

PARKER, Charles William

Service Number 63704

Rank Lance Corporal
Canadian Infantry (Quebec Regiment), "C" Company, 14th Battalion

Born June 15, 1896, Scalby, Yorkshire, England
Died September 7, 1916, Courcellette, France

Occupation Labourer
Marital Status Single

Charles "Will" Parker was born to a large family in Scalby, northern Yorkshire. Through a Salvation Army program, the entire family was able to emigrate and settle at the Coombs Salvation Army Colony. The Parker family took up Lot #2, twenty acres in size. Will would have been 12 or 13 when they emigrated.

He helped his father clear the land and farm it and helped other colonists as well. Feeding a large family also involved hunting and fishing throughout the area. By the time Will was 18, his family had bought land near Qualicum. Shortly afterward their first home burned down, forcing them to live in tents while the new home was built. Will enlisted in September 1914, in the same unit as his friend, Victor Walter Jones.

Will landed in France in May 1915. In April 1916, a rifle grenade exploded prematurely, injuring his left hand. He was able to rejoin the unit and the same month was appointed Acting Lance Corporal for his unit. In August that year, he sent a letter home, talking about the things he missed and expressing concern that his younger brother had enlisted.

On September 7, 1916, Will Parker was killed in action during heavy bombardment near Mouquet Farm, Courcellette, France, during part of the Battle of the Somme. His body was never recovered. He is memorialized at the Vimy Memorial.

Sources: Photo: Kerry Parker
Personnel Records of the First World War, Library and Archives Canada
Books of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada
Circumstances of Death Registers, Library and Archives Canada
Coombshistory.com
Scalbyfair.org.uk / a history of scalby

