



## **William Greaves**

### **1896-1918**

William was born in Ravensthorpe on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1896 and baptised at St. Saviour's Church, Ravensthorpe on January 28<sup>th</sup> 1897. His father was Joseph Worner Greaves, a waterman (bargee) and later a gas stoker born in Mirfield in 1862 and died in 1939. His mother was Sarah (nee Avison) born in Kirkheaton near Huddersfield in 1865 and died in 1939. They were married at St. Saviour's Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1889.

Their other children were; Jane, born in 1889 and died in 1889, Ellen, born in 1891, George, born in 1893 and served in World War 1, Albert, born in 1895 and died in 1895 and Mary Ann born in 1899.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 81, William Street, Ravensthorpe and in 1911 at 2, Day Street, Ravensthorpe and later at 7, Day Street.

William was a single man who in 1911 worked as a carbonizer in the shoddy trade for Messrs Rawdon Briggs and Company.

He was called up in September 1916 serving as Private 242967 in the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and went to the Western Front in January 1917 where he was wounded three times; in the left side and head, in the knee and finally in the right thigh in December 1917. He died of pneumonia on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1918 in No 1 Canadian General Hospital near Etaples and was buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France. William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

During the First World War, the area around Etaples was the scene of immense concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals. It was remote from attack, except from aircraft, and accessible by railway from both the northern and the southern battlefields. In 1917, 100,000 troops were camped among the sand dunes and the hospitals, which included eleven general, one stationary, four Red Cross hospitals and a convalescent depot, could deal with 22,000 wounded or sick. In September 1919, ten months after the Armistice, three hospitals and the Q.M.A.A.C. convalescent depot remained. Etaples Military Cemetery contains 10,771 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, the earliest dating from May 1915. 35 of these burials are unidentified.

William is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of  
Private  
**William Greaves**

242967, 1st/5th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 16 January 1918 Age 21

Son of Joseph and Sarah Greaves, of 7, Day St., Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour  
**Etaples Military Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Tony Emptage.