



Austin Littlewood

1892 – 1917

Austin was born in Dewsbury on 15th April 1892. His father was Edward Littlewood, a dyer born in Dewsbury in 1845 and died in 1905. His mother was Ellen Reddy, born around 1852 and died in 1930; on some census records her place of birth is shown as Rochdale (1901 and 1911) and on others it states Ireland (1871 and 1891) and also Dewsbury (1881). They were married at St. Peter's Church, Birstall on 20th February 1869.

Their other children were; Eliza Ann, born in 1869, Hannah, born in 1871, Mary Emma, born in 1873 and died in 1874, Austin, born in 1876 and died in 1877, Edward, born in 1877, Charles William, born in 1879, Flora/Florence, born in 1881, John, born in 1883 and died in 1884, John Thomas, born in 1885, Albert, born in 1887 and died in 1887, James Arthur, born in 1888, Winifred Ellen, born in 1890, Mary Margaret, born in 1894 and died in 1894 and Mary, born in 1897 and died in 1900.

On the 1881 Census they lived at Back Webster Street, Flatts, in 1891 at 7, Watergate, Dewsbury, in 1901 at Bennett's Yard, Westtown, in 1911 at 56, Middle Road, Westtown and later at 31, Myers Buildings, Whitworth Road, Westtown, Dewsbury.

Austin was a single man who was educated at St. Paulinus School and attended Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church. He worked as a Hurrier in a Coal Mine.

He enlisted at the outbreak of war on 12th August 1914 serving as Private 1604 in the 2nd Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 15th January 1915. He was returned to England with frostbite in his feet and when sent out to the Front again, he was there a year, before coming home on leave. Returning to the Front a third time, he was attached to the machine gun section of his Battalion. According to reports in the *Dewsbury Reporter* and in the *Dewsbury and District News* on 28th July 1917, he died of heart failure in a Field Hospital near Coxyde on 15th July 1917 as a result of the many wounds he had sustained the previous day when the enemy were inflicting a sustained bombardment of Mustard Gas Shells on the Belgian coast around Nieuport. He was buried in Coxyde Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Austin was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Coxyde Military Cemetery is located approximately 500 metres beyond the village of Koksijde on the road towards De Panne. In June 1917, Commonwealth forces relieved French forces on 6 kilometres of front line from the sea to a point south of Nieuport (now Nieuwpoort), and held this sector for six months. Coxyde (now Koksijde) was about 10 kilometres behind the front line. The village was used for rest billets and was occasionally shelled, but the cemetery, which had been started by French troops, was found to be reasonably safe. It became the most important of the Commonwealth cemeteries on the Belgian coast and was used at night for the burial of the dead brought back from the front line. The cemetery now contains 1,507 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

Austin 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 War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church.

In Memory of
Private
Austin Littlewood

1604, 2nd Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 15 July 1917

Remembered with Honour
Coxyde Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

