



Stanley Pickup Fletcher

1897 – 1916

Stanley was born on June 1st 1897. His father was James Fletcher, the Managing Director of a Letterpress and Bookbinding Company born in Batley in 1869 and died in 1960. His mother was Mary Alice (nee Pickup) born in Rawtenstall, Lancashire in 1866 and died in 1942. They were married in Rawtenstall in 1895. They had another son, Herbert James born in 1898 and died as a Prisoner of War on 30th August 1918.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at Moorlands Avenue, Dewsbury, in 1911 at “Elmroyd,” Bath Street, Dewsbury and later at “Saxonholme” West Park Street, Dewsbury.

Stanley was a single man who was educated at Wheelwright Grammar School and was connected to Dewsbury Centenary Wesleyan Church. He worked in his Father’s business, Messrs Battye and Fletcher.

He enlisted in April 1915 into the 15th Battalion (the Leeds Pals) West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales’s Own) serving as Private 1275 and was sent out to Egypt on the 22nd December 1915, the Battalion arriving on the Western Front in March 1916. He was killed in action at Serre on 1st July 1916 during the First Day of the Battle of the Somme. His remains were found in 1917 and were buried in grave number I. G. 28 in Serre Road Cemetery No. 1, Pas-de-Calais, France, just over the border of the Somme Region. Stanley was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The village of Serre is 11 kilometres north-north-east of Albert. On 1st July 1916, the 31st and 4th Divisions attacked and although parties of the 31st Division reached Serre, the attack failed. The 3rd and 31st Divisions attacked once more on 13th November, but again without success. Early in 1917, the Germans fell back to the Hindenburg Line and on 25th February, Serre was occupied by the 22nd Manchesters. The village changed hands once more in March 1918 and remained under German occupation until they withdrew in August. In the spring of 1917, the battlefields of the Somme and Ancre were cleared and a number of new cemeteries were made, three of which are now named from the Serre Road. Serre Road Cemetery No.1 was begun in May 1917 and these graves can now be found in Plot I, Rows A to G. The rest of the cemetery was added after the Armistice, when graves were brought in from the nearby battlefields and from smaller cemeteries. There are now 2,426 casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 1,728 of the graves are unidentified.

Stanley 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 Memorial Plaque in Wheelwright Grammar School to former pupils and on the War Memorial on the outside wall of Dewsbury Centenary Wesleyan Church at the top of Daisy Hill.

In Memory of

Private

Stanley Pickup Fletcher

1275, 15th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 01 July 1916 Age 20

Son of James and Mary Alice Fletcher, of "Saxonholme", West Park St., Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Serre Road Cemetery No.1



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Nigel Marshall.