



William Charles MacDonald

1890 - 1917

William was born in Dundee, Scotland on 3rd December 1890. His father was Charles Craik MacDonald, a jute factory worker born in Dundee in 1870. His mother was Isabella (nee Ross) born in Perthshire in 1870. The family surname is spelt as both *MacDonald* and *McDonald*.

On the 1901 Scotland Census they were living in Union Place, Dundee and had two more children; Donald, born in 1893 and Isabella, born in 1897.

William came to live in Dewsbury around 1911 and was married to Mary Ewen (born in Hawick, Scotland in 1888 and died in 1920) at All Saints Church, Dewsbury on 26th July 1913. They lived at 1, Back Webster Street, Dewsbury and had two children, Flora Isabella, born in 1914 and died in 1918 and Charles Craik, born in 1917. His occupation was a stumper in a woollen mill, (this was a man who replaced bands which transmitted power to the spindles).

He enlisted in January 1915 into the 2nd/4th Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry serving as Private 201143 with a previous number 3422 but was not sent to the Western Front until January 1917. He died of wounds in No. 109 Field Ambulance on 20th November 1917 sustained during the First Day of the Battle of Cambrai. His grave must have been lost or destroyed in later battles as his remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated as *William Charles McDonald* on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France. William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His wife received a letter from Quartermaster W. Pollard, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry: "*Poor Mac., I can hardly realise that he is gone. It is now well over two years since he came to my company, and since that time he has always been at my side as my orderly. He was always cheerful, and I never knew him to be downhearted. He went over the top as brave as anybody, but in Fritz's wire he got a bullet through his thigh which severed an artery, and he was found by one of our corporals, who, under circumstances of great difficulty, bandaged up his wound and released him from the wire. Poor old Mac., however, fainted, and he was put in a shell-hole. I fully believed and hoped he had got safely to hospital, but later I was told he had died through loss of blood, and he was buried on the battlefield.*"

The Cambrai Memorial commemorates 7,120 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South Africa who died in the Battle of Cambrai in November and December 1917 and whose graves are not known. The Memorial stands on a terrace in Louverval Military Cemetery, situated south of the small village of Louverval which is 13 Kms north-east of Bapaume and 16 Kms south-west of Cambrai.

William is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

In Memory of

Private

William Charles McDonald

201143, 2nd/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 20 November 1917

Remembered with Honour

Cambrai Memorial, Louverval



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

