



## **Ralph Crawshaw**

### **1884 – 1917**

Ralph was born in Ravensthorpe on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1884 and baptised at St. Saviour's Church, Ravensthorpe on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1884. His father was Harry Crawshaw, a power loom tuner, born in Dewsbury in 1861 and died in 1937. His mother was Jane (nee Wharton) born in Ravensthorpe in 1863 and died in 1938. They were married in 1884.

On the 1891, 1901 and 1911 they lived at 101, Sackville Street, Ravensthorpe. In 1901 Ralph was recorded as living with his maternal grandparents who also lived in Sackville Street.

Ralph was an only child who worked as a case maker at Newsome Brothers Piano Manufacturers in Ravensthorpe. He was married to Mary Ellen Fearnley (born in Ravensthorpe in 1882 and died in 1934) at St. Mary's Parish Church, Mirfield on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1910. They lived at Spring Place Cottage, Dark Lane, Northorpe, Mirfield and did not have any children. He was a member of Northorpe and Ravensthorpe Conservative Club and Mirfield Parish Cricket Club.

He served as Private 29245 in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) attesting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1915 but was not called up until 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1916. There appears to have been some doubt about his health as he had two medical examinations, one on 21<sup>st</sup> September and another on 29<sup>th</sup> December; he was pronounced fit for service and after completing his training at Tynemouth he was posted to the Western Front on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 1917, joining the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Brigade (17<sup>th</sup> Division). He was killed in action on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1917 during the Battle of Arras. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial. Ralph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His Division was ordered into the Trenches (at Orange Hill) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1917 and at 8.30 pm moved forward to the Sunken Road near Monchy-le Preux, in preparation for an attack on Rifle Trench. The attack commenced at 3.20 am on 25<sup>th</sup> April led by riflemen and bombers, supported by Lewis gunners and rifle bombers. They made steady progress to within 100 yards of the trench when whistles blew and the attack was met by heavy machine gun fire which compelled them to fall back, twice more they were repulsed and on the fourth attempt the right flank of the attack managed to penetrate into the trench, a foothold which they held all day. At night they had to retire and Ralph was discovered to be missing, he was one of the 75 men plus one Officer who were killed in that attack.

The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7<sup>th</sup> August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and who have no known grave. The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the spring of 1918.

Ralph 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 Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of

Private

## Ralph Crawshaw

29245, 9th Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) who died on 25 April 1917 Age 32

Son of Harry and Jane Crawshaw, of 101, Sackville St., Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, Yorks; husband of Mary Ellen Crawshaw, of 102, Shill Bank Lane, Mirfield, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Arras Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

