



Charles Riley

1898-1918

Charles was born in Dewsbury in 1898. His father was John Charles Riley, a Stonemason born in Hull in 1860 and died in 1899. His mother was Sarah Ann (nee Dawson) born in Donnington, Lincolnshire in 1862 and died in 1936. They were married at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 6th June 1881.

On the 1881 and 1901 Census the parents and siblings of Sarah Ann record their surname as *Cook*. The reason is not apparent.

Their other children who could be traced were; Sam, born in 1881 and died in 1882, Mary Emma, born in 1883, Martha, born in 1887, Trant, born in 1889, George, born in 1891, Eliza, born in 1893 and Emily, born in 1895. According to the 1911 Census they had had 9 children, 7 of whom survived and 2 had died. On the birth records of Trant and Eliza their mother Sarah Ann's maiden name is recorded as *Cooke* (Trant) and *Cook* (Eliza).

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 17, Boothroyd Lane, Dewsbury, in 1901 at 5, Moorlands Cottages, Dewsbury and in 1911 at 167, Whitehead's Buildings, Huddersfield Road, Dewsbury and later at 203, Whitehead's Buildings.

Charles was a single man and worked as a Woollen Piecer for Messrs Henry Hamer and Sons.

He attested in Dewsbury on 7th June 1916 and was mobilised at Pontefract on 23rd October 1916 serving as Private 37753 in the 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment and previously the 10th and 3rd Battalions. He was sent to the Western Front on 11th April 1917 and was badly wounded by a bullet in the face and neck, resulting in a fractured jaw on 18th February 1918 and died of his wounds in the 6th General Hospital in Rouen, France on 5th March 1918. He was buried in St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France. Charles was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. A base supply depot and the 3rd Echelon of General Headquarters were also established in the city. Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. They included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross and one labour hospital, and No. 2 Convalescent Depot. A number of the dead from these hospitals were buried in other cemeteries, but the great majority were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. In September 1916, it was found necessary to begin an extension, where the last burial took place in April 1920. The cemetery extension contains 8,348 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, of which 10 are unidentified.

Charles 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 Memorial Plaque from Moorlands Wesleyan Methodist Church, now stored in the Resource Centre at Batley Central Methodist Church.

In Memory of
Private
C Riley

37753, 2nd Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 05 March 1918 Age 20

Son of Sarah Ann Riley, of 203, Whitehead Buildings, Huddersfield Rd., Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Mlle. Laure Guillaud, Le Petit-Quevilly, Rouen, France.