



James Wadsworth

1886 – 1916

James was born on 12th March 1886 at Longshaw End, Billinge, near St. Helens, Lancashire. His father was John Wadsworth, a coal miner born in Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancashire in 1860 and died in 1934. His mother was Mary Jane (née Halliwell) born in Billinge in 1859 and died in 1908. They were married in 1879.

Their other children were; Mary Ellen, born in 1879, Martha, born in 1881, Maria, born in 1883 and died in 1885, Eliza, born in 1885 and died in 1885, William, born in 1887, Maria, born in 1889, Eliza, born in 1891, John, born in 1893, Joseph, born in 1895, Ann, born in 1897, Esther, born in 1899, Emma, born in 1901, Lucy, born in 1904, Eva, born in 1911, and Arthur, born in 1913 and died in 1913. Joseph and William both served in World War 1.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 7, Sims Lane End, Ashton-in-Makerfield, in 1901 at 153, Billinge Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield and in 1911 at 152, Eaton Cottages, North Ashton near Wigan.

James was employed in the coal mining industry. The 1901 Census records him as a colliery labourer below ground and by 1911 he worked as a coal hewer. On this Census, he was a visitor to the home of James and Eliza Walker at 6, Gundills Yard, Horsefair, Pontefract, along with an Annie Wadsworth. Described as married, Annie was in fact his common-law wife. Annie Roby (née Cunliffe) was born in Runcorn, Cheshire in 1876 and died in 1943. She was married in 1890 to Thomas Roby (born in 1871 and died in 1940) and had five children to him between the years 1891 to 1907. In 1911 Thomas is living next door to James's family; his status is recorded as a widower.

James and Annie had two children, their births were recorded as; Lucy Wadsworth, born 25th December 1911 and James Wadsworth Roby, born 1st February 1916. The addresses on James's Pension Record card are; 104, Ass Hill, Chapel Buildings, Old Church, Pontefract and Carr's Buildings, Monkhill, Pontefract. She later moved to live at Elephant Lane, Thatto Heath, St. Helens.

He enlisted in Pontefract serving as Private 16100 in the 7th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 22nd July 1915. He was killed in action at Boezinge near Ypres on 6th March 1916; his obituary in the Wigan Observer and District Advertiser on 6th May 1916 stated he was working in a front-line trench when he was hit in the head by a large piece of shrapnel. He was buried in Bard Cottage Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. James was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

For much of the First World War, the village of Boezinge (now Boezinge) directly faced the German line across the Yser canal. Bard Cottage was a house a little set back from the line, close to a bridge called Bard's Causeway, and the cemetery was made nearby in a sheltered position under a high bank. Burials were made between June 1915 and October 1918 and they reflect the presence of the 49th (West Riding), the 38th (Welsh) and other infantry divisions in the northern sectors of the Ypres Salient, as well as the advance of artillery to the area in the autumn of 1917. There are now 1,639 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 39 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate three casualties known to be buried among them.

James 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. No link to Dewsbury has been established.

In Memory of

Private

J Wadsworth

16100, 7th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 06 March 1916

Remembered with Honour

Bard Cottage Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

