



George Raymond Peace

1877 – 1917

George was born at Kelvin Grove, Batley on 3rd June 1877 and baptised at Christ Church, Staincliffe on 1st July that same year. His father was Joseph Peace, born in Ossett in 1844 and died in 1925. His mother was Sarah Elizabeth (nee Whitworth) born in Earlsheaton in 1848 and died in 1930. They were married in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton on 7th February 1872.

Joseph worked in a probate office and then spent many years as Clerk to the Dewsbury Board of Guardians and Superintendent Registrar. They lived in Park Road, off West Park Street for many years until his retirement, when they went to live at 10, King Edward's Avenue, Harrogate.

Their other children were; Frances Josephine, born in 1873, Charles Ernest, born in 1875, Amy, born in 1890, Kathleen, born in 1883 and Bertrand, born in 1884.

George was known as Ray to his family and friends and worked in the banking sector. On the 1911 Census he was living with his sister Frances and her husband Alfred Slee in 7, Kirkstall Avenue, Kirkstall, Leeds; his occupation was stated as "*a gentleman*". He later spent time in Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg in South Africa but was in Winnipeg, Canada at the outbreak of war. Never in robust health, his condition worsened upon his return home. He tried to join the London Scottish Regiment, but was unsuccessful on health grounds, being described in his obituary in the Dewsbury District News on 28th April 1917 as "*delicate from birth*" and "*thin and fragile*". Careful attention at home improved his health and he returned to the banking industry being finally accepted for service in April 1916.

He attested in April 1916 serving as Private 202486 in the 2nd/4th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment). After training at Salisbury, Wangford and Bedford he was sent to the Western Front in January 1917. He died in hospital at Rouen, France on 22nd April 1917 after being badly wounded by shellfire on 15th April near the village of Lagnicourt during the Battle of Arras. He was buried in St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France. George was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. A base supply depot and the 3rd Echelon of General Headquarters were also established in the city. Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. They included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross and one labour hospital, and No. 2 Convalescent Depot. A number of the dead from these hospitals were buried in other cemeteries, but the great majority were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. St. Sever Cemetery contains 3,082 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. In September 1916, it was found necessary to begin an extension, where the last burial took place in April 1920. The cemetery extension contains 8,348 Commonwealth burials of the First World War (ten of them unidentified).

George (Ray) is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

In Memory of

Private

George Raymond Peace

202486, 2nd/4th Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) who died on 22 April 1917 Age 39

Son of Joseph and Sarah Elizabeth Peace, of 10, King Edward's Drive, Harrogate. Native of Batley.

Remembered with Honour

St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Mlle. Laure Guillaud, Le Petit-Quevilly, Rouen, France.