



## George Harford

### 1898-1918

George was born at Carlinghow Lane, Batley on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1898. His mother was Mary Ann Harford, a Domestic Servant born in Batley in 1866 and died in 1911.

On the 1901 Census, Mary Ann is living as the Housekeeper at the Vicarage of St. John the Evangelist Church, Ealand Road, Carlinghow, Batley. The Minister is the Rev. Charles H. Maggs. George is not recorded at that address and has not been found at any other for that year.

In 1911 George was living with the large family of a widow, Mrs Ann Kellett at 18, Thompson's Buildings, White Lee, Batley; his status is recorded as "adopted" but as there was no formal system of adoption until 1929, this a generic term.

George was a single man who worked as Coal Hurrier at White Lee Colliery, Batley. He must have kept in contact with his mother's family as he left his Soldier's Effects to his uncle, Mr. Mark Harford of 37, Peel Street, Dewsbury who was born in 1883.

He enlisted in Oct 1915 in Bradford serving as Private 24783 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Yorkshire Regiment. He died on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1918 in a Casualty Clearing Station at Esquelbecq, France from wounds sustained in action during the later stages of the German Spring Offensive (*Der Kaiserschlacht*) and was buried in Esquelbecq Military Cemetery, Nord, France. George was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Dewsbury District News on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1918 published his picture as having died of wounds but his name is spelt "*George Harwood*"

Esquelbecq is a village near the Belgian frontier, 24 kilometres north of Hazebrouck and the same distance south of Dunkirk. Esquelbecq Military Cemetery is about one kilometre west of the village, and was opened in April 1918 during the early stages of the German offensive in Flanders, when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian and 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Casualty Clearing Stations came to Esquelbecq. It was closed in September 1918. The cemetery contains 578 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  
Private

**G Harford**

24783, 2nd Bn., Yorkshire Regiment who died on 11 May 1918

Remembered with Honour  
Esquelbecq Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Tony Emptage.