



## Charles Eli Walker 1899-1918

Charles was born in Batley on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1899. His father was Luke Walker, a Rag Warehouseman born in Batley in 1871 and died in 1954. His mother was Grace (nee Childe) born in Batley in 1870 and died in 1928. They were married at All Saints Church, Batley on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1892.

Their other children, all born in Batley except the youngest were; Edith Ann, born in 1892 and died in 1893, Hannah, born in 1893 and died in 1894, Bertha, born in 1895, Doris, born in 1897 and died in 1897, Tom Stephenson, born in 1901 and died in 1903, Hilda, born in 1902 and died in 1903, Elsie, born in 1903 and Jack, born in Bolton, Lancashire in 1909.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 50, Richmond Street, Batley and in 1911 at 27, Carlton Road, Dewsbury.

Luke was remarried in 1929 to Miriam Oates (born in 1874 and died in 1950).

Charles was a single man who was educated at Carlton Road School and was associated with Batley Primitive Methodist Sunday school. He worked in the Rag Warehouse of Mr. J. Burrows in Batley Carr.

He enlisted in Dewsbury serving as Private 81702 in the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Durham Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1918. He was reported missing on 12<sup>th</sup> April and died in a German War Hospital on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1918 at Pont-du-Hem in Northern France during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of the Lys. He was buried by the enemy in Pont-du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, Nord, France. His actual grave location in the cemetery is unknown and he is one of 12 men who died in April 1918 who are commemorated by Special Memorials. Charles was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Pont-du-Hem is a hamlet situated on the main road from La Bassee to Estaires. Pont-du-Hem was in German hands from mid-April to mid-September 1918. The Cemetery was begun, in an apple-orchard, in July 1915, and used until April 1918, by fighting units and Field Ambulances. 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 believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of 44 soldiers from the United Kingdom, two from Canada, two from Australia and one of the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry, buried in this or other cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire, and of five Indian soldiers whose bodies were cremated. There are 107 German burials and 1 American.

Charles is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour now kept in Dewsbury Central Library and as *C.D. Walker* on the War Memorial from Batley Primitive Methodist Chapel now displayed in Batley Central Methodist Church and as *E. Walker* on the Memorial Plaque from the Salem United Methodist Church, Dewsbury, now stored in the Resource Centre at Batley Central Methodist Church and on the Springfield Congregational Church Memorial Plaque now relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of

Private

**C E Walker**

81702, 1st/5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry who died on 13 April 1918

Remembered with Honour

**Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.