



## **George Cook Tolson**

### **1875 - 1917**

George was born in Dewsbury on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1875 and was baptised on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1875 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury. His father was Joseph Tolson, a Grocer born in Dewsbury in 1832 and died in 1899. His mother was Betsy/Betsey (nee Oldfield) born in 1835 and died in 1877. They were married on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1855 at All Saints Church.

Their other children were; Jane, born in 1856, William, born in 1859, Annie, born in 1862, Robert Oldfield, born in 1864, Joseph, born in 1866, Herbert, born in 1870 and Elizabeth (Betsy/Betsey) born in 1872.

George was married on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1900 at St. John the Baptist Church, Daw Green, Dewsbury to May Marcus (her mother's maiden name) she was born *Mary Malcolm Cooper* in North Shields, Northumberland in 1875 and died in 1949. They did not have any children and lived at 8, Prospect View, Pinfold Hill, Dewsbury. He opened a Boot and Shoe business at 60a, Wellington Road, Dewsbury in 1899 and was treasurer of the Dewsbury Branch of the Heavy Woollen District Boot and Shoe Trade Association and was a member of the Dewsbury Club and Institute.

On 9<sup>th</sup> January 1915 he joined the 148<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance, Royal Marines Medical Unit, Royal Naval Division with the Service Number Deal/3246/S. Having gone through the course and taken the certificate for ambulance work before the war, he served in the Gallipoli Campaign, being one of the first to land and one of the last to leave. He later served on the Western Front and was promoted to acting Lance Serjeant in the Royal Naval Field Ambulance on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1916, the promotion being confirmed as permanent on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1916. He was killed in action on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1917 near Elverdinghe in Belgian Flanders during the later stages of the Battle of Passchendaele and was buried in Gwalia Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. George was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. His Colonel described him as "*A man we can never replace*"

Gwalia Cemetery was opened at the beginning of July 1917, in the period between the Battle of Messines and the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele). It lay among the camps in flat, wet country and was used by infantry units, artillery and field ambulances until September 1918. In Plot I, Row H, are buried 14 men of the 9<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers who were killed in the early morning of 4<sup>th</sup> September 1917, in a German air raid over "Dirty Bucket Camp." The cemetery contains 467 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

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

In Memory of  
Lance Serjeant

## George Cook Tolson

Deal/3246(S), R.M. Medical Unit, R.N. Div., Royal Marines who died on 06 November 1917 Age 42

Son of Joseph and Ellen Tolson, of Dewsbury; husband of May Tolson, of 60, Wellington Rd., Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour  
Gwalia Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Ms. Danielle Roubroeks, Antwerp, Belgium.