



## **Thomas Allen Bernin Kitson**

### **1888 – 1917**

Thomas was born in Dewsbury on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1888 and baptised 19<sup>th</sup> February 1888 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury. His father was Albert Kitson, an Insurance Agent born in Dewsbury in 1855 and died in 1931. His mother was Emma Fredericka (nee Hawkyard) born in Hull in 1857 and died in 1924. They were married at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1885.

Their other children were; David, born in 1889 and served in World War 1 and Emma Frederika Elizabeth, born in 1892.

On the 1891 and 1901 Census records they lived at 40, Halliley Street, Dewsbury, in 1911 at 19, Knowles Hill, Dewsbury and later at 96, Savile Road, Savile Town, Dewsbury.

Thomas was a single man who was educated at Dewsbury Parish Church Day School and moved up to Wheelwright Grammar School in 1900. He then became a Pupil Teacher at Eastborough Council School and at Staincliffe Christ Church School. He completed his teacher training at St. John's College York and accepted a post as Head Assistant Teacher at St. Mary's School in Savile Town, where he taught for seven years. He attended St. Matthew's Church, Westtown where he was also a member of the Church Institute and also at St. Mary's Church.

He enlisted on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1916 and was sent to Edinburgh for his training, serving with 'C' Battery, 47<sup>th</sup> Brigade, Royal Field Artillery as Gunner 128037. Although his rank was Gunner, he was actually a Signaller. He died of wounds near Ypres on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1917 whilst on sentry duty when he was struck by a shell. He was buried in Bus House Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Thomas was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

In the report of his death in the local newspapers, his Serjeant wrote: *"He was a splendid worker and was greatly liked by all his comrades, who are very sad to lose him"*.

Bus House Cemetery is located 4 km south of Ieper (Ypres) town centre. It stands behind a farmhouse that was called "Bus House" by the troops during the First World War. It was made in June-November 1917, but one grave of January 1915 was brought in during the war, and four more were added in April 1918. Bus House Cemetery contains 206 First World War burials, of which 12 are unidentified.

Thomas 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 the porch of the now closed St. Matthew's Church, Westtown and on the War Memorial to former pupils at Wheelwright Grammar School and as *Thomas Kitson* on the War Memorial from the now demolished St. Mary's Church, Savile Town now relocated to Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

In Memory of

Gunner

## Thomas Allen Bernin Kitson

128037, "C" Bty. 47th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 24 July 1917 Age 29

Son of Albert and Emma Frederica Kitson, of 96, Savile Rd., Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Bus House Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Ms. Danielle Roubroeks, Antwerp, Belgium.