



Fred Secker

1889 – 1917

Fred was born in Dewsbury in 1889. His father was William Cooper Secker, a cloth weaver, born in Dewsbury in 1864 and died in 1929. His mother was Annetta (nee Mayman) born in Batley in 1864. They were married in 1889.

Their other children were; Edward, born in 1894 and died in 1896, Arthur, born in 1897 and served in World War 1, Gilbert, born in 1901 and William, born in 1910.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 22, Thornton Street, Dewsbury, in 1901 and 1911 at 25, Scargill Street, Eightlands, Dewsbury.

Fred was educated at Boothroyd School and worked as a plumber; he was married to Jane Goodall (born in 1892 and died in 1959) on 12th December 1914 at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Dawgreen, Dewsbury. They lived at 1, Hanover Square, Dewsbury and had a son, Albert, born in 1915.

He enlisted in June 1916 into the Royal Engineers and was later transferred to the 27th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers serving as Private 47919 and was sent to the Western Front on 6th January 1917. He was killed by a shell on 9th April 1917, the first day of the Battle of Arras. His brother Arthur who was serving in the same regiment was able to see his body before he was buried in Fusiliers Cemetery, Bailleul-sire-Berthoult; in 1920 he was reburied in Orchard Dump Cemetery, Arleux-En-Gohelle, Pas-de-Calais, France. Fred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Arleux-en-Gohelle is a village on the main Arras to Henin-Lietard road. The Cemetery was begun in April 1917, on the new front resulting from the Battles of Arras, and it was used by the units holding that front until the following November. The cemetery was greatly enlarged after the Armistice by the concentration of graves from the neighbouring battlefields and from other burial grounds including Fusiliers Cemetery, Bailleul-sire-Berthoult, 800 metres South-West of the village beside the railway line, where eleven men of the Northumberland Fusiliers, four of the Royal Fusiliers and one Royal Marine were buried by the 63rd Division in April and May 1917. There are now over 3,000, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, more than four-fifths are unidentified. A tablet in the cemetery records the fact that the site was given by the widow of a Captain in the French 72nd Infantry Regiment, killed in action in August 1914.

Fred 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 St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor and on the War Memorial in the Providence Independent Methodist Church, Thornton Street, Dewsbury.

In Memory of

Private

F Secker

47919, 27th (Tyneside Irish) Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers who died on 09 April 1917 Age 27

Son of William and Annetta Secker, of Dewsbury; husband of Jane Secker, of 1, Hanover Square,
Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Orchard Dump Cemetery, Arleux-En-Gohelle



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of the "In Memory" Website of Pierre Vandervelden.