



Frank Dudley Fearnside

1896 - 1916

Frank was born in Dewsbury Moor on 20th April 1896. His father was George Haigh Fearnside, a Colliery Deputy born in West Ardsley near Wakefield in 1867 and died in 1932. His mother was Betsy (née Hutton) born in Streethouse near Wakefield in 1868 and died in 1938. They were married at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 26th February 1895. Frank was their only child

In 1911 the family lived at 3, Cyprus Place, Northorpe, Mirfield.

Frank was a single man who was educated at St. Saviour's School in Ravensthorpe and worked as a warehouseman at the Woollen Mill of Messrs Armitage and Rhodes in Ravensthorpe.

He served as Private 18923 in the 2nd Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) enlisting on 26th January 1916 after volunteering on 11th December 1915. After training he joined his battalion on 25th May 1916, which was part of the 4th Division and contained many raw recruits due to previous heavy engagements. He was killed in action on 23rd October 1916 near Lesbœufs during the Battle of the Somme. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme (his name was incorrectly spelt as *Fernside* but in 2022 this was corrected after Dewsbury Sacrifices contacted the Commonwealth War Graves Commission pointing out the discrepancy). Frank was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

On 12th October 1916 the Division attacked the Spectrum Trench north east of the village of Lesbœufs. The battalion lost 120 men but achieved partial success and was ordered to attack again despite being in reserve and 100 men were requested for a "Special Mission" The attack was launched at 2.30pm (delayed because of mist) on Monday 23rd October and the attack was curtailed by the British artillery landing their shells short of the target, and the heavy German shelling. Only part of Spectrum trench was taken at the cost of one officer and five men killed and one officer and 23 men wounded. Frank was one of those killed.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing 300 Commonwealth and 300 French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

Frank is also 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 and as F.D. *Fernside* on the Mirfield War Memorial.

In Memory of

Private

Frank Dudley Fearnships

18293, 2nd Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) who died on 23 October 1916

Remembered with Honour

Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

FEARNSIDES F.D.