



# Dewsbury Baptist Church

'In undying memory of those who died for us'



DEWSBURY SACRIFICES



## THORNHILL LEES MAN LOSES A FOOT.

Pte. Howard Oates (son of Mr. and Mrs. John Richard Oates, of Norton Street, Thornhill Lees) has unfortunately been very severely wounded. He volunteered for service with the Colours on October 13th, 1914. In 1916 he suffered from trench fever and trench feet. In 1917 he was wounded by a shell. Six months ago he went to Italy, and on Thursday morning news arrived that he had his left foot taken off on July 13th. He has a serious wound in his right thigh, and the nurse at the hospital in France where he is lying says if they can save his right leg at all they will do so. Pte. Oates is married, with one child, and his wife and child some time ago removed from Fairfield Terrace, Woodville, Leeds Road, Dewsbury, to Blackpool. He worked at the Syke Ing Mill, Earlsheaton, and played cricket at one time with the Moorlands Wesleyans, and later attended the Out-and-Out Mission and the Baptist Church, Leeds Road, Dewsbury.

## THORNHILL

**BAD NEWS FOLLOWS NINE MONTHS' SUSPENSE.**—Pte. Leonard Halstead (youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Halstead, of Chapel Place, Thornhill) was reported missing on March 21st, the beginning of the last great German offensive. His anxious relatives hoped that he might have become a prisoner, but on Saturday last they received unmistakable evidence from a non-commissioned officer of his regiment that Leonard was killed on that date during the course of an air attack. He was a young man of exceptional promise, and had rendered good service at the Leeds Road Baptist Church. In his boyhood he attended the Walker Council School. Much sympathy is felt with the bereaved family. Two of Leonard's brothers are still in the Army, and a third is ex-Councillor Halstead, now of Sheffield.

## BRAVE LOCAL LAD SUCCUMBS TO WOUNDS

### MILITARY FUNERAL.

Among the gallant local young men who have fallen in the first stage of the great "push" we regret to chronicle the name of Pte. Clifford Hirst, second son of Mrs. Hirst, of the Crown Hotel, Leeds Road, Dewsbury, and of the 15th West Riding (Leeds "Pals") Battalion. Injured in the first day of the attack—July 1st—in both feet, he was removed to Plymouth Hospital, whence a message was received by Mrs. Hirst on Saturday. With her son Arthur she journeyed to Plymouth immediately, only to arrive too late, for her brave son died at 9 in the evening, several hours before his mother and brother came. He was 25 years of age, and attached to "A" Company of the battalion. Before offering his services to his country in



Pte. Clifford Hirst, Leeds Pals, Dewsbury (killed).

the hour of her need he was in the employ of Messrs. Ridgway and Ridgway, solicitors, Dewsbury, and later took up employment with Mr. T. Mitcheson, solicitor, Heckmondwike. He will also be remembered as a popular member of the Dewsbury and Savile Cricket Club, and also of the Hanging Heaton Cricket Club, with whom he played more recently. The shock of his death to his mother, brother, and fiancée, Miss Mabel Wilson, daughter of the late Mr. Charles Wilson, must have been accentuated

by the fact that he wrote from the Hyde Park Hospital, Plymouth, on the day of his death, a letter describing the way in which he suffered his injuries, and also suggestive of his knowledge that he would not live. The letter was as follows:—

"Dear Mother,—As you will have heard by now, I am in this hospital suffering from injuries to both legs. We were in the big attack on the 1st July, and our battalion suffered very heavily. For the first time I was unlucky, and a shell lit near my feet, smashing the left one to bits and breaking the right foot. I was two and a half days before I could be brought out of the trenches from the place I was in, and all this time I had nothing to eat or drink. All the time my feet were in a terrible condition. Eventually we arrived at this hospital at Plymouth, and the only things I could swallow up to then had been liquids; besides this they had to amputate my left foot as far as the ankle, and put in splinters my right foot. All this has been agonising work for me, and I fear I shall be lucky to come through, if I do. You can tell by my writing that I am nearly pail, and can hardly write what I want. If, however, I do go under, remember that I thought of you to the last."

