

ERNEST HEYN LOUGEE



1st September 1918

1898-1918 Aged 20

Private 38138, 9th (Service) Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment.

Ernest Lougee was born in Heaton, Bradford on 19th February 1898, the only son of Norman St. John Lougee and Jenny Helene Heyn. Although they were born in Baildon and Bradford respectively, their parents' heritage was unusual. Norman was the son of Noah Lougee, an 'American Merchant' who was born in Canada; Jenny's father Johannes Heyn was a Hamburg yarn merchant settled in Bradford, while her mother's birthplace was given as both Russia and Germany. Norman and Jenny married at St. Luke's, Manningham in 1897. Ernest was born in 1898, to be followed by two sisters, Nora and Clarisse. His father Norman was partner in a spinning business, Lougee and Smith, and it may have been in connection with this venture that after 1901 the family moved to Baildon, then to Milman House in Idle, and finally to Goit Stock House in Harden. Ernest attended Bradford Grammar School from 1907 until 1913. He came sixth in a class of twenty in his second year, but otherwise he was an average pupil. He left the School when he was fifteen and joined his father's company.

We will see that Ernest was a religious lad and in Idle he was associated with the Parish Church Sunday School. No Service Record survives for him. He was eighteen years and one month old, the age to be conscripted, in March 1916, but not old enough to serve overseas until February 1917. By March of that year he was in training. He wrote from Monkseaton, Northumberland that he was learning signalling and found the work 'exceedingly interesting'. He added that the soldiers highly appreciated the work of the Y.M.C.A. and that the local churches put on musical evenings and provided coffee and buns. Further entertainment was provided by the regimental band every Monday night in the Church Hall where further refreshments were supplied. He declared that 'I like my duties well', but that 'I shall not be sorry when peace is declared.' He was serving in France by October of that year when he was admitted to hospital feeling 'off colour', probably



suffering from the condition labelled 'trench fever'. Notwithstanding this Ernest's optimism had not been dented and he stated the 'general opinion here' was 'that the war will not last long and the boys will soon be home.'

No further letters from Lougee were quoted from in the Shipley Times & Express, and it is possible that 9th battalion's costly involvement in the fighting for Poelcapelle in October 1917 did puncture his faith in victory. His battalion spent the winter in the Loos sector and passed several relatively quiet months during the first eight months of 1918, although patrolling and raids took their usual toll. On 29th August, when the 9th were out of the line training, orders were suddenly received to move by bus to Blangy near Arras. At 6 p.m. the battalion was then sent forward to relieve troops who had just captured the village of Pelves. It took them twelve hours to find their way to the position they were to occupy. The Germans had retired hurriedly leaving behind much booty. The following day, when 'B' Company were in the line, two men were killed and six were wounded. Lougee was one of the latter and was evacuated to a Casualty Clearing Station some thirty kilometres away at Ligny-St. Flochel. He died of his wounds there on 1st September and was buried in the nearby British cemetery.



Acknowledgements:

Lougee's photo is from the School memorial book courtesy of the O.B.A. and B.G.S. The family was researched using Ancestry.com. His years at B.G.S. are recorded in the Annual Reports for 1908 to 1913. Three items relating to him in the *Shipley Times & Express* for 23.3.1917, 26.10.1917 and 13.9.1918 were researched using finmypast.co.uk. For the circumstances of his death I used the 9th West Yorkshire War Diary (downloaded from T.N.A.). Lougee was remembered on his parents' memorial in Nab Wood Cemetery, Shipley.

This biography was researched and composed by Nick Hooper in August 2018. For further information, contact Nhooper1956@googlemail.com, or see <<http://www.bradfordgrammar.com/former-pupils/bradford-grammar-school-in-ww1/>>.