



Captain Harold Hirst

‘Until the day break and the shadows flee away’



DEWSBURY SACRIFICES



Harold was born in Dewsbury in 1890. He was the only son of Joseph and Ann Hirst of Ravensleigh, Oxford Road Dewsbury. Harold attended Wheelwright Grammar School and Rugby School. Harold was employed at G.H. Hirst and Company, a woollen manufacturers based at Alexandra and Bright's Mills in Batley and at Victoria Mills in Dewsbury. Harold's father was a Director of the company.

In June 1914, Harold married Gladys Crawshaw, daughter of Mr and Mrs C.B. Crawshaw of Rufford Lodge, Dewsbury. They had one daughter, Leila, who Harold never knew.

Harold served as a Captain in the 1st / 4th Battalion, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. He joined the regiment in 1910 as a Territorial Lieutenant and regularly went to the Dewsbury Drill Shed. He was promoted to Captain soon after the outbreak of war. Harold died on 24 June 1915 in France. He was shot in the head by a sniper, whilst trying to locate those shooting at the British trenches. He is buried in the Bois-Grenier Communal Cemetery, which at the time was only about six hundred yards behind the trench where he was killed.

Harold is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park; in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour at Dewsbury Central Library; and on the St John's Church War Memorial, Dewsbury Moor. A window is also dedicated to Captain Hirst in St John's Church. He is also commemorated at Wheelwright Grammar School, Dewsbury Central Methodist Church on Daisy Hill, and at the Ebenezer Chapel on Longcauseway (now the United Reform Church).

Harold received the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

