



## **Thomas (O') Connor**

### **1891 - 1917**

Thomas was born in Dewsbury on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1891, and was baptised as Thomas Connor at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church on 21<sup>st</sup> December that year; the Baptism Record states that he was in danger of death. His name has many spelling variations. His father was Timothy Connor, born in Ireland around 1848 and died in 1903. His mother was Bridget (nee Early) born in Leinster, Ireland around 1857 and died in 1921. They were married at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 1884.

Their other children were; James, born in 1885 and died in 1891, Mary, born in 1886, Annie, born in 1888, Timothy, born in 1890 and died in 1891, Catherine, born in 1893, Nellie, born in 1895 and Patrick, born in 1897. This information was obtained from the Baptism Records at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury, It is possible that the births went unregistered as many believed that registration was unnecessary if the child had been baptised, although the two deaths were registered.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at Manor Road, Westtown and in 1901 & 1911 at 27, Low Fold, Middle Road, Westtown.

Thomas was a single man who worked as a teamer for a coal merchant.

He served as Private 12142 Thomas O'Connor in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1915. He was killed in action in the Arras area on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1917 and was buried in Beaurains Road Cemetery, Beaurains, Pas-de-Calais, France. Thomas was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Beaurains is a village on the southern outskirts of Arras, and Beaurains Road Cemetery is just north of the village. The cemetery was begun a few days before Beaurains was captured by Commonwealth forces on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1917. It was a month before the Battle of Arras began, and the Germans were still in nearby Tilloy-les-Mofflaines. The cemetery was used (sometimes under the name of Ronville Forward Cemetery) until the beginning of June by the 14<sup>th</sup> (Light) Division Burial Officer and by fighting units. It was used again for a short time in August and September 1918, in the Second Battle of Arras. It contained, at the date of the Armistice, the graves of 129 British soldiers, 15 French soldiers and four German prisoners. It was enlarged after the armistice when graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefields and two cemeteries at Ronville. The cemetery now contains 331 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 23 of the burials are unidentified and there are special memorials to 14 casualties buried in Ronville British Cemetery, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire.

Thomas is commemorated as Thomas Connor on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church (as Thomas *Conner*).

In Memory of

Private

**T O'Connor**

12142, 6th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 12 March 1917

Son of Mrs. B. O'Connor, of 27, Low Fold, Middlie Rd., West Town, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

**Beaurains Road Cemetery, Beaurains**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

