



## **Alonza Driver**

### **1890 – 1917**

Alonza was born in Thornhill on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1890. His father was James Driver, a Railway Shunter born in Rickingham, Suffolk in 1850 and died in 1904. His mother was Ann/Annie Land, (nee Taylor) born in Rickingham in 1850 and died in 1905. They were married at Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1875.

Their other children were; Harriet, born in 1876, Ernest Edward, born in 1878, John William, born in 1881, Percy Tobias, born in 1884 and Florence Hilda, born in 1887.

Annie was previously married on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1870 at Holy Innocents Church to Alonza Land (born in 1843 and died in 1873) they had two daughters, Elizabeth Ann, born in 1871 and Rhoda born in 1872. They lived at Croft Top, Thornhill.

On the 1881, 1891 and 1901 Census Records the family were living at 55, Dale Street, Thornhill Lees. In 1911 Alonza is boarding with the family of his half-sister Elizabeth (now Mrs. Dan Cooper) at 31, Dale Street.

Alonza attended Thornhill Lees Wesleyan Methodist Church and Sunday school; like his father, he worked as a Railway Shunter and was based at the transport shed at Thornhill Station. He was married to Edith Powick (born in 1895 and died in 1950) on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1915 at Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees. They lived at Whitley Street, Thornhill Lees and had two children, Annie, born in 1915 and Alonza, born in 1917.

He enlisted in Bradford around September 1916 serving as Private 6049 in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own). He was killed in action in France on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1917, whilst on sentry duty he was hit in the stomach by a sniper. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme. Alonza was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20<sup>th</sup> March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing 300 Commonwealth and 300 French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

He is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and on the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Thornhill Lees Wesleyan Methodist Church Memorial Plaque relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury and as *Alonzo Driver* on the War Memorial in Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

In Memory of

Private

**Alonza Driver**

6049, 2nd/6th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 02 March 1917

Remembered with Honour

**Thiepval Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

