



Ewart Doodson

1898 – 1917

Ewart was born in Elland on 11th November 1898; his birth name was registered as *Ewart Alderman Jagger*. His mother was Mary Jagger, born in Huddersfield in 1867.

On the 1901 Census he is recorded as *Ewart Alderman*, a boarder aged 2 living in Elland with the family of Edna Doodson, a widow with three children.

On the 1911 Census he is registered as Ewart Doodson, the adopted son of Tyas Wood, a rag and shawl finisher born in Holmfirth in 1865 and his wife Morrenah (nee Jagger) born in Longwood, Huddersfield in 1865, she was the sister of his mother Mary. They were married in 1889 in Saddleworth and had two children; James born in 1890 and Lily born in 1896. The family lived at 25, Huddersfield Road, Ravensthorpe. Ewart was a single man who worked as a clerk at the Yorkshire Electric Power Company.

He enlisted under age in October 1915 and served as Gunner 206130 in 12th Company, “D” Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Heavy Branch); originally the unit was entitled Motor Machine Gun Services, who originally used motor cycles but as the demand for this type of outfit declined they became the Tank Corps in 1917. As part of the crew of one of eight tanks, Ewart advanced to St. Eloi at the end of March and from there to a sunken road, called the Elbe Trench on the 7th and 8th of April. Zero hour for the commencement of the Battle of Arras was 5am on the morning of 9th April. The terrain proved too difficult for the use of tanks, which were soon left far behind by the infantry who captured Hill 135 at relatively small cost. The tanks caught up at around 7.15 am but the officers had to lead them on foot and all tanks became ditched between the 2nd and 3rd lines and there they remained until dug out by their crews on succeeding days. Three of the crew of Ewart’s tank got out to make an adjustment when a shell dropped a yard behind them; their Serjeant died in a few minutes but Ewart survived another half-hour before he died. He was buried in the field, but after the Armistice his remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial. Ewart was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

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 7th August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and 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.

Ewart 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 and on the War Memorial in the porch of the now closed St. Matthew’s Church, Westtown.

In Memory of

Private

Ewart Doodson

206130, 12th Coy. "D" Bn., Machine Gun Corps (Heavy Branch) who died on 09 April 1917 Age 18

Adopted son of Mr. and Mrs. Tyas Wood, of 4, Scout Hill Terrace, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Arras Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

