



James Arthur Blackburn

1897 – 1917

James was born in Dewsbury on 17th March 1897 and baptised at St. Philip's Church, Leeds Road, Dewsbury on 10th October 1904. His father was also James Blackburn, a Coal Miner born in Dewsbury in 1864 and died in 1931. His mother was Florence (nee Thompson) born in Dewsbury in 1866 and died in 1933. They were married on 25th March 1888 at St. Mark's Church, Halifax Road, Dewsbury.

Their other children were; Willie, born in 1888 and died in 1891, Clifford, born in 1894 and Florrie, born in 1904.

On the 1891 Census they lived at 34, Cliffe Street, Dewsbury and in 1901 and 1911 at 66, Cliffe Street.

James was a single man who was educated at the Dewsbury Parish Church Day School. In 1911 he worked as a chain boy in a coal mine but prior to enlistment he worked as a Fetter for Messrs Mark Oldroyd and Sons, Spinkwell Mills, Dewsbury.

He attested in September 1916 serving as Private 202710 in the 1st/4th Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to the Western Front on 1st January 1917. He suffered gas poisoning on 22nd July 1917 when the enemy were inflicting a sustained bombardment of Mustard Gas on the Belgian coast around Nieuport, Flanders. He died in the 2nd Canadian General Hospital at Le Treport on the French coast on 31st July 1917 and was buried in Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Seine-Maritime, France. James was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

According to the report of James' death in the *Dewsbury Reporter* on 11th August 1917, Chaplain H.H.K. Greene wrote to James' parents: "*When the war clouds have rolled away, then will we all realise better what our heroes have saved us from. God grant their sacrifices may leave us a better people.*"

Le Treport is a small seaport 25 kilometres north-east of Dieppe. The Cemetery is 1.5 kilometres south of the town. During the First World War, Le Treport was an important hospital centre and by July 1916, the town contained three general hospitals (the 3rd, 16th and 2nd Canadian), No.3 Convalescent Depot and Lady Murray's B.R.C.S. Hospital. The 7th Canadian, 47th and 16th USA General Hospitals arrived later, but all of the hospitals had closed by March 1919. As the original military cemetery at Le Treport filled, it became necessary to use the new site at Mont Huon. There are now 2,128 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery.

James 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 from the now closed St. Philip's Church, Leeds Road now displayed in Dewsbury Minster.

In Memory of

Private

James Arthur Blackburn

202710, 1st/4th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 31 July 1917 Age 20

Son of James and Florence Blackburn, of 66, Cliffe St., Crackenedge, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

