



## Walter Swithenbank

### 1881-1918

Walter was born in Earlsheaton on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1881 and baptised at St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1882. His father was Thomas Swithenbank, a Rag Blender in a Woollen Mill born in Dewsbury Moor in 1836 and died in 1911. His mother was Sarah (nee Hinchcliffe) born in Dewsbury in 1844 and died in 1910. They were married at All Saints Church, Dewsbury on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1861.

Their other children were; Mary Elizabeth, born in 1862 and died in 1895, Albert, born in 1863, Charles, born in 1865, William, born in 1867 and died in 1876, Samuel (Sam), born in 1869 and died in 1914, Joseph (Josh), born in 1871, Louisa, born in 1873, Alice, born in 1875, Hannah (Annie), born in 1877 and died in 1903, Frederick, born in 1879, Gertrude, born in 1884 and died in 1885 and John William, born in 1886.

On the 1871 Census the family are living at Chickenley Lane, Chickenley, Dewsbury, in 1881 at Green Gates, Earlsheaton, in 1891 at Queen Street, Chickenley and in 1901 at Providence Street, Earlsheaton.

Walter worked as a Woollen Spinner and was married to Mary Ellen Collinson (born in Kippax, Yorkshire in 1882 and died in 1973) on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1905 at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton; they had two children, Percival Arthur, born in 1905 and Reginald, born in 1912. In 1911 they lived at 15, Battye Street, Dewsbury and later at 34, Park Road, Earlsheaton. Mary Ellen was remarried in 1920 to a widower Arthur Backhouse (born in 1876 and died in 1939) at St. Mary's Church, Kippax.

He enlisted in Dewsbury serving as Private 205316 in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; he was killed in action in France on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1918 during the German Spring Offensive (*Der Kaiserschlacht*). His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial. Walter was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Pozieres Memorial relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields, and the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1918. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died between 21<sup>st</sup> March to 7<sup>th</sup> August 1918.

Walter 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 Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton.

In Memory of

Private

**Walter Swithenbank**

205316, 7th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 04 April 1918

Remembered with Honour

**Pozieres Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

