



## **Tom Wattam**

### **1894-1918**

Tom was born in Batley in 1894. His father was William Wattam, a Licensed Victualler, born in Messingham, Lincolnshire in 1851 and died in 1907. His mother was Ellen (nee Broadbent) born in Dewsbury in 1854 and died in 1922. They were married at St. Mark's Church, Halifax Road, Dewsbury on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1877.

Their other children were; Harold, born in 1878, Alice, born in 1879, Charles Albert, born in 1880, Nellie, born in 1883, Frank Broadbent, born in 1885, Joseph William, born in 1887 and died in 1911, Arthur, born in 1889 and Grace Dorothy, born in 1893. Harold, Frank and Arthur all served in World War 1.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 5, Williams Yard, Batley, in 1901 at the Woolpack Inn, High Street, Heckmondwike, in 1911 at The Unicorn Hotel, Drighlington where Ellen was the licensee; they later moved to the Horse and Shoe Inn, Mirfield and finally at 3, Bradbury Street, Ravensthorpe.

Tom was a single man who was educated at Christ Church School, Battysford, Mirfield and in 1911 worked as a Railway Porter and later as a Blanket Raiser at Messrs James Walker and Sons, Butt End Mills, Mirfield.

He enlisted in July 1917 serving as Private M/324442 in "L" Siege Park, Army Service Corps (the "Royal" prefix was awarded 27<sup>th</sup> November 1918) the prefix "M" on his number shows that he was working with mechanical transport. He was employed in the Motor Transport Section of "L" Siege Park and was attached to the XI Corps heavy artillery units; he would be responsible for transporting ammunition from railheads to the dumps nearer the guns. He was admitted to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at Valenciennes, France on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1918 suffering from influenza and pneumonia (Spanish Flu) and died on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1918; he was buried in Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery, Nord, France. Tom was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

In November and December 1918, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 57<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian and 32<sup>nd</sup> Casualty Clearing Stations were posted at Valenciennes and the last of them did not leave until October 1919. Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery contains 885 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 37 of the burials are unidentified.

Tom 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 Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of  
Private  
**T Wattam**

M/324442, "L" Siege Park., Royal Army Service Corps who died on 16 December 1918 Age 24

Son of the late William and Ellen Wattam.

Remembered with Honour  
**Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of the "In Memory" Website of Pierre Vandervelden.