

Bury Choral Society concert, 6th November, 2018 – *The Great War: Armistice*

Pte George Stanley Peachment, VC, 6th King's Royal Rifle Corps

At The Fusilier Museum there is an exhibition – “18 for 18”. It celebrates the 18 men of The Lancashire Fusiliers who were awarded the Victoria Cross during the First World War. But there was another Bury man who was awarded the Victoria Cross – his VC you will not see there.

George Stanley Peachment was born at Fishpool, Bury, on 5th May 1897; his parents came from East Anglia having moved north a short time before. He went to Parkhills United Methodist Church School, St Chad's Junior School and Bury Technical School. He became an apprentice fitter engineer at Ashworth & Parker of Elton, Bury, and later with JH Riley.

Like many others he tried to enlist when he was still underage eventually succeeding on 18th April 1915, giving his age as 19 years and one month when he was in fact not yet 18 years old. He joined the King's Royal Rifles Corps and was sent to France on 27th July.

Two months later at 6.30am on 25th September whistles were blown along the whole British front and the men advanced; the great Battle of Loos had commenced. On the left flank things went well and in the smoke and mist the British line advanced almost a mile. Not so on the right where the 2nd King's Royal Rifles, who were already suffering from a British gas attack that went wrong and German machine gun fire, found that the wire had not been cut by the 4 day barrage which preceded the battle. George was orderly to Captain Dubs, the commanding officer of “A” Company. Captain Dubs went to investigate the halted line and was hit by a hand bomb, severely wounding him in the head. George was close behind and went to help him. Just then the smoke and mist lifted and the men in the line retreated to cover. Though there was a shell hole nearby George Peachment did not retreat but continued to bandage Captain Dubs' wounds. George was hit in the chest by a hand bomb and a minute later he was shot in the head. Captain Dubs survived.

George's body was not recovered after his death. He was just 18 years and 4 months old. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery. His citation ends with these words: "He was one of the youngest men in his battalion and gave this splendid example of courage and self-sacrifice". There is a plaque commemorating George Peachment in St Anne's Church, Tottington, and a memorial stone at the village cenotaph.



The story of George Peachment was one of four stories of local Bury people, or enlisted men in the Lancashire Fusiliers, presented as part of Bury Choral Society's concert. Barbara Crabtree, whose late husband was Stanley Peachment, nephew of George, attended the concert.