



## **Sydney Oates**

### **1896 - 1916**

Sydney was born in Holbrook, Derbyshire on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1896. His father was Fred Oates, a coal miner born in Lockwood, Huddersfield in 1875 and died in 1952. His mother was Hannah (née Ellis) born in Birstall in 1874 and died in 1936. They were married on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1895 at Christ Church, Battyeford, Mirfield.

Their other children were; John Arthur, born in 1898, Emma Eliza, born in 1901, Mary Hannah, born in 1903. George Lewis, born in 1906 and died in 1913, Frederick William, born in 1908 and Florence Ena, born in 1909.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at New Street, Mosborough, Derbyshire and in 1911 at 13, Garden Terrace, Painthorpe, near Wakefield; they later moved to live in Whitley Lower.

Sydney was a single man who on the 1911 Census was working as a screen boy in a colliery but prior to enlistment he worked for Messrs Sutcliffe and Company, Maltsters, Thornhill Lees.

He served as Private 18520 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the King's Own Scottish Borderers and was posted to the Balkans on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1915. He was later posted to the Western Front and was wounded on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1916 during the Battle of the Somme and died on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1916 at a Casualty Clearing Station at Heilly. He was buried in a joint grave in Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-l'Abbe, Somme, France. Sydney was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Mericourt-l'Abbe is a village approximately 19 kilometres north-east of Amiens and 10 kilometres south-west of Albert. Heilly Station Cemetery is about 2 kilometres south-west of Mericourt-l'Abbe, on the south side of the road to Corbie. The 36<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station was at Heilly from April 1916. It was joined in May by the 38<sup>th</sup> and in July by the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> London, but these hospitals had all moved on by early June 1917. The burials in this cemetery were carried out under extreme pressure and many of the graves are either too close together to be marked individually, or they contain multiple burials. Some headstones carry as many as three sets of casualty details, and in these cases, regimental badges have had to be omitted. Instead, these badges, 117 in all, have been carved on a cloister wall on the north side of the cemetery.

Sydney 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 Memorial Pillar in St. Mary and St. Michael's Church, Whitley Lower.

In Memory of  
Private  
**S Oates**

18520, 1st Bn., King's Own Scottish Borderers who died on 26 October 1916

Remembered with Honour  
Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'abbe



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

