

CHARLES HENRY WAKEHAM PARSONS

Lance Corporal 29224



Charles¹ Parsons was born in Revelstoke in 1896, the son of Thomas and Jane Parsons, who lived in Newton Ferrers. Census and baptism records show many Parsons in the two villages at this time, but there is nothing to identify this particular family. Several Parsons were blacksmiths to Lord Revelstoke, and Charles may have been related to them.

On joining the Army at Devonport he was first assigned to the Army Service Corps (Official No. S/33210), and then later transferred to the 7th Battalion of the East Yorkshire Regiment. The battalion saw action in France as part of 50th Brigade in 17th Division, and were in the front line when the German Spring Offensive began on 21 March 1918. The division had been on the retreat for ten days, but the German offensive was nearly exhausted. This phase of the offensive is known as the Battle of Albert.

On 31 March 1918 at 5.30am the battalion attacked a position captured by the Germans three days earlier. Despite heavy rain, the battalion reached its objective, but flanking units were held up so the East York's had to withdraw to their previous position. Four tanks were supposed to support them, but they either broke down or were knocked out. Between 21 March and 31 March, the battalion war diary records a loss of 19 officers and 400 men. One of those killed on 31 March 1918 (Easter Sunday) was Charles Parsons, aged 23.

He is remembered with honour at the Arras Memorial, Bay 4 and 5.



¹ The Commonwealth War Graves Commission shows first name as Claude.