



Herbert Haigh

1881-1919

Herbert was born in Batley Carr on 10th October 1881. His father was John Thomas Haigh, a Woollen Waste Puller born in Dewsbury in 1858 and died in 1927. His mother was Eliza (nee Bland) born in Kirkby Overblow, Yorkshire in 1858 and died in 1933. They were married in 1878.

Their other children were; Thomas William, born in 1880, Charles, born in 1884 and died of wounds on 29th November 1917, Harry, born in 1892 and Sarah Elizabeth, born in 1894.

On the Census Records for 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911 the family lived at Clay's Buildings, Leeds Road, Dewsbury.

Herbert was educated at Eastborough Council School, Dewsbury and in 1911 worked as a hewer in a Coal Mine. He was married at St. Philip's Church, Leeds Road on 19th September 1903 to Charlotte Crutchlow (born in Bedworth, Warwickshire in 1881 and died in 1940). In 1911 they lived at Brearley Street, Batley and later at Wood Nook, Leeds Road, Dewsbury. They had five children; Horace, born in 1905, Clarence, born in 1906 and died in 1906, Clara, born in 1908 and died in 1908 and Phyllis, born in 1911. Charlotte was remarried in 1922 to a Samuel Bucknall (born in 1874 and died in 1943) and moved back to her home town of Bedworth where she appears on the 1939 register living with her surviving children.

He enlisted in the 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry serving as Private 2307 with a later number 200411 and was sent to the Western Front on 13th April 1915. At some stage he was gassed, and was discharged on 19th February 1919 returning to his job as a Coal Miner at Soothill Wood Colliery. He was under a Doctor Beattie's supervision after complaining of pains under the heart and said that everything he ate tasted of gas. At 5-30am on the 30th May he suffered a severe bilious attack, having eaten a meal of fish and chips the previous evening and was attended by his doctor at 12-30pm. He died at his home at 7-30am on 31st May 1919. He was buried in Dewsbury Cemetery. Herbert was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Following a post-mortem, an inquest on 2nd June ruled that his cause of death was due to *"deranged function of stomach and liver followed by excessive vomiting and heart failure after eating fish and chips probably accelerated by being gassed in military service"* His widow had testified that when he came home on leave at Christmas 1918, he had a cough which he said was *"flu"* and that he felt *"tight across the chest"* The Coroner asked his doctor *"if a man gets a fair amount of gas, the effect will last a long time?"* Doctor Beattie replied *"yes"*.

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

He is one of twenty men named on the above but who are not recorded as official war casualties, due to their cause of death not being officially attributed to war service.