



## **William Edward Speight**

### **1882 - 1917**

William was born in 1882 in Dewsbury. His father was Richard Henry Speight, a Bootmaker born in Briestfield in 1850 and died in 1917. His mother was Sarah Elizabeth (nee Burman) born in 1852 and died in 1914. They were married on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1875 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury.

Their other children were; Annie Gertrude, born in 1875, Lillian Burman, born in 1878, Harry Arnold, born in 1880, Percival, born in 1884, George Richard, born in 1887, Fred Leslie, born in 1890, Walter Douglas, born in 1893 and Harold, born in 1895. All the brothers served in World War 1.

On the 1891 Census the family lived on Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, in 1901 at 72, Westgate, Dewsbury and in 1911 at 4, Calder Grove Terrace.

William was educated at Dewsbury Parish Church School and attended the Centenary Wesleyan Church and Sunday school. He was also a member of the Thornhill Lees Albion Football Club. In 1901 he worked as a Draper's Assistant having served as Private 13378 in the Royal Army Medical Corps during the South African Campaign (Boer War) for which he was awarded the Queens South Africa Medal with three Clasps for Cape Colony, Wittebergen and Orange Free State. He re-enlisted on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1902 as Private 7718 in the King's Own Yorkshire, Light Infantry and served again in South Africa from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1902 to 1<sup>st</sup> August 1902, when he was discharged. His occupation in 1911 is recorded as a Music Hall Attendant. He was married on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1915 at St. Matthew's Church, Westtown to Florence Dawson (born in 1879 and died in 1954). They lived at Quarry Road, Westtown and had one child, Frank, born in 1916. Prior to enlistment he worked for Mr. Abraham Saville, Drysalter. Florence later lived at 155, Huddersfield Road, Dewsbury.

He was attached as a Special Police Constable in Dewsbury when he was called up in January 1917 into the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Regiment serving as Private 205005. He was killed in action on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1917 during the Battle of Passchendaele, his remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Tyne Cot Memorial forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery and commemorates nearly 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16<sup>th</sup> August 1917 and whose graves are not known. The memorial stands close to the farthest point in Belgium reached by Commonwealth forces in the First World War until the final advance to victory.

William 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 Dewsbury Parish Church Old Boys War Memorial now displayed in Dewsbury Minster and on the War Memorial in the porch of the now closed St. Matthew's Church, Westtown.

In Memory of  
Private  
**William E. Speight**

205005, 6th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 24 August 1917

Remembered with Honour  
**Tyne Cot Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

SPEIGHT W. E.