



John William Child

1894-1918

John was born in Heckmondwike in 1894. His father was Henry Child, an engineer born in Liversedge in 1866 and died in 1948. His mother was Annie (nee Rayne) born in Glasgow, Scotland in 1868 and died in 1927. They were married on 27th September 1890 at St Peter's Church, Birstall.

Their other children were; Ethel, born in 1892 and died in 1918, twins Albert, born in 1896 and died in 1896, Arthur, born in 1896 and died in 1905, Fred, born in 1898 and died in 1900 and Doris, born in 1904.

On the 1901 Census the family were living at 17, Blanket Hall Street, Heckmondwike and in 1911 at 14, George Street, Dewsbury Moor.

John was a single man who worked as a mechanical apprentice.

He served as a third engineer in the Mercantile Marine and was killed on 10th February 1918 when serving on board SS "*Romford*" which was a steamer of 3035 tons built in 1898 by Ropner and Son, Stockton and was operated by Britain Steam Ship Company Ltd (Watts, Watts and Co) London. She was mined by U-boat UC67 captained by Karl Neumann 2.5 miles east of Cape Carthage, Tunisia whilst on route from Barry to Tunis carrying a cargo of phosphates. All 28 members of crew died. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London.

The First World War section of the Tower Hill Memorial commemorates almost 12,000 Mercantile Marine casualties who have no grave but the sea. It was unveiled by Queen Mary on 12th December 1928.

During the period from 5th August 1914, the day following the British declaration of war against the German Empire, and the armistice of 11th November 1918, altogether 2,479 British merchant vessels and 675 British fishing vessels were lost as a result of enemy action, with respectively 14,287 and 434 lives lost. The Mercantile Marine War Medal was instituted by the Board of Trade and approved by the King to reward the war service of the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine who, while only trained as peacetime mariners, continued to serve while running the risk of being attacked at sea during the war. It has not been possible to find any records of any Medals awarded to John. He would have been entitled to this award and also the British War Medal but they were not automatically issued and had to be claimed.

John 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 the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor.

In Memory of
Third Engineer
John William Child

S.S. "Romford" (London), Mercantile Marine who died on 10 February 1918 Age 23

Son of Henry and Annie Child (nee Rayne), of 14, George St., Dewsbury Moor, Dewsbury. Born at Heckmondwike, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour
Tower Hill Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

