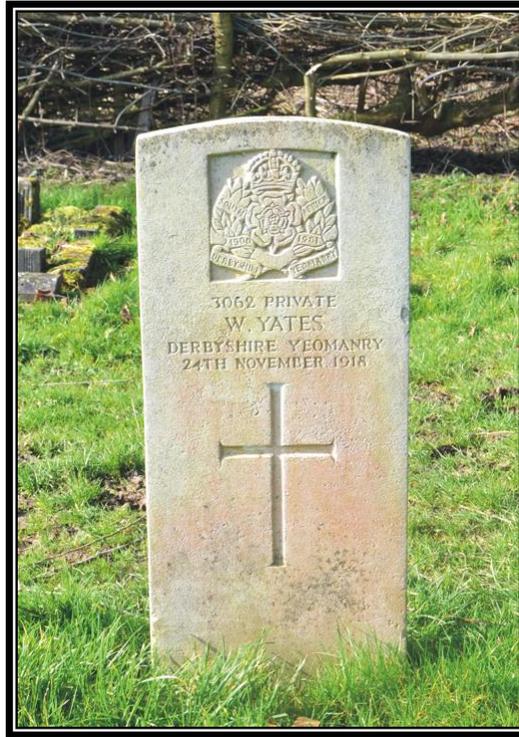


Pte. William Yates



Regiment: Labour Corps
Company: 301st Reserve Coy.
Rank: Private
Service No: 226369
Date of Death: 24/11/1918
Cemetery: CODNOR AND LOSCOE
Grave Ref: 3059

When I wrote the book 'Codnor & District Fallen Heroes of WW1' in 2014, I was unable to 100% identify the correct service record for William Yates.

Since then I have found more details and I can now confirm that William Yates was born in 1894 and is the son of Samuel Yates and Harriett (nee Ratcliffe) of Wright Street Codnor.

The 1911 census shows that the family had moved to Glass House Hill and that William's occupation was a coal miner (Ganger).

He married Clarice Sharpe, daughter of George and Mary Ellan Sharpe in 1916.

William's Grave stone at Crosshill cemetery indicates that he served as a Private in the Derbyshire Yeomanry, but his record at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission states that he was later transferred to the Labour Corps.

However William Yates's military service record does not appear to have survived so further details are not forthcoming.

The Labour Corps were often treated as something of a second-class organisation; for example, the men who died are commemorated under their original regiment, with Labour Corps being secondary. Nevertheless their roll was just as dangerous, often having to dig trenches and construct bunkers well within the range of enemy artillery.

I can say with some certainty that William Yates joined the 2nd/1st Derbyshire Yeomanry (service number 3062) after January 1916, but transferred to the Labour Corps before April 1917, possibly due to ill health or injury, medically rating him below the "A1" condition needed for front line service.

The UK Register of Soldiers Effects records that William died in November 1918 after being discharged from the army. His widow Clarice was granted his War Gratuity of £6.15s in April 1920.