



Gilbert Hirst

1886-1918

Gilbert was born in Dewsbury on 12th December 1886 and baptised on 18th April 1887 at St. Mark's Church, Halifax Road, Dewsbury. His father was William Henry Hirst, a Clogger born in Honley near Huddersfield in 1849 and died in 1906. His mother was Mary Elizabeth (nee Thorpe) born in Hoyland Nether near Barnsley in 1858 and died in 1920. They were married at St. Paul's Church, Easthorpe, Mirfield on 6th August 1883.

Their other children were: Albert Ellis, born in 1883, Clemishaw, born in 1889 and died in 1892, Charles William, born in 1893 and Rufus, born in 1895 and died in 1896.

On the 1891, 1901 and 1911 Census Records the family lived at 39, Wellington Road, Dewsbury.

Gilbert was educated at Dewsbury Parish School and also attended the Sunday school, finishing his education at Batley Grammar School. He worked as a Shop Assistant in the cycle and motor trade whilst his mother and brothers were running the shoe and clog making business. He emigrated to the USA as a passenger on the SS "Merion" landing in Philadelphia on 15th May 1911. He settled in Newark, New Jersey and was later married to a Florence Haigh, their address was 198, New Street, Newark and he worked as an Air Brake Inspector. They do not seem to have had any children. Florence moved to live in Chicago after Gilbert's death.

He received his draft papers for call up to the American Army in June 1917 but chose to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Toronto on 31st July serving as Private 2507412 in the 58th Battalion Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment). He arrived in England on 17th December 1917 and was able to obtain leave to visit his family in Dewsbury. He was killed in action by a shell fragment around Tilloy near Cambrai on 1st October 1918 and was buried in Canada Cemetery, Tilloy-lez-Cambrai, Nord, France. Gilbert was awarded the British War Medal, the Victory Medal and the Canadian Silver Cross (Mother's Cross).

Tilloy-lez-Cambrai is a village on the north-western outskirts of the town of Cambrai and a little east of the road to Douai. The village of Tilloy was captured by the Canadian Corps at the beginning of October 1918 in the face of strong opposition, and the cemetery was made by their burial officer on 13th October. Canada Cemetery contains 265 First World War burials, 25 of them unidentified. Most of the burials are Canadian.

Gilbert 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 Batley Grammar School Memorial Plaque and in the Canadian Book of Remembrance, Parliament Hill, Ottawa.

In Memory of
Private
G Hirst

2507412, 58th Bn., Canadian Infantry who died on 01 October 1918

Remembered with Honour
Canada Cemetery, Tilloy-Lez-Cambrai



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

