



## **Robert Ellis Oates**

### **1892 – 1917**

Robert was born in Liverpool on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1892 and was baptised at All Saints Church, Dewsbury on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1892. His father was Jabez Oates, a Salesman for a Drysalter born at Greenwood Lock, Mirfield in 1859 and died in 1937. His mother was Mary Ann (nee Tolson) born in Dewsbury in 1862 and died in 1923. They were married on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1887 at All Saints Church.

Their other children, all born in Liverpool were; Edith Mary, born in 1888 and died in 1920, Christian Edwin, born in 1894 and May Oldfield, born in 1890 and died in 1897.

On the 1891 census they lived at 37, Cotswold Street, West Derby, Liverpool. In 1901 Robert is living with his father at the home of his paternal grandmother Mrs. Eliza Cockroft in Southbank Road, West Derby. His mother is living with her married brother George Tolson and his children at the Rising Sun Inn, Webster Hill, Dewsbury; her other two children were living with their maternal grandparents Ellis and Jane Tolson. In 1911 Robert is living at his now widowed grandfather's home in Earlsheaton with his mother and two siblings; his father Jabez is a boarder in Liverpool. On Mary Ann's pension award record, her address is shown as 28, Station Road, Earlsheaton.

Robert, known as Bob to his family and friends was a single man who worked as a draper's assistant. He suffered from asthma and did not initially volunteer to enlist but he was sent a white feather and enlisted as a Runner. They were essentially foot messengers whose primary role was to deliver critical pieces of information from one command unit to another and were lightly equipped with only a sidearm, canteen and a light pack.

He served as Private 40943 in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) and was killed in action on 27<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. Robert was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

An 'In Memoriam' verse "in loving memory of our dear Bob" from his family appeared in the Dewsbury Reporter 31<sup>st</sup> August 1918. *"Worthy of everlasting love from those he left behind; a better brother never lived, a son more true and kind"*.

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.

Robert is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and on the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church Earlsheaton and as *Robert L. Oates* on the Memorial in the now demolished Chickenley Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (current whereabouts of Memorial untraced).

In Memory of  
Private  
**Robert Ellis Oates**

40943, 9th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 27 August 1917

Remembered with Honour  
**Tyne Cot Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

OATES R. E.