



William Harry Griffith

1898-1918

Harry, as he was known to his family was born in Crewe, Cheshire in 1898. His father was David William Griffith, a carpenter, later a stockkeeper, born in Llandegai, Caernarvonshire, Wales in 1871 and died in 1954. His mother was Elizabeth (nee McWalter) born in Bedford, Leigh, Lancashire in 1870 and died in 1956. They were married in St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Atherton, Lancashire on 27th June 1896.

Their other children were; Alice Muriel, born in Crewe in 1902, George Maurice, born in Crewe in 1903 and Frederick, born in Heaton Norris, Lancashire in 1910.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 29, Alton Street, Crewe, in 1911 at 1, Seymour Cottages, Queen Street, Ravensthorpe and later at 583, Huddersfield Road, Ravensthorpe then at 10, Shackerley Road, Tyldesley, Manchester; in 1939 they were living in Royal Cottage, Aethwy, Anglesey, Wales.

Harry was single man whose occupation was unknown as he was still at school in 1911.

He enlisted in 1915 as *William Harry Griffith* and was sent to the Western Front on 26th August that same year, serving as Gunner 80644 in "D" Battery 38th Brigade Royal Field Artillery; he must have given a false age upon enlistment as he was only 17 years and a few months old. The 38th Brigade were armed with 4.5" howitzers and in the 2nd Battle of the Lys they were moved from division to help stem the German tide. On the 10th April 1918 they were attached to the 25th Division in the Ploegsteert area of southern Belgium. Due to German pressure on the following day, the infantry division of the 25th Division were compelled to retire and this was covered by the artillery. The Division then took up positions between Neuve Eglise and Dranouter. On the 13th of April 1918 the Germans again attacked in force aiming for Neuve Eglise. New positions were taken up a mile south-east of Dranouter where they fired upon the Germans. The losses for that day amounted to one officer and nine other ranks, of which he was one. His remains were never identified for burial and so he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Harry was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The Tyne Cot Memorial forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery and commemorates nearly 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16th August 1917 and whose graves are not known. The memorial stands close to the farthest point in Belgium reached by Commonwealth forces in the First World War until the final advance to victory.

Harry is also commemorated as *Harry Griffith* on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of

Gunner

William Harry Griffith

80644, "D" Bty. 38th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 13 April 1918 Age 20

Son of David William and Elizabeth Griffith, of 10, Shackerley Rd., Tyldesley, Manchester.

Remembered with Honour

Tyne Cot Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

