



Harold Gaunt

1896-1918

Harold was born in Pudsey, Yorkshire in 1896. His father was William Gaunt, a Woollen Overlooker born in Pudsey in 1865 and died in 1943. His mother was Mary (nee Eddison) born in Pudsey in 1867 and died in 1932. They were married at St. Wilfrid's Church, Calverley near Pudsey on 22nd December 1894.

They also had a daughter, Florrie, born in Pudsey in 1895.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at 6, Ingham Terrace, Pudsey, in 1911 at 11, Perseverance Street, Pudsey and later at Laurel Mount, Syke Lane, Earlsheaton.

Harold was a single man who attended St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton and was a member of the Church Institute. He worked as a Clerk at the Bradford goods office of the Great Northern Railway.

He enlisted in Dewsbury on 25th November 1915 into the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry with the Service Number 27223, later transferring to the 21st Battalion Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) serving as Private 34902 and was sent to the Western Front on 25th June 1916. He was killed in action in France on 13th September 1918 and was buried in the field. In July 1919 his remains were reburied in Gouzeaucourt New British Cemetery, Nord, France. Harold was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Gouzeaucourt is a large village 15 kilometres south west of Cambrai and 15 kilometres north-east of Peronne. The village was captured by the 8th Division on the night of 12th -13th April 1917. It was lost on 30th November 1917 in the German counterattack at the end of the Battle of Cambrai, and recaptured the same day by the 1st Irish Guards. It was lost again on 22nd March 1918, attacked by the 38th (Welsh) Division on the following 18th September, and finally retaken by the 21st Division on 8th October. The cemetery was begun in November 1917, taken over by the Germans in 1918, and used again by Commonwealth forces in September and October 1918, but the original burials were only 55 in number. It was enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from other cemeteries and from the battlefield of Cambrai. The cemetery now contains 1,295 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 381 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 34 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Another special memorial records the name of a soldier buried in Gouzeaucourt Communal Cemetery in May 1917 whose grave was destroyed by shell fire.

Harold 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 Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton and on the Earlsheaton Men's Institute Plaque now relocated to St. Peter's Church.

In Memory of

Private

Harold Gaunt

34920, 21st Bn., Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) who died on 13 September 1918 Age 21

Son of Mr. and Mrs. William Gaunt, of Laurel Mount, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Gouzeaucourt New British Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of "Frajohn" a member of the Great War Forum.