



Fred Cardwell

1895 – 1916

Fred was born in Ravensthorpe on 3rd April 1895. His father was Samuel Cardwell, a coal miner and later a road sweeper born in Dewsbury in 1867 and died in 1921. His mother was Sarah (née Stubley) born in Dewsbury in 1868 and died in 1922. They were married at St. Saviour's Church, Ravensthorpe on 30th July 1886.

Their other children were; Percy, born in 1886 and died in 1886, Ernest, born in 1888 and died in 1888 and Elsie, born in 1892.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at Albion Street, Ravensthorpe and in 1911 at Farrar's Buildings, Commercial Street, Ravensthorpe.

Fred was a single man who attended St. Saviour's Boys' School and in 1911 was employed as a dyer's labourer for Messrs Jas Smith, Ravensthorpe.

He was a pre-war Territorial with the local 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front in May 1916 serving as Private 1818. There is some discrepancy around his date of death during the Battle of the Somme. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records it as 27th July 1916. Other sources say 26th July or 28th July. A letter in the 'Dewsbury Reporter' from a Private Reeves said that Fred and three other men were fetching water for breakfast when they were caught in German shelling. The men ran for cover, but Fred slipped and fell as another shell landed nearby. His pals returned for him and found him still alive, apparently suffering from severe shell shock. The doctor was summoned, but when he arrived Fred was pronounced dead. Private Reeves' letter stated that Fred died at about 20 minutes past six o'clock on the morning of 28th July. He was buried in Authuille Military Cemetery, Somme, France. Fred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Authuille (now Authuille), is a village 5 Kms north of Albert. The village was held by British troops from the summer of 1915 to March, 1918, when it was captured in the German Offensive on the Somme; it was ruined by shell fire even before that date. The Military Cemetery was used by Field Ambulances and fighting units from August, 1915 to December, 1916, and in 1917 and 1918 by Indian Labour Companies. There are now over 450, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, nearly 40 are unidentified and special memorials are erected to 18 soldiers from the United Kingdom, known or believed to be buried among them. The cemetery was named as Authuille Military Cemetery at the time of creation and the CWGC maintain this as the historic name of the cemetery.

Fred 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 Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St Saviour's Church and on the War Memorial in Ravensthorpe United Methodist Church.

In Memory of

Private

F Cardwell

1818, 1st/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 27 July 1916

Remembered with Honour

Authuille Military Cemetery, Authuille



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Robert Pike.