



William Duncan Sheard MM

1896-1918

William was born in Ravensthorpe in 1896. His father was Sam William Sheard, a blanket fuller born in Ravensthorpe in 1862 and died in 1919. His mother was Mary Heleana/Ellen (nee Pitt) born in Clerkenwell, London in 1864 and died in 1941. They were married at St. Saviour's Church, Ravensthorpe on 19th June 1887.

Their other children were; Walter Harold, born in 1888, Maggie, born in 1890, Stanley, born in 1891, Lucille Elsie, born in 1894 and died in 1895, Gladys Nellie, born in 1900 and died in 1900. Walter and Stanley both served in World War 1.

On the 1891 and 1901 Census Records the family lived at Havelock Street, Ravensthorpe, in 1911 at Smithson's Buildings, Back Queen Street, Ravensthorpe and later at 23, Commercial Street, Ravensthorpe and then at Westmoreland Avenue, Blackpool.

William was a single man who was connected with the Ravensthorpe North Road Congregational Church, and worked as a Spinner at Messrs Rawdon, Briggs and Company in Ravensthorpe.

He enlisted in Dewsbury into the Royal Army Service Corps with the Service Number 224421 and later as Private 78670 in the 17th Battalion Tank Corps of which he was attached to the Armoured Car Section. He was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in the field on 8th August 1918 during the Battle of Amiens which was officially announced in the London Gazette on 24th January 1919. He was killed in action in France on 29th September 1918 and was buried in the field; in July 1919 his remains were reinterred in Templeux-Le-Guerard British Cemetery, Somme, France. In addition to the Military Medal, William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Templeux-le-Guerard is a village 26 kilometres east of Peronne. The village was taken early in April 1917, lost on the 21st March 1918, and retaken by the 15th Suffolks of the 74th (Yeomanry) Division on the following 18th September. Templeux-Le-Guerard British Cemetery was begun by the 59th Division in April 1917, and carried on by other units until August 1917, and again in September and October 1918. After the Armistice, a further 360 graves were brought in from the battlefields of April 1917 and March and September 1918 surrounding the village and in 1930 more British graves were brought in. There are now over 750, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, nearly a quarter are unidentified and special memorials are erected to 16 soldiers from the United Kingdom, known or believed to be buried among them.

William 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 Blackpool War Memorial as *W. D. Sheerd*.

In Memory of

Private

W D Sheard

M M

78670, 17th Bn., Tank Corps who died on 29 September 1918

Remembered with Honour

Templeux-Le-Guerard British Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Tony Emptage.