



Harold Zetland Harling

1898-1918

Harold was born in Golcar, Huddersfield on 7th Dec 1898 and baptised 8th Jan 1899 at St. John's Church, Golcar. His father was Willie Harling, a cloth finisher born in Golcar in 1872 and died in 1902. His mother was Mary Elizabeth (nee Whitwam) born in Golcar in 1873 and died in 1956. They were married at St. John's Church, on 28th May 1898. Harold was their only child.

Mary was remarried to a widower Fred Liley (born in 1874 and died in 1922) at Dewsbury All Saints Church on 12th November 1910. They lived at 18, Stonefield Street, Dewsbury. Fred had a son from his first marriage, Percy, born in 1901.

On the 1901 Census, Harold and his parents are living at the home of his maternal grandparents Richard and Sarah Whitwam at Knowl Bank, Golcar; in 1911 Harold is still living with his grandparents at 78, Church Street, Golcar. It is not known whether he ever lived with his mother and stepfather in Dewsbury.

Harold was unmarried and his occupation is not known as he was still a schoolboy in 1911.

He enlisted in Huddersfield into the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry serving as Private 38697 in "C" Company 9th Battalion. He was killed in action in France on 27th May 1918 during the First Day of the 3rd Battle of the Aisne (*Operation Blücher-Yorck*), the third stage of the German Spring Offensive (*Der Kaiserschlacht*). His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Soissons Memorial, Aisne, France. Harold was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The town of Soissons stands on the left bank of the River Aisne, approximately 100 kilometres north-east of Paris. For three and a half years from September 1914, this part of the front was held by French forces and the city remained within the range of German artillery. Here, at the end of May 1918, they found themselves facing the overwhelming German attack which, despite fierce opposition, pushed the Allies back across the Aisne to the Marne. The Allied counter attack drove back the Germans by early August and recovered the lost ground. The Soissons Memorial commemorates almost 4,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom forces who died during the Battles of the Aisne and the Marne in 1918 and who have no known grave.

Harold is also 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 St. John's Church, Golcar.

In Memory of

Private

Harold Zetland Harling

38697, "C" Coy. 9th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 27 May 1918 Age 19

Son of Mary Elizabeth Liley (formerly Harling), of 18, Stonefield St. Dewsbury, Yorks, and the late Willie Harling.

Remembered with Honour

Soissons Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

