



## **John William Paver**

### **1897-1918**

John was born in Pontefract on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1897. His father was Frederick Joseph Paver, a Colliery Stoker and later a Maltster's Labourer born in Pontefract in 1865 and died in 1923. His mother was Annie/Nancy (nee Richardson) born in Headby, Lincolnshire in 1867 and died in 1936. They were married in 1890.

Their other children were; Harriet Ann, born in 1891, Nelly/Nellie, born in 1893, Hilda, born in 1896 and died in 1897, Joseph Richardson, born in 1900, Elsie, born in 1904 and Mary Alice, born in 1908.

On the 1891 census the family lived at 5, Barbican Road, Pontefract, in 1901 at Finkle Street Cottage, Pontefract and in 1911 at Castle Villas, North Baileygate, Pontefract and later at 11, Moorend Lane, Dewsbury Moor.

John was a single man who in 1911 was a Butcher's Errand Boy and later worked at the Cooperative Wholesale Society Boot Works in Heckmondwike. He was connected to Dewsbury Primitive Methodist Church and Sunday school.

He enlisted in Dewsbury in October 1916 joining the Household Battalion with the Service Number 1401 and was later transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Coldstream Guards serving as Private 22767. He was sent to the Western Front towards the end of 1917 and was killed in action in Northern France on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1918 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of the Lys; his remains were found in September 1919 and he was reburied in Merville Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France. John was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Merville is a town 15 kilometres north of Bethune and 20 kilometres south-west of Armentieres. It was the scene of fighting between the Germans and French and British cavalry early in October 1914 but from the 9<sup>th</sup> of that month to 11<sup>th</sup> April 1918, it remained in Allied hands. It was a railhead until May 1915, and a billeting and hospital centre from 1915-1918. On the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> April 1918, in the Battles of the Lys, the Germans forced their way into Merville and the town was not retaken until 19<sup>th</sup> August. The cemeteries were not used again until the concentration of battlefield burials into the Extension began, after the Armistice. Merville Communal Cemetery Extension now contains 920 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 345 of them unidentified.

John is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

In Memory of

Private

## John William Paver

22767, 3rd Bn., Coldstream Guards who died on 13 April 1918 Age 20

Son of Joseph and Annie Paver, of 11, Moorend Lane, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Merville Communal Cemetery Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.