



## **Percy Boothroyd**

### **1889 – 1916**

Percy was born in Ravensthorpe on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1889. His father was Joe Boothroyd, a woollen warehouseman born in Honley near Huddersfield in 1855 and died in 1914. His mother was Mary Ann (née Gillett) born in Scarborough in 1855 and died in 1925. They were married in 1878.

Their other children were; Alice Maud, born in 1879, Ainley, born in 1881 and died in 1882, Jessie, born in 1882 and died in 1892, Jesse, born in 1883, Allen Gillett, born in 1885, George Herbert, born in 1887 and Eva, born in 1891 and died in 1892.

On the 1881 Census the family lived at Brooke Street, Dewsbury, in 1891 at Lee Street, Ravensthorpe, in 1901 and 1911 at 107, Sackville Street, Ravensthorpe.

Percy was a single man who was educated at St. Saviour's Boys School; he attended the Ravensthorpe Primitive Methodist Church with his family. He worked as a grocer's errand boy for a Mrs. Townend, moving on to Lion Stores at Thornhill Lees and then became a grocery assistant in the North Road Branch of the Co-operative Stores (Dewsbury Pioneers Society). At the time of his enlistment he worked as a salesman for the Central Stores of the Co-operative in Doncaster.

He served as Private 40937 in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) and was sent to the Western Front on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1916; at the end of November the Battalion was ordered to proceed to the front line where they were to relieve the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Border Regiment. On 28<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm, the Battalion was occupying the reserve trenches a little to the west of Beaucourt railway station on the Somme; on the following day 29<sup>th</sup> November the trenches were shelled at 10pm and four men were killed outright and four were wounded and it is likely that he was one of the wounded, having never reached the front line. A postcard was sent home stating that he had been injured, followed by one on the 7<sup>th</sup> December stating that he was "*going on nicely*". Sadly, by the time this arrived, Percy had died. According to the matron of the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Rouen to where he had been evacuated, "*He had a severe haemorrhage and passed away in the afternoon, he did not know he was so ill*". He was buried in St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France. Percy was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

St. Sever Cemetery and St. Sever Cemetery Extension are located within a large communal cemetery situated on the eastern edge of the southern Rouen suburbs of Le Grand Quevilly and Le Petit Quevilly. During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. The cemetery extension contains 8,348 Commonwealth burials of the First World War (ten of them unidentified).

Percy 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 Roll of Honour in Ravensthorpe Primitive Methodist Church.

In Memory of  
Private  
**Percy Boothroyd**

40937, 9th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 07 December 1916 Age 27

Son of Mary Ann Boothroyd, of 110 Back Sackville St., Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour  
**St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Nigel Marshall.