



Joseph Megson **1877 - 1917**

Joseph was born in Ossett, Yorkshire on 28th October 1877. His father was Benjamin Oldroyd Megson, a Mungo and Shoddy Merchant born in Ossett in 1854 and died in 1922. His mother was Harriet Wylde (nee Newsome) born in Emley near Huddersfield in 1855 and died in 1938. They were married on 17th May 1875.

Their other children were; George Arthur, born in 1875 and served in World War 1, Willie, born in 1880 and served in World War 1, Jane Oldroyd, born in 1882 and Percy Oldroyd, born in 1886 and was killed in action on 6th September 1916.

On the 1881 Census the family were living at Crackenedge Lane, Dewsbury, in 1891 and 1901 at Providence Street, Earlsheaton and in 1911 at The Common, Earlsheaton.

Joseph was married to Mary Walker Lumb (born in 1878 and died in 1955) at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton on 12th July 1905; they had two children, Dorothy, born in 1908 and Reginald, born in 1910. On the 1911 Census they were living at Halfpenny Lane, Featherstone where he was working as a Byeworker/Coal Miner underground. They later moved to 31, Ryecroft Street, Ossett, Joseph was now in business as a rag merchant. He was a well known local cricketer having played at one stage for the Yorkshire Colts and for clubs in Chickenley, Ossett, Morley and Featherstone and also played football in Dewsbury.

He enlisted in Pontefract in January 1917 into the 2nd/5th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) with the Service Number 42006 rising to the rank of Lance Corporal and was sent to the Western Front in April. He was killed in action during the First Day of the Battle of Cambrai on 20th November 1917; whilst in charge of the bombing section of his Company's platoon who were attacking the village of Havrincourt he was shot through the head, dying instantaneously. He was buried in Grand Ravine British Cemetery, Havrincourt, Pas-de-Calais, France. Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Havrincourt is a village approximately 10 kilometres south west of Cambrai and 3 kilometres south of the Cambrai to Bapaume road. Havrincourt was stormed by the 62nd (West Riding) Division on 20th November 1917. It was lost on 23rd March 1918, but it was retaken on 12th September by the 62nd Division, who held it against a counter-attack the following day. Grand Ravine British Cemetery consists of three rows of graves. Row B was made by the 62nd Division Burial Officer in December 1917, and Rows A and C by the same officer in October 1918. The cemetery contains 139 First World War burials, 11 of them unidentified.

Joseph 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 Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos in Earlsheaton St. Peter's Church and on the Ossett Trinity Church Oak Memorial Plaque and on the Ossett War Memorial.

In Memory of
Lance Corporal
J Megson

42006, 2nd/5th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 20 November 1917 Age
40

Husband of Mary W. Megson, of 31, Ryecroft St., Ossett, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Grand Ravine British Cemetery, Havrincourt



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



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