



## Joseph Straw 40 White Street

Joseph Straw and his family have proved very tricky to pin down! We know that Joseph and his parents and siblings lived at 40 White Street between 1903 and about 1920 but we know little about their lives before that date and almost nothing after 1920.

Arthur and Emily Straw were married in Ilkeston in 1883 and the birth of their oldest child – Joseph – was registered in the first quarter of 1884. By the 1891 census the family were living on North Street in Ilkeston and Arthur was a Lace Maker by trade.

We can't trace the family in the 1901 census but there was a Joseph Straw aged 19, Lace Maker, lodging with the Fretwell family in Ilkeston. By the 1911 census the family were at 40 White Street, with four children: Joseph (27), William (23) – both "Lace Hands" like their father and Elsie (19) and Albert (17) who were clerks. A further four children born to the couple had not survived.

Why and when the family moved from Ilkeston to Derby is not known but we know from baptism records for Joseph and William (both being baptised in April 1902 at St Pauls Church, Chester Green) that the family lived briefly at 22 Henry Street.

Joseph is recorded as absent on military service in the 1918 Register of Electors but

we know little else. Four men called Joseph Straw served in the army and survived – one in the Sherwood Foresters; one in the Royal Field Artillery, one in the Scottish Rifles and one in the Royal Army Medical Corps and then the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment. It would be tempting to assume that "our" Joseph was the one in the Sherwood Foresters as it is our local regiment but there are many families names Straw in the Nottingham/Derby area and not all local men were posted with local regiments.

Joseph is not mentioned in the local Electoral Registers again after 1918 and must have moved away after being demobbed. The family left White Street around 1921 and no further trace of them can be found in terms of marriage and death registration. The exception is youngest brother Albert who married Thomasina Beardsley in 1925 and appears in the 1939 Register living at 65 Heanor Road Ilkeston and working as a Mechanical Engineer.

All three brothers would have eligible for conscription in 1916 but whether Albert and William served is unknown – they may have fought and been injured or they may have been declared medically unfit for duty.