

Sergeant William Lowe

Regimental number: 267270

1st/7th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment)

born: about 1888 - died: 3 July 1918

Sergeant William Lowe, born in about 1888, was the son of David and Lucy Lowe of Great Crosby, Lancashire.¹ His father was born in about 1863 in Carmyllie, Forfarshire (now Angus) in Scotland. His mother, the former Lucy Witcombes, was born in about 1861 in Wells, Somerset. His parents were married in West Derby, Lancashire in 1886.² They had nine children – two of whom died before 1911.³ The remaining children were: George (born in about 1887), William, Lucy (born in about 1891), Elsie (born in about 1894), Bessie (born in about 1897), Kenneth (born in about 1898) and Madge (born in about 1903).

In 1891, the family was living on Byron Road, in Great Crosby, Lancashire, where David was a caretaker at a golf club.⁴ Golf was known as the “Scottish national game” and David, a Scot, may have worked at the West Lancashire Golf Club, which had been established in 1873.⁵ Byron Road was just a mile from the West Lancashire Golf Club. In 1901, they were at the same address, but David was now a golf club maker.⁶ By 1911, the family had moved a few blocks away to 3 Cambridge Drive. David was still a golf club maker and two of his sons, including William, had joined him in this occupation.⁷ It is possible that William’s mother died in 1917, never to know that she would lose her son in the war.⁸

When he died, William was a Sergeant in the 7th Battalion of The King’s (Liverpool Regiment).⁹ He had enlisted in Bootle.¹⁰ The Battalion was a unit of the Territorial Force which had its headquarters in Bootle,¹¹ just four miles from Great Crosby. The Battalion went to France in March 1915, but it is not known when William joined it.

William had already died when he was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 3 July 1918. He had been buried by shell fire and suffered spinal injuries. He was buried the following day in the Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row D, Grave 24) with the chaplain J. K. Tibbits presiding. William was a member of the Church of England. His father, who was still living at 3 Cambridge Drive was notified of his death and received the monies owing to him by the army after his death.¹²

There are over 1,000 First World War soldiers buried in the Pernes British Military Cemetery – most of them were soldiers who died at one of the nearby clearing stations.¹³ This cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when the 1st and 4th Canadian Casualty Clearing Stations came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.

Information about William’s medals was not found. However, he was almost certainly eligible for the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).

It is not known if William’s older brother, George, served in the Great War, but his younger brother, Kenneth, served in, and survived, the Great War.¹⁴ At the age of just 18, he enlisted as Private in the King’s (Liverpool Regiment) in May 1916. He was an apprentice in motoring. He later transferred to the Army Service Corps and, in July 1917, went to France. He was with the army of occupation in the Rhine when he was demobilised in November 1919. He transferred then to the Army Reserve. Kenneth was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹⁵

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- ¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for William Lowe, Registration district: West Derby, Registration District Number: 455, Sub-registration district: Crosby, ED, institution, or vessel: 25, Piece: 22324
- ² "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for David Lowe, District: West Derby, County: Lancashire, Volume: 8B, Page: 418
- ³ "1911 England Census," entry for William Lowe
- ⁴ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 27 January 2015), entry for Lucy Lowe, Registration district: West Derby, ED, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 2983, Folio: 91, Page Number: 55
- ⁵ "The West Lancashire Golf Club," (<http://www.westlancashiregolf.co.uk/history>; accessed 29 April 2015)
- ⁶ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for William Lowe, Registration district: West Derby, Sub-registration district: Crosby, ED, institution, or vessel: 24, Piece: 3446, Folio: 89, Page Number: 20, Household schedule number: 110
- ⁷ "1911 England Census," entry for William Lowe
- ⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 2 June 2015), entry for Lucy Lowe, Registration district: Kensington, Inferred County: London, Volume: 1a, Page: 159
- ⁹ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 615
- ¹⁰ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for William Lowe
- ¹¹ "Kings (Liverpool) Regiment 7th Btn. during the Great War," *The Wartime Memories Project* (<http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/alliedarmy-view.php?pid=651#sthash.R0piOtlh.dpuf>; accessed 29 April 2015)
- ¹² "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for William Lowe
- ¹³ "Pernes British Military Cemetery" *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11600/PERNES%20BRITISH%20CEMETERY>; accessed 13 January 2015)
- ¹⁴ "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for Kenneth Lowe, Regimental Number: 280221, Form Title: Short Service Attestation
- ¹⁵ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 29 April 2015), entry for Kenneth Lowe