



Roscoe Crossley Riley

1879-1918

Roscoe was born in Dewsbury Moor on 20th January 1879 and baptised at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 2nd March 1879. His father was Benjamin Riley, a Stable Groom born in Hooton, North Yorkshire in 1851 and died in 1894. His mother was Rebecca (nee Howden, late Roe) born in Wakefield in 1853 and died in 1924. They were married on 20th November 1876 at St. John the Evangelist Church.

They also had a daughter, Lois, born in 1878.

Rebecca had been previously married in 1872 to Henry Roe (born in 1849 and died in 1876). She was married a third time in 1895 to Alfred Edward Lister (born in 1871 and died in 1938); her age is given as 35 but she was actually 42. They had a son, Edgar Lister, born in 1896. On the 1901 Census Rebecca's age is given as 35 but she was actually 48. On the 1911 Census her age is given as 48 but she was actually 58. Her age at death in 1924 is given as 62 but she was actually 71.

On the Census Records from 1881 to 1911 the family lived at 4, Longcauseway, Dewsbury.

Roscoe was a single man who worked at Mr. Harry Birch's Dyeworks, but in 1901 he was working as a Clerk in a Loan Office in Manchester and was a boarder at the home of his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson at 104, Hadfield Street, Newton Heath, Manchester.

He enlisted at the outbreak of World War 1 serving as Private 200027 in the 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 13th April 1915. He was killed in action when hit by a shell in Belgian Flanders on 25th April 1918 and was buried in the field; his remains were reburied in August 1919 in Perth Cemetery (China Wall) West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Roscoe was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His mother received a very poignant and personal letter from a soldier named J.E. Auty who lived at Leeds Road, Dewsbury; he writes *"I am very sorry to have to tell you that poor old 'Rossie' was killed on April 25th, it was a hellish bombardment."*

Perth Cemetery (China Wall) is located 3 Kilometres east of Ieper (Ypres) town centre. There are now 2,791 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated here. 1,369 of the burials are unidentified and special memorials are erected to 27 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials bear the names of 104 casualties buried in cemeteries which were concentrated here, and whose graves could not be found.

Roscoe 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

Roscoe C. Riley

200027, 1st/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 25 April 1918

Remembered with Honour

Perth Cemetery (China Wall)



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Ms. Danielle Roubroeks, Antwerp, Belgium.