



## **William Hilton Thomas**

### **1893 – 1915**

William was born in 1893 in Crewe, Cheshire. His father was Arthur Thomas, a caterer, born in Wrexham, North Wales in 1869. His mother was Sarah Jane (nee Hilton), born in Newton Heath, Manchester in 1870. They were married in 1892 at All Saints Church, Newton Heath.

They had two daughters; Dorothy (Dolly), born in Crewe in 1895 and Margaret (Peggy), born in Batley in 1904.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at Stonehyrst Lodge, Batley Carr, in 1911 at 24, Anroyd Street, Westborough.

William worked as a Tailor's Apprentice at Chadwick Brothers, Clothiers and Hatters, Westgate, Dewsbury.

He enlisted in Dewsbury on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1914 into the Northumberland Fusiliers General Service Corps as Private 15400. On 9<sup>th</sup> February 1915 he was transferred to 21<sup>st</sup> Division Army Cyclist Corps, with Service Number 672.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February 1915, whilst training to be a motor-cycle dispatch rider at Halton Park near Aylesbury, against advice he was a passenger on the back of a motor-cycle being ridden by Lance Corporal John White (also in training and who also died). The motor-cycle was in collision with a motor ambulance on the Aylesbury Road. On 6<sup>th</sup> March 1915, the Dewsbury Reporter published the Inquest verdict of "death by misadventure". A Royal Berkshire Hospital Surgeon concluded William was unconscious, with severe injuries, broken arm, ruptured liver, internal hemorrhage, shock, and died at 10.20pm. John White – broken leg, broken arm, broken bones in hand, dislocated wrist, internal hemorrhage, shock, died at 10.52pm. Both men were buried with full military honours in a joint grave in Dewsbury Cemetery. William did not qualify for any medal awards as he did not serve overseas or in a war zone.

In the local newspaper an expression of thanks for support during their bereavement was expressed by William's parents and 'Miss Ada Lynk'.

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 War Memorial in St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor and on the Springfield Congregational Church Memorial Plaque now relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of

Private

## William Hilton Thomas

672, 21st Div. Cyclist Coy., Army Cyclist Corps who died on 25 February 1915 Age 22

Son of Arthur and Sarah Jane Thomas, of 10, Swanland Avenue, Bridlington. Born at Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Dewsbury Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

