



Gilbert Parker

1896 – 1917

Gilbert was born in Dewsbury in 1896. His father was Thomas Parker, a woollen mill worker born in Dewsbury in 1871 and died in 1936. He volunteered for active service during World War 1 and served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers. His mother was Florence (nee Thewlis) born in Dewsbury in 1876 and died in 1945. They were married in Dewsbury in 1895; her name is recorded as *Florence Nightingale Thewlis*.

Their other children were: Joseph, born in 1899 and served World War 1, Albert, born in 1904, Evelyn, born in 1905 and Ivy, born in 1910.

On the 1901 Census they lived at 113, Lidgate Lane, Dewsbury, in 1911 at Scargill Street, Dewsbury and later at 4, Beatson Street, Thornhill Lees where Florence was still living in 1939.

Gilbert was a single man who was educated at Dewsbury Parish Church School and was becoming well known as a boxer, had he survived the War he was booked to fight at the National Sporting Club. He worked in the rag trade, firstly for Messrs Joshua Ellis and Son and then for Messrs Henry Burrows Ltd.

He enlisted in Pontefract in March 1916 as Private 23451 in the York and Lancaster Regiment later transferring to the 6th Battalion of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) serving as Private 241003. He was sent to the Western Front in January 1917 and was badly wounded in the aftermath of the Battle of Arras. It is reported that he had laid in a shell hole for four days until 23rd May when he was taken to a Casualty Clearing Station with severe wounds to his thigh and back and was operated upon immediately. He died on 25th May 1917 and is buried in Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery, Saulty, Pas-de-Calais, France. Gilbert was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His family received two poignant letters informing them of his death, one was from the Rev. Eustace Hill and the other from hospital Sister Luard.

Warlincourt and Saulty are villages on either side of the main road between Arras and Doullens. The site of the cemetery was chosen in May 1916. It was used from June 1916 to May 1917 by the 20th and 43rd Casualty Clearing Stations, in February 1917 by the 1st/1st South Midland, and from April to June 1917 by the 32nd. From June 1917, the cemetery was practically unused until the fighting of May and June 1918, when field ambulances buried in it. After the Armistice the cemetery was increased by graves brought in from smaller military cemeteries. The cemetery now contains 1,266 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Gilbert 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 Dewsbury Parish Church School Memorial Plaque.

In Memory of

Private

Gilbert Parker

241003, 6th Bn., Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who died on 25 May 1917 Age 20

Son of Tom and Florence Parker, of 4, Beatson St., Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery, Saulty



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.