



WATSHAM, WILLIAM RANSOM

Rank: Private aged 18

Manchester Regiment 19th Battalion. 90th Brigade, 30th Division



Date of Death: 27/08/1917

Service No: 51218



19th (Service) Battalion (4th City) was formed in Manchester on 28 August 1914, by the Lord Mayor and City. In April 1915 it was attached to 90th Brigade, 30th Division on the 21 December. This Division was formed of many units that had been raised by public subscription and private projects, and was only taken over by the War Office on 27th August 1915. The Division moved to France in November 1915. It served on the Western Front with distinction throughout the war. The Battle of Pilckem was fought by this Division between 31st July & 2nd August 1917.



His parents & sisters

He was the son of William and Esther Watsham, of Fingringhoe Haye, Colchester. The family came to Fingringhoe round about 1825, when John Watsham and Maria Clark, both born in Alresford, and who had been married at Langenhoe in 1825, settled in the village. Most members of the family seem to have lived at The Haye.

John was a mole-catcher, and the family carried on as mole-catchers until the end of the 19th century. John's sons Henry (1833-1878) and William (1835-1910) were both mole-catchers, although son George (1837-1914) moved to Hythe Hill in Colchester and became a bootmaker (shoemaking was

the other main trade followed by the Watsham family in general). John's grandson William Watsham (1861-1939) was described as a mole-catcher up to and including 1891, but in 1901 was a general labourer. He married Esther Roper of East Donyland in 1887. Three of their four sons were to serve in World War One.

1901 Census shows the family at Fingringhoe as:- William Watsham aged 2 ,Harold Watsham aged 4 Ellen Watsham aged 8, Albert Watsham aged 10 Lily Watsham aged 12 Ethel Watsham aged 13 born & living at Fingringhoe . His mother Esther Watsham aged 34 born East Donyland living at Fingringhoe & his father William Watsham aged 39 born & living at Fingringhoe working as a General Labourer . (spelling in actual document was Watcham)

William Ransom Watsham enlisted at Colchester. He was awarded (posthumously) the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. (The medal roll card gives no further details.) William Ransom Watsham has no living descendants.



1914-20 War Medal 1914-19 Victory Medal

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
WATCHAM William	March. R	Private	51218
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	H/1104 ^B 45	9113	
BRITISH	do	do	
WAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

Note the alternative spelling is used but service number confirms this is William's

His brother Harold Frederick Watsham (1896- c. 1945) was born on 4th June 1896. He was a Private in the Essex Regiment, and was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. (The medal roll card gives no further details.) Harold married Jessie Cook in 1919 and the couple remained in the Colchester area and had eight children; Harold died in about 1945 (death registered March quarter of 1945). One of his sons Dennis Harold Watsham died on 6th December 1944 after his ship, HMS Bullen, was torpedoed; Dennis is buried at Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery .



His other brother, who served in WW1, Albert William Watsham, was born on 5th April 1890. He served in the 8th Hussars as a shoeing-smith. He first entered a theatre of war on 11th November 1914, and was awarded the 1914 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Albert married Annie E. Lee in 1920 and the couple remained in the Colchester area and had eleven children; he died in 1954

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead. He did not die from enemy action but due to illness.

Grave/Memorial Reference: P. II. H. 1B.

Cemetery: ST. SEVER CEMETERY EXTENSION, ROUEN

During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. A base supply depot and the 3rd Echelon of General Headquarters were also established in the city.



Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. They included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross and one labour hospital, and No. 2 Convalescent Depot. A number of the dead from these hospitals were buried in other cemeteries, but the great majority were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. In September 1916, it was found necessary to begin an extension, where the last burial took place in April 1920. During the Second World War, Rouen was again a hospital centre and the extension was used once more for the burial of Commonwealth servicemen, many of whom died as prisoners of war during the German occupation. The cemetery extension

contains 8,345 Commonwealth burials of the First World War (ten of them unidentified) and 328 from the Second World War (18 of them unidentified). The extension was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

**OTHER MEMORIALS Saint Andrew's
Fingringhoe & the Methodist Chapel
Fingringhoe**

Note the plaque has the correct spelling "Watsham" which differs from the CWGC data bank & the 1901 Census.



THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ABBERTON, EAST DONYLAND, FINGRINGHOE, LANGENHOE