



## **John Ellis**

### **1892 - 1917**

John was born at Low Moor, Bradford on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1892. His father was William Ellis, a railway worker, born in Bishopthorpe, York in 1865. His mother was Margaret/Maggie (nee Simpson) born in Melbourne near Pocklington, Yorkshire in 1864 and died in 1918. They were married on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1889 at St. Peter's Church, Bradford.

Their other children were; Elizabeth Blanche, born in 1890, William Harold, born in 1895 and died in 1896, Frank, born in 1898 and William Simpson, born in 1900.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 139, Exeter Street, Bradford, in 1901 at Havelock Street, Ravensthorpe, in 1911 at Sackville Street, Ravensthorpe and later at 79, Garden Street, Ravensthorpe.

John was a single man who worked as a strap maker for Hartley Bros, Curriers, Ravensthorpe. He was attached to the Ravensthorpe Primitive Methodist Church and Sunday school where he was a teacher and a member of the Christian Endeavour Society and on the committee of Band of Hope.

He served as Private 242385 in the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, having initially joined the Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1915 and was sent to the Western Front at the end of 1916. During March 1917 the Battalion was holding trenches at Neuve-Chapelle and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that Month they took over the front line trenches from the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in a position known as the "Duck's Bill Crater", on the 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> a raid was organised by the 147<sup>th</sup> Brigade to the right of the Battalion's position. He was killed in action on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1917 and was buried in Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, Nord, France. John was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

According to a letter written to his parents by a Corporal F. Johnson, John was shot through the jaw whilst "on patrol". The letter went on to say that he did not live long and actually died whilst Corporal Johnson and others carried him away. He was buried the next day in "*a pretty little British cemetery, the service being conducted by the chaplain*".

Pont-du-Hem is a hamlet situated on the main road from La Bassee to Estaires. Pont-du-Hem was in German hands from mid-April to mid-September 1918. The Cemetery was begun, in an apple-orchard, in July 1915, and used until April 1918, by fighting units and Field Ambulances. After the Armistice, Commonwealth graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefields and from smaller burial grounds. There are now over 1,500, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, over half are unidentified.

John 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

**John Ellis**

242385, 1st/5th Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 29 March 1917

Remembered with Honour

**Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue**



**Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.