



Arthur Gaythorne Joy

1878 – 1916

Arthur was born in Liversedge in 1878. His father was John Joy, a Grocer born in Liversedge in 1840 and died in 1901. His mother was Hannah Elizabeth (née Forsyth) born in Goole in 1850 and died in 1934. They were married at St. Peter's Church, Birstall on 25th December 1869.

Their other children were; Granville, born in 1872, Maggie, born in 1873, John Robert, born in 1878 and died in 1879, Percival, born in 1880 and died in 1882 and Annie Maud, born in 1881.

Arthur was educated at Staincliffe Church School and enlisted in the army in 1899. He served in the South African Campaign (Boer War) from 1899 to 1902 with the 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry rising to the rank of Corporal with the Service Number 6064. He was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with Clasps for Cape Colony, Orange Free State and Transvaal. Afterwards he spent two years in Gibraltar before leaving the military after eight years' service, returning home to Staincliffe and went onto the Army Reserve.

He was married on 31st October 1909 at St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton to Sarah Ellen Riley (or Rylah); she had been born in Dewsbury in 1885 and died in 1969. She had a daughter, Alice Rylah, born in 1907. They had a son, Willie, born in 1909 and died in 1909. On the 1911 census they were living at Mount Pleasant, Earlsheaton. Arthur was working as a general labourer in the sheet making industry. Sarah was remarried in 1958 to William Sykes.

At the outbreak of war, he re-joined his old regiment and went out to France at the end of November 1914. He was wounded in the shin on 23rd February 1915 and returned home to recover. He resumed active service and left England for Mesopotamia in May 1916. By now he had transferred to the 1st/6th Battalion Devonshire Regiment serving as Private 4137. He died of disease on 28th July 1916 and is buried in Amara War Cemetery, Mesopotamia (now Iraq). Arthur was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Amara is a town on the left bank of the Tigris some 520 kilometres from the sea. The War Cemetery is a little east of the town between the left bank of the river and the Chahaila Canal. Amara was occupied by the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force on 3 June 1915 and it immediately became a hospital centre. The accommodation for medical units on both banks of the Tigris was greatly increased during 1916 and in April 1917, seven general hospitals and some smaller units were stationed there. Amara War Cemetery contains 4,621 burials of the First World War, more than 3,000 of which were brought into the cemetery after the Armistice. 925 of the graves are unidentified. In 1933, all of the headstones were removed from this cemetery when it was discovered that salts in the soil were causing them to deteriorate. Instead a screen wall was erected with the names of those buried in the cemetery engraved upon it. Because of the current political instability in Iraq, the cemetery is inaccessible. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has a Roll of Honour commemorating all casualties buried and commemorated in Iraq at their Head Office in Maidenhead.

Arthur is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library. He is also commemorated on the Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and on the Oak Reredos located behind the Altar in St. Peter's Church, Earlsheaton and on the Batley War Memorial and on the Batley Town Hall Memorial Plaque and on the Memorial Plaque to former pupils of Staincliffe Church School.

In Memory of

Private

A Joy

4137, 1st/6th Bn., Devonshire Regiment who died on 28 July 1916

Remembered with Honour

Amara War Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

