



Bruce Metcalfe

1889 – 1917

Bruce was born in Dewsbury in 1889. His father was Robert Metcalfe, a Tea Dealer and Grocer born in Hawes, Yorkshire in 1850 and died in 1897. His mother was Kate (nee Robinson) born in Brighouse in 1854 and died in 1921. They were married on 15th October 1877 at Christ Church, Staincliffe, Dewsbury.

Their other children were; Warren, born in 1879 and died of sickness in York Military Hospital on 21st February 1919, Albert, born in 1881, Robert, born in 1883 and served in World War 1, Kate, born in 1885 and Phoebe, born in 1887.

On the 1881 Census they lived at Halifax Road, Dewsbury, in 1891 at 1, Stonefield Street, Dewsbury and in 1901 at 9, Stonefield Street.

On the 1911 Census Kate Metcalfe is recorded as a widow and living at 11, Hope Street, Dewsbury with Warren, Albert and Phoebe, her brother Tom Robinson and a boarder, George Hewitt.

Bruce was a single man who was educated at Carlton Road Council School and attended St. Mark's Church and Sunday school. He worked as a Porter on the railways. On 1911 census, he was living as a Boarder at 28, Suffield Road, Kirkdale, Liverpool with the family of Mr. Allen Schofield who was born in Mirfield and was also a Railway Porter. His obituary in the Dewsbury Reporter on 4th August 1917 stated that his occupation was an electrician and he had worked as an electrical engineer for the Belfast City Tramways Company. On his Pension Record there is an entry for an award to a Miss Edith Lightowler of 14, Scargill Street, Dewsbury (born in Rotherham in 1893 and died in Dewsbury in 1946) who is named as "unmarried wife". Further research has revealed that a daughter; Lilian Lightowler was born at 19, Back Barber Street, Dewsbury on 23rd April 1914 and died in 2000. She was married in 1939 to a James Frederick Kelk (born in 1915 and died in 2001). Edith also had a daughter; Ada Lightowler, born in 1919 and died in 2017 and a son; Geoffrey Lightowler, born in 1929 and died in 1994.

He enlisted in Harrogate in June 1915 into the Yorkshire Dragoons with the Service Number 3587 and was later transferred to the 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry with the Service Number 204007, rising to the rank of Lance Corporal. After eighteen months training at Beverley Camp he was sent to the Western Front in December 1916. He suffered gas poisoning on 22nd July 1917 when the enemy were inflicting a sustained bombardment of Mustard Gas on the Belgian coast around Nieuport. He was taken to the 16th Canadian General Hospital at Le Treport on the French coast where he died on 26th July 1917 and was buried in Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Seine-Maritime, France. Bruce was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Sadly, his medals were returned as none of his family claimed them.

Le Treport is a small seaport 25 kilometres north-east of Dieppe. The Cemetery is 1.5 kilometres south of the town. During the First World War, Le Treport was an important hospital centre and by July 1916, the town contained three general hospitals (the 3rd, 16th and 2nd Canadian), No.3 Convalescent Depot and Lady Murray's B.R.C.S. Hospital. The 7th Canadian, 47th and 16th USA General Hospitals arrived later, but all of the hospitals had closed by March 1919. As the original military cemetery at Le Treport filled, it became necessary to use the new site at Mont Huon. There are now 2,128 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery.

Bruce 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
Lance Corporal
B Metcalfe

204007, 1st/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 26 July 1917 Age 28

Son of Robert and Kate Metcalfe, of Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

