

Private Joseph Wilcock©
Regimental Number: M2/104121
Royal Army Service Corps, United Kingdom

born: April 1894 — died: 9 March 1916



Royal Army Service Corps Badge

Source: Forces War Records
(www.forces-war-records.co.uk/)

Private Joseph Wilcock served with the Army Services Corps of the British Army during the Great War.¹ He came from a large family and was born in Salford, Lancashire, in 1894.² His parents were Ann Jane and Joseph Wilcock of Salford.³ Ann and Joseph had 12 children but only 8 were still living at the time of the 1911 Census. They were: Henry (b. 1878), George (b. 1880), Edith (b. 1882), Ethel (b. 1884), Sam (b. 1886), Phoebe (b. 1890)⁴ and Dora (b. 1892).⁵

Over the years, Joseph's father worked as a toolmaker, then as a labourer in an iron foundry and in 1911 was employed in an engineering works as a toolmaker. By 1911, Joseph's older brother, Sam, had moved out of the family home and worked first as an iron moulder and then as a coal miner.⁶ Joseph was also working by 1911; he was employed as a fitter, perhaps in the same engineering works as his father. Before war broke

out, at least three of Joseph's brothers had also married and no longer lived with their parents. At the time of the 1911 Census, only Joseph and his sister Dora were still living at home. In addition, their sister-in-law, Alma, resided with the family along with three of her children. Joseph's sister, Dora, worked as a sewing machinist/tailoress, while Alma was employed as a weaver in a cotton mill.⁷

Joseph's civilian position as a fitter probably helped him after he enlisted. The Army Service Corps was sometimes called "Ally Sloper's Cavalry" (named after a popular comic strip character), and its members were the unsung heroes of the British Army, keeping the soldiers at the front supplied with food, equipment and ammunition. Joseph's unit, the 363 Mechanical Transport Company, was attached to the Royal Garrison Artillery and from May 1915 supplied the 18th Brigade with ammunition and other supplies. They provided motorized transport for the artillery equipment, guns and howitzers, and operated dumps and stores of ammunition. Specialized mechanical handling equipment was also required for the larger caliber artillery shells.⁸

No detailed record of Joseph's service was found in available records, but it is known that he entered the Western European theatre of war at the beginning of July 1915.⁹ He was in France for the next eight months and died at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station near Pas-de-Calais on 9 March 1916 of "wounds obtained." He was 21 years of age.¹⁰

Joseph is buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension Nord, Pas-de-Calais, France in Plot II. C. 234, northwest of Armentières. At the time of his death his mother was living at 132 Chorlton Road, Manchester.

Joseph Wilcock was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹¹

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¹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joseph Wilcock.

² "England & Wales Births Marriage & Death, 1837–2006," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joseph Wilcock, County: Lancashire, Salford, Volume: 8d, Page: 162, Line 267, Parish Register.

³ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joe Willcock, Registration district: Salford, Registration district number: 465, Sub-registration district: Broughton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 23978.

⁴ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joseph Wilcock & family, Registration district: Warrington, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 35, Piece: 3079, Folio: 77, Page: 20.

⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joe Willcock, Registration district: Salford, Registration district number: 465, Sub-registration district: Broughton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 23978.

⁶ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Sam Wilcock, Registration district: Salford, Registration district number: 465, Sub-registration district: Greengate, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 14, Piece: 24027.

⁷ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 28 April 2014), entry for Joe Willcock, Registration district: Salford, Registration district number: 465, Sub-registration district: Broughton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 23978.

⁸ "The Long, Long Trail, The British Army in the Great War of 1914–1918, Army Service Corps Mechanical Transport Companies," (<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/army-service-corps-mechanical-transport-companies/>: accessed 26 June 2016), information on 363 Company, Army Service Corps, Mechanical Transport.

⁹ "British Army WW1 Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 June 2016), entry for Joseph Wilcock, Regimental number: M2/104121.

¹⁰ "Global, Find A Grave Index for Burials at Sea and other Select Burial Locations, 1300-Current," *Ancestry* and *Find A Grave* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 27 April 2014), entry for Joseph Wilcock.

¹¹ "UK, WW1 Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1912–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 June 2016), entry for Joseph Wilcock.