

# NORMAN WADDILOVE



1st July 1916

1897-1916 Age 19

**Private 16/313, 16th (Service) Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment 1st Bradford 'Pals'.**

Norman Waddilove was born in Bradford on 20th February 1897, the second child of Albert Waddilove and Annie Farrand. Albert was a son of Joshua Kelley Waddilove, who was the founder in 1880 of the Provident Clothing Club. Joshua would later be knighted for his work, and the company became Providential Financial p.l.c., which still has its headquarters in Bradford. Its origins lay in Hull, where Joshua was an insurance agent. He established a means to enable poor families to purchase clothing, shoes, food and coal. He later returned to Bradford. When he died his estate was worth £90,000 - by today's standards he was a millionaire. Four of his six sons, including Albert, worked for the company. Albert married Annie Farrand in 1894. By 1911 they had eight children and Albert was wealthy enough to have given up working and lived off 'private means'.

Norman was a pupil at Grange Road Secondary School in Horton until aged thirteen he started at Bradford Grammar School in 1910. After his first year he was near the bottom of his form in most subjects, and matters did not improve much; at the end of 1913 he was bottom in all subjects bar History and Art in Vth Modern Middle; in his final year it was only for History, Physics and German that he made much effort. He does not seem to have played for the School Football XV's, however he did join the Old Boys Rugby Club. On leaving the School in 1914 aged seventeen he did not go to university nor take up a profession. His father had the means for Norman not to need to earn his living, and when war broke out a few weeks later, the appeal for volunteers perhaps spared him from having to make a decision about his future. Although under age, in early September he enlisted in the Lord Mayor's Bradford Battalion. His service number shows he was one of the early recruits. He gave his occupation as 'gentleman'.

The early months in the Pals were an anti-climax, living at home and drilling at an ice-rink on Manningham Lane and in Lister Park. January 1915 brought a move to a camp on the edge of Skipton, thence to Ripon, Salisbury Plain and, in December 1915, to Egypt. After guarding the Suez Canal against a feared attack by the Turks, the 31st Division, to which the 1st and 2nd Pals belonged, arrived in France in March and was sent to the Somme area to prepare for the planned joint



offensive with the French.

On the last day of June 1916, the 1st Pals left their billets at Bus-les-Artois at 6.35 p.m. to make their way to the assembly trenches. On the way up they had a meal of hot bully beef at Colincamps, but they also suffered some losses from German shells. They reached their positions in Old Monk Trench, Bradford Trench and South Monk Trench at 3.20 a.m., then waited for Zero Hour. As they formed the Second Wave, at 7.30 a.m. they would leave their assembly trench, move forward to the British Front Line and cross it, pass through the gaps in the barbed wire and move into no man's land. As soon as the 1st Pals climbed the scaling ladders they came under heavy fire from shells, machine guns and rifles. Private George Morgan recalled how he was forced to shelter in a shell crater before returning to the British trench, which was 'full of wounded and dead. I dropped into the trench and on to another Pal who was dead. He must have fallen back into the trench, he must never have gone up the ladder... I knew it were Norman Waddilove without looking at him because he had a silver bracelet on his wrist with his name on, but I knew it was him without looking at it because he looked as if he'd gone to sleep and that's how a lot of them were.' Waddilove was 19. Because he was killed behind the British front line, his body could be taken for burial to the nearby Euston Road Cemetery, where he lies with seventeen others from his battalion.



## Acknowledgements:

Norman's photo is courtesy of the O.B.A. Roll of Honour. The family history was researched using Ancestry.com. Norman's school record is from the B.G.S. Annual Reports 1911-1914, held in the School Archives. I found no record of him in The Bradfordian. The Grange Road School War Memorial photo is from <http://www.grangetechnologycollege.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=116&type=pdf>. Waddilove is listed as a member of Bradford Grammar School Rugby Union Football Club in Yorkshire R.F.U. Commemoration Book 1914-19 and Official Handbook Season 1919-20, p. 336. For Providential Financial's early history, see <https://www.providentfinancial.com/meet-pfg/our-heritage/> accessed June 2016. The account of Norman's death is taken from David Raw, *Bradford Pals* (Barnsley, 2008), pp. 183. The photo of his grave was taken by the author. Norman's uncle was chairman of Bradford Park Avenue Football Club and a great supporter of the Bradford Cricket League. The Waddilove Trophy is still played for today by cricket clubs, and there is also a music prize. Whether they were memorials for Norman I have been unable to ascertain.

Compiled and researched by Nick Hooper June 2016 (Nhooper1956@googlemail.com) v2 (October 2016).

