

Private Sam Pickles©

Regimental number: 202711

1st/4th Battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

born: 1895 or 1896 - died: 24 July 1917

Private Sam Pickles was born late in 1895 or early in 1896 in Dewsbury, Yorkshire.¹ He was the son of Sam and Mary Ann (also known as Polly) Pickles and was baptized on 16 February 1896 in the parish of St Mark in Dewsbury²—the same parish in which his parents had married on 17 September 1887.³ His parents were both born in about 1866—his father in Dewsbury and his mother (the former Mary Ann Wilson), in Heckmondwike, Yorkshire.⁴ They had eight children, six of whom survived childhood.⁵ They had four daughters between 1888 and 1893: Emma (born in 1888),⁶ Florence (born in 1889),⁷ Edith (born in 1891)⁸ and Evalina (born in 1893).⁹ Unfortunately 1893 was not a good year for the family. Two of their daughters died— Evalina in first months of the year¹⁰ and Edith in the spring.¹¹ After the deaths of their two daughters, Sam and Mary Ann had four sons: Harry (born in 1894),¹² Sam, Edwin (born in 1906)¹³ and Walter (born in 1907).¹⁴

In 1891, the family was living at 9 Belgrave Street in Dewsbury, where Sam Sr. was a coal miner.¹⁵ His brothers, Mark and Henry, also coal miners, were living with them. Ten years later, the family was at 8 Vulcan Street and Sam Sr. was a coal hewer.¹⁶ By 1911, they had moved to 11 Waverly Street in Savile Town, Dewsbury. Sam Jr., age 15, had joined his father in the mines and was working as a haulage boy underground in the coal mine.¹⁷

Sam enlisted in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in Wakefield, Yorkshire,¹⁸ sometime after July 1916.¹⁹ The 1st/4th Battalion of the KOYLI landed at Boulogne, France, on 12 April 1915;²⁰ however, it is not known when Sam joined the battalion on the Western Front. In the summer of 1917, he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station where he died of gas poisoning on 24 July, at the age of 21.²¹

The chaplain at No.1 CCCS noted that Sam had made a will leaving a watch and two rings to his mother.²² His father, who was still living at 11 Waverly Street, was his next of kin and was notified of his death and received the monies owing to Sam from the army upon his death.²³

Sam was buried in Adinkerke Churchyard Extension (Grave Reference: 844).²⁴ Adinkerke Churchyard Extension is in Adinkerke, near Veurne, Belgium. It is a Belgian Military Cemetery on the west side of the churchyard less than a kilometre from the Adinkerke Military Cemetery. Commonwealth troops held the Front from the Belgian coast inland for about 70 kilometres from June to November 1917. No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station was at Adinkerke for a short time in June. There are 67 Commonwealth graves from the Great War.²⁵

Sam's family asked to have the following inscription placed on his gravestone:

GREATER LOVE
HATH NO MAN THAN THIS²⁶

Sam was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²⁷

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- ¹ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles, Registration district: Dewsbury, Inferred county: Yorkshire West Riding, Volume: 9b, Page: 635
- ² "West Yorkshire, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1910," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles
- ³ "West Yorkshire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles
- ⁴ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 May 2017), entry for Jam [sic] Pickles, Registration district: Dewsbury, Sub-registration district: Dewsbury, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 07,6, Piece: 4266, Folio: 122, Page: 3, Household schedule number: 19
- ⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 11 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles, Registration district: Dewsbury, Registration district number: 503, Sub-registration district: Thornhill, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 1, Piece: 27342
- ⁶ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Emma, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 684
- ⁷ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Florence, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 659
- ⁸ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Edith, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 726
- ⁹ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Evalina, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 667
- ¹⁰ "England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Evalina Pickles, District: Dewsbury: Yorkshire, Volume: 9B, Page: 518
- ¹¹ "England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Edith Pickles, District: Dewsbury: Yorkshire, Volume: 9B, Page: 468
- ¹² "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Harry, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 689
- ¹³ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Edwin, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 625
- ¹⁴ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 10 May 2017) entry for Pickles, Walter, Registration district: Dewsbury, Volume 09B, Page 623
- ¹⁵ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 14 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles, Registration district: Dewsbury, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 3734, Folio: 53, Page: 40
- ¹⁶ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 May 2017), entry for Jam [sic] Pickles
- ¹⁷ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 11 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles,
- ¹⁸ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 11 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles
- ¹⁹ Based on "War Gratuity Calculator" (<https://wargratiuity.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>; accessed 18 May 2017); "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles
- ²⁰ "Unit History: King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry," *Forces War Records* (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/445/kings-own-yorkshire-light-infantry>; accessed 7 April 2017)
- ²¹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca; accessed 27 April 2017), entry for Pickles, S.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 10 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles

²⁴ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 27 April 2017), entry for Pickles, Sam, Service No: 202711

²⁵ "Adinkerke Churchyard Extension," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 18 April 2017)

²⁶ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 27 April 2017), entry for Pickles, Sam

²⁷ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 May 2017), entry for Sam Pickles