



Charles Dixon Crabtree

1899-1918

Charles was born in Dewsbury on 27th September 1899 and baptised on 27th October 1899. His father was William Crabtree, a Postman born in Dewsbury in 1851 and died in 1927. His mother was Georgiana (nee Dixon) born in Dewsbury in 1854 and died in 1917. They were married on 9th March 1872 at St. Mark's Church, Halifax Road, Dewsbury.

Their other children were; Emily, born in 1873, Joseph Arthur, born in 1874, George William, born in 1876, Herbert, born in 1878, Watson, born in 1880 and died in 1882, Maud, born in 1882, Albert, born in 1884 and served in World War 1, Ethel, born in 1886, Florrie, born in 1888, Fred, born in 1890 and was killed in action on 11th August 1918, Minnie, born in 1892 and died in 1893 and Clarence, born in 1894.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 4, Woodbine Street, Dewsbury, in 1901 and 1911 at Whitley Street, Dewsbury and later at Springfield House, Willans Road, Dewsbury.

Nothing is known about Charles's education and occupation as he was still a schoolboy in 1911 and no articles appeared in the local newspapers announcing his death.

He enlisted in Dewsbury into the Army Service Corps with the Service Number M/315119 and was later transferred into the 6th Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment serving as Private 47547. He was killed in action in France on 31st August 1918 and is buried in Combles Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France. Charles was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The large village of Combles is 16 kilometres east of Albert and 13 kilometres south of Bapaume. The village was entered in the early morning of the 26th August, 1916, by units of the 56th (London) Division and of the French Army; and it remained in Allied occupation until the 24th March, 1918, when the place was captured after a stubborn stand by the South African Brigade at Marrieres Wood. It was retaken on the 29th August, 1918, by the 18th Division. The cemetery was begun in October, 1916 by French troops, but the 94 French graves made in 1916 have been removed to another cemetery. The first British burials took place in December, 1916. From March, 1917, to the end of May, 1918, the Extension was not used. In June, July and August, 194 German soldiers were buried in what was afterwards called Plot I, but these graves, too, have been removed; and in August and September further burials were made by the 18th Division. Plots II, V, VI and VII and most of Plot IV were added after the Armistice by the concentration of 944 graves from the battlefields in the neighbourhood and from smaller cemeteries. There are now over 1,500, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over half are unidentified and special memorials are erected to nine soldiers from the United Kingdom and one from South Africa, known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of three soldiers from the United Kingdom, buried in Maurepas and Longtree Dump Military Cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.

Charles 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

Charles Dixon Crabtree

47547, 6th Bn., Northamptonshire Regiment who died on 31 August 1918 Age 19

Son of William Crabtree, of Willans Rd., Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Combles Communal Cemetery Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Tony Emptage.