



Thomas Henry Hopkinson 1882-1918

Thomas was born in Battyeford, Mirfield on 4th May 1882 and baptised at Christ the King Church, Battyeford, Mirfield on 7th June 1882. His father was Sam Hopkinson, a coal miner born in Mirfield in 1850 and died in 1923. His mother was Martha Alma (nee Gibson) born in Wakefield in 1855 and died in 1915. They were married on 30th December 1873 at St. Mary's Church, Mirfield.

Their other children were; John Henry, born in 1874 and died in 1874, Eli, born in 1875, Louisa, born in 1877, Maria, born in 1879, John William, born in 1884, Alice, born in 1887 and died in 1891, Stanley, born in 1890 and Susan, born in 1892.

On the Census Records from 1881 to 1911 the family address was; The Elbow, Battyeford.

Thomas worked as a mill hand and later a yarn weigher. He was married to Margaret Stanley (born in Newbiggin, Westmoreland in 1883 and died in 1961) on 25th January 1913 in St. Mary's Church, Mirfield. They did not have any children.

He enlisted in Mirfield into the West Riding Regiment with the Service Number 31459, later transferring to the 23rd Battalion Royal Fusiliers serving as Private G/66917 and was captured at Cambrai, France on 23rd April 1918 during the German Spring Offensive (*Der Kaiserschlacht*). He was first sent to Langensalza Prisoner of War Camp, Thuringia, Germany, and then Ohrdruf Prisoner of War Camp, Thuringia where he died of dysentery on 26th May 1918 and was initially buried in Ohrdruf Prisoners of War Cemetery which contained 107 burials between 1915 and 1918. In April 1924 he was reburied in Niederzwehren Cemetery, Kassel, Hessen, Germany. Thomas was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The city of Kassel lies in the centre of Germany approx 165 kilometres south of Hannover. The cemetery was begun by the Germans in 1915 for the burial of prisoners of war who died at the local camp. During the war almost 3,000 Allied soldiers and civilians, including French, Russian and Commonwealth, were buried there. In 1922-23 it was decided that the graves of Commonwealth servicemen who had died all over Germany should be brought together into four permanent cemeteries. Niederzwehren was one of those chosen and in the following four years, more than 1,500 graves were brought into the cemetery from 190 burial grounds. There are now 1,796 First World War servicemen buried or commemorated in the Commonwealth plot at Niederzwehren.

Thomas is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Mirfield War Memorial in Ings Grove Park. He is listed as *T. Hopkinson* on all three.

In Memory of

Private

T H Hopkinson

G/66917, 23rd Bn., Royal Fusiliers who died on 26 May 1918

Remembered with Honour

Niederzwehren Cemetery, Kassel



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

