



## Joseph Arthur Watson 1887-1918

Joseph was born in Batley in 1887. His father was James Watson, a Farmer and later an Innkeeper, born in Thornhill around 1834 and died in 1889. His mother was Lavinia (nee Smith) born in Batley in 1848 and died in 1933. They were married on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1879 in All Saints Parish Church, Batley.

Their other children, all born in Batley were; Mary Ann, born in 1880, Grace Smith, born in 1881, Edith Martha, born in 1883 and Lucy, born in 1889.

On the 1881 Census the family were living at The Fleece Inn, Church Lane, Batley, in 1891, 1901 and 1911 at 11, Church Field Terrace off Fleming Street, Batley.

James was previously married in St. Giles's Church, Pontefract on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1859 to Mary Ann Hall (born in Batley in 1837 and died in 1878). They had six children; Harriet Rebecca, born in 1860, Thomas, born in 1862, Alfred, born in 1864, William Hall, born in 1867, Eliza Ellen, born in 1869 and James Walter, born in 1870.

Joseph was educated at Batley Parish Church School and was a member of the church choir. He worked as an Ironmonger's Assistant and later became the Manager of A. Scarr & Sons Ironmongers, Daisy Hill, Dewsbury and was married to Emily Barker (born in Wakefield in 1884) at Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1912; they lived at 17, St. Mary's Terrace, Savile Town and did not have any children. Emily later moved to live at 800, Huddersfield Road, Ravensthorpe.

He attested into the Army Reserve on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1915 and was mobilised on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1917 serving as Private 204710 in the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment and was sent to the Western Front on 30<sup>th</sup> June that same year. He was wounded in March 1918 and was due to be sent home to recover around Easter time but was recalled at the last minute. He was killed in action in Northern France on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1918 and was buried in Le Grand Beaumart British Cemetery, Steenwerck, Nord, France; his exact burial location is not known and so his headstone is endorsed "Buried Near This Spot". Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Steenwerck is a village on the south-west side of the main road to Armentieres and Bailleul. It remained untouched for much of the First World War, but on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1918 it was captured during the German advance and remained in their hands until the beginning of October. The original cemetery was made by fighting units and field ambulances in April and October 1918, and contained 55 graves. It was increased after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields of Steenwerck, Nieppe and Armentieres. Le Grand Beaumart British Cemetery contains 553 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 108 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 12 casualties known to be buried among them,

Joseph is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and as *Joseph Watson* on the War Memorial from the now demolished St. Mary's Church, Savile Town now displayed in Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

In Memory of  
Private

## Joseph Arthur Watson

204710, 1st/5th Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 15 April 1918 Age 31

Son of James and Lavinia Watson of Batley, Yorks; husband of Emily Watson of 800 Huddersfield Rd.,  
Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Le Grand Beaumart British Cemetery, Steenwerck



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.