

# World War 1 Roll of Honour

## Birmingham City Police

### PC E296 Benjamin James FIRTH MM

#### Bombardier 66759 121 siege bttn Royal Garrison Artillery



Photographs by kind permission of Benjamin's grand-daughter  
Benjamin pictured as Middleweight boxer of the B Division on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1923

Benjamin was born 15<sup>th</sup> December 1892 in Heap Street, Burnley Lane, his parents later migrated to Earby

24<sup>th</sup> March 1914 Benjamin joined Birmingham City Police as a cotton weaver. He was issued with warrant number 8463 and posted to the B division where he served with collar numbers PC B97, PC R88, and PC E296

15<sup>th</sup> November 1915 Benjamin resigned to join HM Forces. He enlisted in Birmingham

22<sup>nd</sup> December 1917 the London Gazette confirmed Benjamin had been awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in carrying in the wounded under very heavy shell fire. He had previously written to his parents informing them very briefly that he had been recommended for some honour but he didn't know what for. He requested his father not to say anything about the affair until it was gazetted. Benjamin wrote to the authorities asking if his Military Medal would be posted to Ladywood Police Station as he did not desire a presentation

Whilst at war, Benjamin met his cousin on the battlefield, Pte 204908 Arthur Firth 2<sup>nd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> bttn Lancashire Fusiliers but sadly a short time after they met, Arthur was killed in action on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1917 aged 20 years and is commemorated at Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium

11<sup>th</sup> March 1919 Benjamin re-joined the police from HM Forces and was issued with new warrant number 8906 and was posted to the B Division

3<sup>rd</sup> December 1919 Awarded a guinea for arrest of a pick pocket at a tram terminus

29<sup>th</sup> March 1920 Awarded a gratuity of a guinea for arrest of shop breakers

5<sup>th</sup> November 1921 Benjamin married Beatrice Maggie RUSHTON, they had three children, Vera was born 10<sup>th</sup> July 1922, Barry was born on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1927 and Derek was born on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1933

25<sup>th</sup> July 1923 Awarded a guinea for general good police duty

17<sup>th</sup> September 1923 Benjamin performed duties in CID on probation

14<sup>th</sup> March 1924 Transferred to R Division to perform duties in the CID

4<sup>th</sup> June 1924 Awarded a guinea for arrest of a thief, also for rendering first aid (fracture and poisoning)

27<sup>th</sup> November 1924 Complimented for the arrest of a man loitering with intent

5<sup>th</sup> January 1927 Awarded a guinea for arrest of two men on enclosed premises

28<sup>th</sup> March 1928 Awarded first stripe of merit for the arrest of housebreakers and thieves

2<sup>nd</sup> October 1929 Awarded a guinea for stopping a runaway horse

2<sup>nd</sup> April 1930 Complimented for the arrest of persons stealing

14<sup>th</sup> March 1931 Complimented for the arrest of housebreakers

13<sup>th</sup> April 1932 Complimented for the arrest of loiterers

5<sup>th</sup> June 1935 Awarded a guinea for the arrest of persons shop breaking

2<sup>nd</sup> October 1935 Awarded a guinea for the arrest of persons for larceny and receiving

4<sup>th</sup> June 1936 Complimented for the arrest of a juvenile, housebreaking

2<sup>th</sup> March 1939 Benjamin retired from the police after 25 years' service

23<sup>rd</sup> April 1974 Benjamin sadly died, his widow, Beatrice received a police widow's pension of £3.44 per week

