



Fred Archer

1883 – 1916

Fred was born in Dewsbury on 27th September 1883 and was baptised on 21st October 1883 at St Matthew's Church, Westtown. His father was Smith Archer, a Beerhouse Keeper and later a Rag Extractor and then a Mule Spinner born in Dewsbury in 1845 and died in 1901. His mother was Hannah (née Whitworth) born in Dewsbury in 1849 and died in 1915. They were married on 11th February 1871 at Dewsbury Registry Office.

Their other children were; Mary Emma, born in 1872 and died in 1877, Edward, born in 1873, Ellen, born in 1875 and died in 1877, George, born in 1877, Robert, born in 1878, Thomas Whitworth, born in 1881 and served in World War 1, Edith, born in 1885, Mary Emma, born in 1888 and Frank, born in 1891.

On the 1891 and 1901 Census Records the family were living at Foundry Street, Dewsbury and in 1911 at 3, Lawson Street, Dewsbury.

Fred worked as a coal miner (hewer) in 1901. He was married in 1906 to Agnes Thorpe (born in Brighouse in 1887 and died in 1962) they had a child, Gladys, born in 1906 and died in 1906. In 1911 they were living at Thorne View, Thornhill Lees, his occupation is shown as a Rag Grinder in a yarn spinning mill. His obituary in September 1916 stated that he worked as a warehouseman for Messrs S. Stross and Sons, Scout Hill, Dewsbury and that he lived at Wakefield Road, Dewsbury. His Army Pension Record stated that he had been separated from his wife for four years and he had specifically expressed that no pension should be awarded to her. Agnes was remarried in 1917 in Manchester in to Joseph Knight (born in 1893). They had three children.

He enlisted in Dewsbury serving as Private 25140 in the 7th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. He was killed in action in Flanders on 11th June 1916 and is buried in Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Fred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery is located 5 Kms west of Ieper (Ypres) town centre, on the Hospitaalstraat a road leading from the Poperingseweg (connecting Ieper to Poperinge). The Cemetery was started by French troops in 1914 and was taken over by Commonwealth forces in April 1915. It was used by fighting units and field ambulances until June 1917, when the land adjoining the cemetery was claimed for a military railway preventing further extension. The cemetery is remarkable for the care with which men of the same unit were buried side by side if they died at about the same time. There are also a very high proportion of graves of Territorial units, in particular Lancashire Territorials, who have nearly 250 graves. During the early months of 1917, whenever it was possible, the 55th Division brought their dead from the front for burial here. The cemetery now contains 1,175 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Fred 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
Private
F Archer

25140, 7th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 11 June 1916

Remembered with Honour
Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Ms. Danielle Roubroeks, Antwerp, Belgium.