



Richard Pickard

1894 - 1916

Richard was born in Thornhill Lees in 1894. His mother was Elizabeth Pickard, born in Thornhill Lees in 1868 and died in 1938; she also had a daughter, Martha Ann Pickard, born in 1888.

Elizabeth was married in 1897 to George Henry Goldthorpe, a Teamer on a pit stack born in Dewsbury in 1871 and died in 1943. They had two children; Clara Elizabeth Goldthorpe, born in 1899 and died in 1899 and Annie Elizabeth Goldthorpe, born in 1903.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 27, Thornhill Road, Dewsbury and in 1911 at 15, Hill End, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury.

Richard was a single man who was educated at Dewsbury Parish Church School and was employed by Mr. Joe Long, a Farmer and Cattle Dealer of Scout Hill, Dewsbury. Richard was a talented and keen rugby football player, having won two medals playing for the Dewsbury Celtic Football Team which brought him to the attention of Dewsbury RLFC and he was signed on to play in Second Team. He had a son, John Pickard Webster born 20th April 1914 to Mary Elizabeth Webster (born in 1891 and died in 1970). She was married in 1916 to George Robson Milnes (born in 1893 and died in 1966).

He enlisted on 21st September 1914 serving as Private 15615 in the 9th Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment and was sent to the Western Front on 27th September 1915. His record survives and shows five disciplinary offences for which he received varying punishments; he was confined to Barracks on three occasions and Admonished once and more seriously, fourteen days No 2 Field Punishment. He was killed in action during the First Day of the Battle of the Somme on 1st July 1916. His body was not recovered until 1927 when he was reburied in Serre Road Cemetery No 2, Somme, France. Richard was awarded the 1914-15 Star, which was re-issued on 17th May 1920 at the direction of the Adjutant and also the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The village of Serre is 11 kilometres north-north-east of Albert. In June 1916, the road out of Mailly-Maillet to Serre and Puisieux entered No Man's Land about 1,300 metres south-west of Serre. On 1st July 1916, the 31st and 4th Divisions attacked north and south of this road and although parties of the 31st Division reached Serre the attack failed. The 3rd and 31st Divisions attacked once more on the 13th November, but again without success. Early in 1917, the Germans fell back to the Hindenburg Line and on 25th February, Serre was occupied by the 22nd Manchesters. The village changed hands once more in March 1918 and remained under German occupation, until they withdrew in August. In the spring of 1917, the battlefields of the Somme and Ancre were cleared by V Corps and a number of new cemeteries were made, three of which are now named from the Serre Road. Serre Road Cemetery No.2 was begun in May 1917 and by the end of the war it contained approximately 475 graves, but it was greatly enlarged after the Armistice by the addition of further graves from the surrounding area, including graves from smaller cemeteries. There are now 7,127 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery, mostly dating from 1916. Of these, 4,944 are unidentified.

Richard 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
Richard Pickard

15615, 9th Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 01 July 1916 Age 22

Son of Mrs. Elizabeth Goldthorpe (formerly Pickard), of 15, Hill End, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Serre Road Cemetery No.2



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

