



Harry King DCM 1880-1921

Harry was born in Upwood, Huntingdonshire in 1880. His father was James King, an agricultural labourer born in Upwood in 1853. His mother was Jane (nee Mills) born in Bedford in 1857. They were married in 1874.

Their other children were; Tom, born in 1878, Mary Jane, born in 1884, and died in 1886, Polly, born in 1886, George William, born in 1888, Easter James, born in 1892 and Alice Mary, born in 1894.

Harry was married to Elizabeth Whitworth (born in Dewsbury in 1882 and died in 1943) on 30th October 1905 at Dewsbury All Saints Church. They had three children, Alice, born in 1906, Harry, born in 1907 and died in 1908 and Ada, born in 1909.

On the 1911 Census they lived at 5, Leonard Street, Deane, Bolton, Lancashire where Harry's occupation was shown as a Contractor's Labourer. They lived at 23, South Woodbine Street, Dewsbury at the time of his death.

He enlisted in the Royal Engineers as Sapper 66919 and was sent to the Western Front on 25th February 1915 rising to the rank of Corporal then Acting Serjeant. Harry was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The following citation appeared in the London Gazette on 21st October 1918 announcing his DCM award.

“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. During the period under review he has been working on forward roads and front line dug-outs, and has often displayed a gallantry and devotion to duty which has been an example to his comrades. Whenever any difficult or dangerous work had to be undertaken, he has always been the first to volunteer, and on one occasion, when heavy enemy shelling had caused serious casualties, it was owing to his gallant and determined bearing that the work was kept going.”

He was discharged on 18th March 1919 and died of Nephritis and Rheumatic Heart Disease on 28th February 1921 aged 41. He is buried in Dewsbury Cemetery.

Harry is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

He is one of twenty men named on the above who are not recorded as official war casualties due to their cause of death not recorded as being directly attributed to war service.