



Ernest Exley

1894 – 1917

Ernest was born in 1894. His father was Luke, born in Heckmondwike in 1851. He was a Dyer's Labourer. His mother was Ellen Jane Coulton, born in Barnard Castle, County Durham in 1854. They were married at Birstall Parish Church on 13th November 1875. They lived at Back Kensington Street, Flatts, Dewsbury.

According to the 1911 census, Ernest had two surviving brothers: John George Exley, born in North Startforth in 1879. He served as a Bombardier with the Royal Field Artillery in World War 1, Fred, born in Dewsbury in 1887. He served as a Corporal in the 10th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was killed on 1st July 1916, the First Day of the Battle of the Somme.

Ernest married Gladys Johnson at St Peter's Church, Earlsheaton on 3rd April 1915. They lived at 24, Hill End, Wakefield Road, Dewsbury. Ernest was a Cloth Finisher at Aldams Mills, Dewsbury.

He enlisted on 6th September 1916 serving as Private 202688 in the 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to France on 1st January 1917.

Ernest died as a result of Mustard Gas poisoning when the enemy were inflicting a sustained bombardment of Mustard Gas on the Belgian coast around Nieuport, Flanders. He died in No 2 Canadian General Hospital, Le Treport, France on 31st July 1917 and is buried in Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport. Ernest was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

According to the report of his death in the *Dewsbury Reporter* on 4th August 1917, Ernest was initially well enough to write to his wife: *"I am sorry to say that I am hospital gassed, but I am going on well. Keep smiling! I shall be in Blighty as soon as the doctor finds me fit to travel."*

Ernest is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Dewsbury Parish Church School War Memorial.

In Memory of

Private

Ernest Exley

202688, 1st/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 31 July 1917 Age 23

Son of Luke and Ellen Exley; husband of Gladys M. Exley, of 24, Hill End, Wakefield Rd., Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

