



## John Henry Prentice 1891 – 1915

John was born in Holton-le-Beckering, Lincolnshire in 1891. His father was also John Henry Prentice, a Blacksmith born in Skillington, Lincolnshire in 1860 and died in 1926. His mother was Ann (nee Freeman) born in Minting, Lincolnshire in 1850 and died in 1926. They were married in 1890.

Their other children were; Walter, born in 1892 and Percy, born in 1895.

On the 1891 Census the family are living at Holton-le-Beckering, in 1901 at 52, Bourne Street, Carlton, Nottinghamshire and in 1911 at 82, Station Street, Carlton.

Ann was previously married in 1869 to Thomas Leonard Friskney (born in 1846 and died in 1878) they had six children; Thomas Leonard, born in 1870, Annie Louisa, born in 1871, Francis Edwin, born in 1873, John George, born in 1874, Arthur Herbert, born in 1876 and Charles Walter, born in 1878. She was remarried in 1880 to Harry Crosha Bralsford (born in 1854 and died in 1888) they had five children; Emma Jane, born in 1881, Harry Crosha, born in 1882, Alice Rebecca, born in 1883 and died in 1885, James William, born in 1885 and Robert Freeman, born in 1888.

John was a single man who in 1911 was working as a Railway Porter. According to the *Dewsbury Reporter* of 16<sup>th</sup> October 1915 he had moved to South Terrace, Earlsheaton as a boarder of Mrs Swift, specifically to take up the role of Signaller at Earlsheaton Railway Station. He also attended Highfield Congregational Church.

He attested on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1914 at Dewsbury, serving as Private 19093 in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment and quickly rose through the ranks; he was promoted to Lance Corporal on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1914, Corporal on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1914, Serjeant on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1915 and Company Quartermaster Serjeant on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1915. He was offered a commission, but for personal reasons (not declared), he declined it. He was sent to the Western Front on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1915 and died of wounds on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1915 in Northern France after being hit by a bullet behind the ear whilst issuing rations; he was buried in Erquinghem-Lys Churchyard Extension, Nord, France. John was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The village of Erquinghem-Lys is situated approximately 1.5 kilometres west of Armentieres. It was occupied by German forces early in October 1914, and taken by the 1<sup>st</sup> Somerset Light Infantry on 16<sup>th</sup> October. It remained in Allied hands until 10<sup>th</sup> April 1918, when the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade and the 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Wellington's, after a stubborn defence, evacuated the village during the great German offensive. The village was finally retaken in September 1918. The earliest Commonwealth burials were made in two places in the churchyard itself, in October 1914-January 1915, but these 27 graves were moved into the extension in 1925, the churchyard being closed for burials. The extension was begun in April 1915 and used by units and field ambulances until April 1918. It was continued down to the stream by the Germans (who also used the churchyard) in the summer of 1918, and in September and October 1918, it was used again for some Commonwealth burials. The extension now contains 558 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, with eight of them being unidentified.

John is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph at Crow Nest Park and as *John Prentice* in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Earlsheaton Park and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton.

In Memory of  
Company Quartermaster Serjeant

**J H Prentice**

19093, 9th Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 08 October 1915

Remembered with Honour  
**Erquinghem-Lys Churchyard Extension**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Réal Desmarests.