



Friend Whitwam

1876 - 1917

Friend was born in Mirfield on 19th May 1876. His father was Zachariah Whitwam, a card cleaner and fettler in a mill and later a yeast dealer born in Paddock, Huddersfield in 1842 and died in 1915. His mother was Mary (nee Crowther) born in Greetland, Halifax in 1851 and died in 1920. They were married at St. John the Baptist Church, Halifax on 8th December 1870.

They also had two daughters, Clara, born in Halifax in 1872 and Sarah, born in Mirfield in 1880.

On the 1871 Census they lived at South Parade, Stainland, Halifax, in 1881 at Snakeshill, Mirfield, in 1891 at William Street, Ravensthorpe, in 1901 at George Street, Ravensthorpe and in 1911 at 11, William Street, Ravensthorpe.

Friend was married to Annie Newhill (born in Cockley Hill, Kirkheaton in 1876 and died in 1921) on 2nd November 1901 at Wellington Road Primitive Methodist Chapel, Dewsbury. In 1911 they lived at Armitage Street, Ravensthorpe. He had worked in the Woollen Trade until taking over his father's yeast dealing business at 11, William Street, Ravensthorpe where they lived prior to his Army service. They had a daughter, Elsie, born in 1904 and died in 1904. He was attached to the Ravensthorpe Primitive Methodist Church and Sunday school.

He attested on 11th December 1915 and was called up on 12th September 1916, being sent to the 2nd/4th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers based at York. On 16th June 1917 he was sent to the training camp at Etaples on the French coast. He was transferred on 1st July 1917 into the 13th Battalion Durham Light Infantry serving as Private 245205. On the 18th October during the Battle of Passchendaele, the 13th Battalion was ordered from camp to the front line at Reutel, east of Polygon Wood. The Battalion's War Diary for the 21st October indicates that although it was fairly quiet during the day, in the evening the Germans shelled the positions quite heavily and he was one of 13 men killed, with a further 13 wounded. A letter to his widow from a Chaplain stated that he had been killed instantaneously and had been buried, but when the battlefields were cleared post-war, his remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Friend was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Tyne Cot Memorial forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery and commemorates nearly 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16th August 1917 and whose graves are not known. The memorial stands close to the farthest point in Belgium reached by Commonwealth forces in the First World War until the final advance to victory.

Friend is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church and on the Roll of Honour in Ravensthorpe Primitive Methodist Church.

In Memory of

Private

Friend Whitwam

245205, 13th Bn., Durham Light Infantry who died on 21 October 1917

Remembered with Honour

Tyne Cot Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

WHITWAM F.