



Woodford Remembers



Pte. Charles Edward Smart

12 November 1896 – 13 June 1916

Family

Charles was one of eleven children (quite possibly the youngest) born to William and Rose Smart nee Devereaux. The couple both came from Liddington in Bedfordshire and were married in 1865. William worked as a Blast Furnace Labourer at the Islip Furnaces. When the family first moved to Woodford the Smarts lived in the High Street towards Mill Road junction, before moving to Cairo Cottages in Thrapston Road. By 1901 they had moved to Sunnyside (or New Row as it was then called, having been built only three or four years previously). Charles started at the Infant School on 13th November 1899 and transferred to the Junior School on 9th May 1904 where he would have remained until the age of 14 years. In 1911 Charley, as he was then known, was working as a farm hand and was the last child to be at home. Charles' mother continued to live in Sunnyside

Older sister Rhoda had married Mr William Harris on 26th December 1907 at Woodford St Mary's Church. Mr Harris emigrated to Canada in early 1910. His wife followed on the Allen Line "Tunisian" arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia on 25th November 1910 giving her reason to reside in the country to join her husband, who had emigrated earlier that year, who was employed as an electrical engineer in Hamilton, Ontario. The 1911 census records the couple living as lodgers in Queen Street North, with William working as a chauffeur and his wife a tailoress.

On 22 July 1913 Charles journeyed from Liverpool to Montreal on board the SS Corsican, an Allen Line ship launched in 1907, which in 1912 hit an iceberg but suffered little damage. His immigration forms state he was joining his brother (in law) in Hamilton as a trainee engineer and he also had 1 ½ years agricultural experience.

Army Service

Charles joined the 91st Royal Canadian Militia and on 19th April 1915 signed up to the 36th Battalion of the Canadian Army which was recruiting in the Hamilton district of Canada: regimental number 406808. The 36th embarked (coincidentally) the SS Corsican on 19th June 1915. Arriving ten days later in England they moved to Shorncliffe. It was from here that members of the battalion, including Charles, reinforced the 1st Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, between July 19th 1915 and January 1st 1917. The CEF were active in many theatres of war along the Western Front, but the Battle of Hill 62 – Mount Sorrel between 2nd and 14th June 1916 is probably the best known. Over 8000 allied soldiers lost their lives in the battle defending a small hill rising no more than 30 metres above the surrounding area just 2 miles east of Ypres. Many that died are buried in nearby Sanctuary Wood cemetery, and those with no recorded resting place are recorded on the Menin Gate. Private Charles Smart was amongst the latter group.

Burial / grave

No known grave

Dependants

None

Commemoration

Menin Gate panels 10/26/28 (Canadian Forces)

Woodford War Memorial

St Mary's Church Memorial

