



Harry Walters Pool

25 Wheeldon Avenue

When Harry enlisted in April 1918 he was a married man of 47 with two children. The defeat of the Fifth Army on the Western Front in March 1918 and the political crisis that followed saw the upper age for conscription for married men raised from 41 to 50.

However, Harry was not called up for service until August when he was posted to the Army Service Corps (Mechanised Transport division). This posting may have been related to his civilian work, as he worked as a Coach Painter for his father at the family-owned Carriage Works on Kedleston Road, which stood on the site now occupied by ATS Tyres. William Pool ran the works, along with three of his sons, and many of the family lived in the area. Harry was the sixth of eight children. The family home was within the carriage works, Harry's brother William lived at 41 Wheeldon Avenue and his brother Ebenezer lived at 9 White Street. For a few years his sister Rosa lived at 13 Bromley Street.

When Harry enlisted, his medical record said he was not to be placed in a medical Category higher than B1 at any time during his service. This barred him from active service. He was sent to No 1 Reserve MT Depot at Grove Park near London.

Just a month after being called up he was declared unfit for heavy duties, categorised as unfit for motorised transport duties and transferred to the Packer and Loader Section. His medical record states that his disabilities were due to age and not to war conditions.



Men of the Army Service Corps stacking cases of pork and beans, 1917. IWM ©Q26630

In March 1919 Harry was demobilised from the Army, although he remained on the Army reservists list - the British government needed to ensure that they could recall the army at short notice if peace negotiations failed.

Harry returned to Wheeldon Avenue to his wife, Ethel, and his two sons Geoffrey (born in 1904) and Douglas (born 1905). In the local directory for 1935 he was still listed as a "Coach Builder" He died on 23 July 1954 aged 83.