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His commanding officer wrote to his mother, *"I hope you will find some consolation in the knowledge that he was firing his gun at the time, and fell at his post. Death was instantaneous, the wound being on the chest. The doctor tells me he would feel no pain."*

St. Laurent-Blangy is a village adjoining the north-east side of Arras. Bailleul Road East Cemetery was begun in April 1917 and after the Armistice by the concentration of isolated graves from a very wide area North, East and South of Arras. There are now over 1,000, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over half are unidentified, and seven special memorials record the names of soldiers from the United Kingdom buried in Northumberland Cemetery, Fampoux, whose graves could not be found on concentration; and a number of graves are marked by headstones bearing the additional words, "Buried near this spot". Every year of the war is represented in the cemetery, but more particularly the last nine months of 1917.

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 Earlsheaton War Memorial in Earlsheaton Park and on the Oak Reredos of St. Peter's Church Earlsheaton and on the Memorial Plaque from the now demolished Earlsheaton Highfield Congregational Church relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of
Serjeant
J W Barber

780053, "D" Bty. 311th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 30 April 1917

Remembered with Honour
Bailleul Road East Cemetery, St. Laurent-Blangy



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.