



## **John William Medley**

### **1887-1918**

John was born in Dewsbury on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1887 and baptised in St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1889. His father was Thomas Cass Medley, a coal miner born in Batley in 1858 and died in 1919. His mother was Sarah (nee Bedford) born in Dewsbury in 1867 and died in 1910. They were married in 1886.

Their other children were; Jonathan Bedford, born in 1889, Clara, born in 1891, Edith Ann, born in 1894, Elsie, born in 1896, Nelly/Nellie, born in 1899, Albert, born in 1901, Bertie, born in 1903 and died in 1905 and Thomas Cass, born in 1906.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at 35, Heckmondwike Road, Dewsbury Moor, in 1901 at 11, Beckett Nook, Dewsbury Moor and in 1911 at 27, Beckett Nook.

John was educated at Dewsbury Moor Council School and was a member of the Gladstone Liberal Club; he was employed as a woollen spinner at Messrs J. Kaye and Sons, Savile Town.

He was married to Ada Wroe (born in 1889 and died in 1973) at All Saints Church, Batley on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1909. In 1911 they lived at 79, Lister Hill, Watergate, Dewsbury and had three children, Sarah, born in 1914, Annie, born in 1916 and Elsie, born in 1918; they later lived at 3, Back Halliley Street, Flatts, Dewsbury and then 3, Belgrave Street, Flatts. Ada was remarried in 1933 to Harry Bevitt (born in 1878 and died in 1960).

He enlisted on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1918 serving as Gunner 252616 in "X" 5<sup>th</sup> Trench Mortar Battery of the Royal Field Artillery. He was killed in action in France on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1918 when a shell hit his gun team; he was buried in Tannay British Cemetery, Thiennes, Nord, France. John was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The village of Thiennes is about 8 kilometres east of Aire-sur-la-Lys, which is a town found between Bethune and St. Omer. It was not until the German offensive of April 1918, by which time Merville was overwhelmed and the German line had passed along the River Lys nearly as far as St. Venant that Thiennes became a place of British burials. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of that month the first death occurred in the 13<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance (belonging to the 5<sup>th</sup> Division) during its service at Tannay, and thenceforward until the first week in August, 5<sup>th</sup> Division units carried out almost all the burials in Tannay British Cemetery. The cemetery now contains 363 First World War burials.

John is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library. In the latter his name simply appears as "*J.W. Medley*" with no other details.

In Memory of

Gunner

## John William Medley

252616, "X" 5th Trench Mortar Bty., Royal Field Artillery who died on 28 June 1918 Age 31

Remembered with Honour

Tannay British Cemetery, Thiennes



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph taken by Chris and Jean Cosgrove.  
Supplied by courtesy of the "In Memories" Website of Pierre Vandervelden, Belgium.