



Ernest Blackburn

1885 - 1916

Ernest was born in Wakefield on 6th August 1885 and baptised on 4th July 1886 at Wakefield All Saints Church. His father was James Blackburn, a Solicitor's Clerk born in Wakefield in 1852 and died in 1923; he joined the West Riding Constabulary on 23rd September 1881. His mother was Eliza (née Milnes) born in Wakefield in 1850 and died in 1925. They were married at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Wakefield on 23rd November 1874.

Their other children were; Frances Mary, born in 1875, Louisa, born in 1877 and died in 1877, May, born in 1879, Albert, born in 1880, Herbert, born in 1883, Lily, born in 1888 and Harold, born in 1891.

Ernest was married to Sarah Anne 'Annie' Smith (born in 1885 and died in 1968) on 12th August 1912 at the Ebenezer United Congregationalist Church, Dewsbury; they had two children, Stanley, born in Leeds on 22nd February 1915 and Ernest Leslie, born in Leeds on 17th October 1916, shortly after the news of Ernest's death had reached his widow. He was an Assistant Master at Upper Wortley Council School in Leeds, a post he held from August 1906. Previously he had lived with his parents at 68a, Westgate, Dewsbury and was a worshipper at the Ebenezer United Congregationalist Church on Longcauseway. He was also a choirman, and Sunday school teacher as well as Assistant Superintendent of the Boy's Brigade. Ernest was a keen cricketer and secretary of the Church Cricket Club. They lived at 7, Moorfield Avenue, Armley, Leeds and later at 24, Highthorne Street, Upper Armley.

He served as Rifleman R/25080, firstly in the 24th and then in the 9th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps, attesting in May 1916 and was sent to the Western Front after 12 weeks training. He was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette on 16th September 1916. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme. Ernest was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

Ernest is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Armley Park, Leeds. He is also remembered on the memorial to the fallen of the King's Royal Rifle Corps within the grounds of Winchester Cathedral.

In Memory of

Rifleman

Ernest Blackburn

R/25080, 9th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps who died on 15 September 1916 Age 31

Son of James and Eliza Blackburn, of 68A, Westgate, Dewsbury, Yorks; husband of S. A. Blackburn, of 24, Highthorne St., Upper Armley, Leeds.

Remembered with Honour

Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

BLACKBURN E.