



## **Arthur Oldroyd**

### **1897-1917**

Arthur was born in Balmain, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia in 1897. His father was Smith Oldroyd, a Milk Vendor born in Dewsbury in 1863 and died in 1907. His mother was Sarah (nee Sykes) born in South Crosland near Huddersfield in 1861 and died in 1951. They emigrated to Australia where they were married at Christ Church St. Laurence, George Street, Sydney on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1892.

They had a son, James, born in Sydney in 1893 and died in 1893 and a daughter, Barbara, born in Sydney in 1894. They returned to England in 1900 where their daughter Dorothy Hoban was born in 1901.

On the 1901 Census they are living at the home of Sarah's father, James Sykes at 72, Whitley Street, Dewsbury. In 1911 Sarah is head of the family at 16, Wharfe Street, Savile Town, Dewsbury; her father James is also living with them, he died in 1916.

Arthur was a single man who was educated at Victoria Jubilee School in Wellington Road, Dewsbury and attended St. John the Baptist Church and Sunday school in Dawgreen. He was a keen member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Dewsbury Boy Scouts Troop and worked as an Upholsterer for Mr. Harry Senior, Daisy Hill, Dewsbury.

He attested in November 1914 (when under age) into the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry serving as Private 201312 and was sent to the Western Front in January 1917. He was killed in action on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1917 during the Battle of Arras. Whilst standing outside the signal office with an officer and the Company Serjeant Major, a heavy shell burst nearby killing all three men instantly. He was buried in St. Leger British Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France. Arthur was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

St. Leger is a village approximately 12 kilometres south of Arras and 8 kilometres north of Bapaume. The village was occupied by Commonwealth troops in the middle of March 1917, lost after obstinate defence by the 40<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Divisions a year later, and recaptured towards the end of the following August, after severe fighting, by the 62<sup>nd</sup> (West Riding) and Guards Divisions. The cemetery was begun in March 1917 and used by fighting units and field ambulances until March 1918, when a certain number of burials were made by the Germans. The Cemetery contains 184 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. Three of the burials are unidentified and six destroyed by shell fire are represented by special memorials.

Arthur is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park Dewsbury and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial from the now demolished St. Mary's Church, Savile Town now relocated to Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

In Memory of

Private

## A Oldroyd

201312, 2nd/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 14 April 1917

Remembered with Honour

St. Leger British Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.