



## **William Henry Hirst**

### **1880 - 1917**

William was born in Dewsbury in 1880. His father was Joseph Hirst, a Woollen Spinner born in Mirfield in 1852 and died in 1909. His mother was Louisa (nee Ingham) born in Mirfield in 1859 and died in 1933. They were married on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1877 at St Mary's Church, Mirfield.

Their other children were; George Ingham, born in 1878, Arthur, born in 1881 and died in 1902, Annie, born in 1882, Eleanor, born in 1884 and died in 1884, Ernest, born in 1885 and died in 1896, John born in 1888 and Minnie, born in 1895.

On the 1881 and 1891 Census Records the family lived at 28, Moorend Lane, Dewsbury Moor, in 1901 at 29, Back Cullingworth Street, Staincliffe and in 1911 at 91, Staincliffe Road, Dewsbury.

William was educated at Christ Church School, Staincliffe and was connected with the Staincliffe Baptist Chapel. In 1901 he worked as a railway porter, in 1911 as a blender in a rag warehouse and just prior to his enlistment was an agent for the Britannic Insurance Company in Batley. He was married in December 1915 to Laura Dickinson (born in Huddersfield in 1882 and died in 1942). They lived at 196, The Nook, Earlsheaton; they did not have any children.

He enlisted in Dewsbury in August 1916 serving as Private 35754 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front in December 1916. He was killed in action in France on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1917. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme. William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

It was not until March 1918 that his wife received an official intimation that he was presumed to have been killed on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1917. The Red Cross stated in a letter to his widow that *"despite their utmost endeavours, they can garner no information as to his whereabouts"*.

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.

William is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Earlsheaton Park War Memorial.

In Memory of

Private

**William Henry Hirst**

35754, 2nd Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 14 April 1917

Remembered with Honour

**Thiepval Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

