



Samuel James Major

1886-1918

Samuel was born in Basford, Nottingham in 1886. His father was Caleb John Major, a Coal Miner born in Basford in 1861. His mother was Elizabeth (nee Northage, formerly Smith) born in Arnold, Nottinghamshire in 1860 and died in 1914. They were married in 1882.

They had another son, William Charles, born in Basford in 1883; in 1911 he is recorded as Charles William and was killed in action on 18th April 1915.

Elizabeth had a daughter, Martha Northage, born in 1877. In 1879 she was married to a John Smith (born in 1856 and died in 1881); they had a son, also named John Smith, born in 1879.

In 1891 the family lived at 12, Durban Terrace, Radford, Nottingham, in 1901 at 37, Back Bright Street, Dewsbury. In 1911 Caleb is living in a lodging house in Pontefract and is recorded as single, his occupation is a Labourer. Elizabeth is living with the family of her daughter Martha (now Mrs. John Slevin) at 35, Denstons Yard, Central Street, Dewsbury.

Samuel was educated at the Victoria Jubilee Council School and was a member of the Court "Abiding Hope" of Foresters in Batley. In 1911 he worked as a Fire Stoker in a chemical works and later as a Foreman Night Carboniser at Messrs Wilson Brothers in Chickenley. He was married on 15th April 1905 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury to Frances Waite (born in 1881 and died in 1967) they had three children; Agnes, born in 1906 and died in 1907, Ada, born in 1907 and George, born in 1909. In 1911 they were living with Frances's family at 9a, High Street, Westtown and later at 182, Whitaker's Yard, Town Green, Earlsheaton. Frances was remarried in 1922 to Joseph Fortis (born in 1869 and died in 1949)

He enlisted in June 1916 into the 20th Company of the Machine Gun Corps with the Service Number 58124, rising to the rank of Lance Corporal. He died of pneumonia and influenza (Spanish Flu) in the 18th Casualty Clearing Station at Doullens, France on 20th December 1918 and was buried in Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No. 2, Somme, France. Samuel was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Doullens is a town in the Department of the Somme, approximately 30 kilometres north of Amiens on the road to Arras. The Communal Cemetery and Extensions lie on the eastern side of the town. The 18th Casualty Clearing Station was based at Doullens from 18th November 1918 to May 1919. The Communal Cemetery Extension No.2 contains 374 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Samuel is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

In Memory of
Lance Corporal

Samuel James Major

58124, 20th Coy., Machine Gun Corps who died on 20 December 1918 Age 34

Son of Caleb and Elizabeth Major, of Dewsbury; husband of Frances Major, of 182, Wittakers Yard, Town Green, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No.2



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of the British War Graves Website of Michael McCann.