



Fred Needham Blakey

1895-1918

Fred was born in Goole, Yorkshire in 1895. His father was George Blakey, a Life Insurance Agent and later a Police Constable born in Louth, Lincolnshire in 1869 and died in 1920. His mother was Mary Ann (nee Needham) born in Eastoft, Lincolnshire in 1860 and died in 1930. They were married in Goole in 1888.

They had one other son, George Henry, born in Goole in 1892.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at Holmes's Yard, Goole, in 1901 at 31, Great Northern Street, Morley, Yorkshire and in 1911 at Devonshire Buildings, Town Street, Earlsheaton.

Fred was a single man who was educated at Knowl Council School, Mirfield and attended Knowl Wesleyan Sunday school; he worked as a Millhand employed by Messrs Mark Oldroyd and Sons, Calder Mills, Dewsbury.

He enlisted in January 1916 serving as Private 27155 in the 2nd/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front after 13 weeks training; after 10 months active service he was invalided home with pneumonia, returning to the front in June 1917. He suffered shrapnel wounds to his back in September that same year and was once again invalided home to recover; he returned to the front for a third time early in July 1918 and was killed in action in France on 20th July 1918 during the Second Battle of the Marne. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial, Aisne, France. Fred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The town of Soissons stands on the left bank of the River Aisne, approximately 100 kilometres north-east of Paris. For three and a half years from September 1914, this part of the front was held by French forces and the city remained within the range of German artillery. Here, at the end of May 1918, they found themselves facing the overwhelming German attack which, despite fierce opposition, pushed the Allies back across the Aisne to the Marne. The Allied counter attack drove back the Germans by early August and recovered the lost ground. The Soissons Memorial commemorates almost 4,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom forces who died during the Battles of the Aisne and the Marne in 1918 and who have no known grave.

Fred 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 Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton.

In Memory of

Private

Fred Needham Blakey

27155, 2nd/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 20 July 1918 Age 23

Son of Mrs. Mary Ann Blakey, of 57, Town St., Earlsheaton, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Soissons Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

