

# WALLACE JAMES DAVIES

Rank/Number: Private 171864  
Regiment: 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Wallace James Davies was born on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1897, the youngest son of Thomas and Sarah Ann Davies of Pelsall, Staffordshire. His father was a coal miner; on the 1911 census he is shown as being employed as an underground colliery deputy.

At this time the Kent Coalfield was being developed, with Snowdown Colliery opening for production in 1912 and Tilmanstone Colliery the following year. Miners from all over the country came to Kent to work in the new mines and Thomas Davies brought his family from the Midlands to settle in Elvington.

No records remain to indicate when Wallace joined up. He served in the 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Machine Gun Corps attached to the 50<sup>th</sup> (Northumberland) Division. The Division joined the British Expeditionary Force in April 1915 and was immediately moved to the front to join the second Battle of Ypres. The Division was active in three key areas during the Battle of the Somme the following year and in 1917 saw action in the Arras offensive and the second Battle of Passchendaele. Heavy losses were experienced in the early part of 1918 and whilst new infantry units were brought in to relieve the original units, the Machine Gun Corps stayed with the Division. In October the Division was involved with battles across the Hindenburg line at St Quentin and Cambrai, the Selle and Valenciennes, as the German troops retreated.

In June 1918, Wallace James Davies marries Florence Mary Parsons at St Peter's Church, Whitfield. Florence was the daughter of Daniel and Florence Parsons of 'Ivanhoe', Whitfield. Her father was a former sergeant in the Royal Garrison Artillery.



At 06.15hrs on 4<sup>th</sup> November all companies of the 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion carried out barrage fire during a successful attack against the enemy Green Line. Retaliatory fire resulted in 12 casualties from the 50<sup>th</sup> battalion Machine Gun Corps, including Wallace John Davies, aged 21.

He is buried at the Cross Roads Cemetery, on the outskirts of Fontaine-au Bois, near Cambrai, France. It contains 750 graves, of which over 100 are unidentified. He is also named on the Eythorne War Memorial.

