



## **Ernest Rowley**

### **1891-1918**

Ernest was born in Hunslet, Leeds in 1891. His father was Samuel Rowley, a Cloth Fetter born in Earlsheaton in 1856 and died in 1943. His mother was Letitia (nee Hanson) born in Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire, Scotland in 1861 and died in 1919. They were married in 1881.

Their other children were; Garnet, born in Dewsbury in 1881, Stanley, born in Hunslet in 1883, Bertie, born in Hunslet in 1885, Herbert, born in Hunslet in 1888 and was killed in action 20<sup>th</sup> October 1916 and Annie, born in 1889.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 5, Milner Grove, Hunslet, in 1901 at Providence Street, Earlsheaton, in 1911 at Short Street, Chickenley and later at 71, Robinson's Yard, Earlsheaton.

Ernest was a single man who was educated at Earlsheaton Council School; he attended Highfield Congregational Sunday school, and was a member of the Highfield Institute. He played cricket, being highly skilled as a slow bowler, with the Earlsheaton Wesleyan cricket club. He was employed as a Wheelwright by Mr. Abraham Firth, Savile Town, Dewsbury.

He enlisted in July 1916 serving as Sapper 471698 in 130<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers and was sent to the Western Front in April 1917; he came home on leave in March 1918 returning to the front on 4<sup>th</sup> April. He was killed in action on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1918 when his company was retreating from Le Bizet a few hundred yards inside the Belgian border about a mile and a half from the large French town of Armentieres to a place called Brune-Gave between Le Bizet and Nieppe in France. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium. Ernest was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Ploegsteert Memorial stands in Berks Cemetery Extension, which is located 12.5 Kms south of Ypres (now Ieper). The memorial commemorates the 11,349 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South African forces who have no known grave and died in the area from the line Caestre-Dranoutre-Warneton to the north, to Haverskerque-Estaires-Fournes to the south, including the towns of Hazebrouck, Merville, Bailleul and Armentieres, the Forest of Nieppe, and Ploegsteert Wood. The original intention had been to erect the memorial in Lille.

Ernest 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 and on the Memorial Plaque from the now demolished Earlsheaton Highfield Congregational Church relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of

Sapper

# Ernest Rowley

471698, 130th Field Coy., Royal Engineers who died on 10 April 1918

Remembered with Honour

Ploegsteert Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

