



## **John William Robinson**

### **1882 – 1916**

John was born in Dewsbury in 1882. His father was John Robinson, a Coal Miner born in Dewsbury in 1850 and died in 1933. His mother was Jessie (née Penrose) born in Mary Tavy, Devon in 1855 and died in 1934. They were married on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1878 at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor. They had 12 children of which 4 had died before 1911.

Their other children who could be traced were; George Arthur, born in 1878 and served in World War 1, Keziah, born in 1881, Joseph, born in 1884 and died in 1884, Elizabeth Ann, born in 1885, Mary Jane, born in 1886, Eliza, born in 1888 and died in 1889, Tom, born in 1890, Edith, born in 1893, Lily, born in 1895 and Louisa, born in 1897 and died in 1902.

On the 1891, 1901 and 1911 Census Records the family lived at 20, Leatham Street, Westborough, Dewsbury.

John was associated with St. John the Evangelist Church, where he was involved with the boy's football team. After leaving school he worked as a coal miner in the Barnsley area. He was unmarried.

He enlisted in September 1914, initially joining the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, a mining battalion formed by the West Yorkshire Coal Owners Association. Because of his skills he transferred to the specialist tunnelling branch of the Royal Engineers as Serjeant 82691 and was sent to the Western Front on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1915. He proved an expert tunneller, earning a proficiency certificate in the use of mine rescue equipment. He also instructed in the use of smoke helmets. Just after midnight on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1916, whilst serving with the 185<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company, he was shot through the abdomen by a German sniper. Two letters arrived home. One from his brother George, also serving with the Royal Engineers. An officer had alerted him about John's injury, so he was able to see him at the dressing station at Aubigny. He was optimistic at the chances of recovery saying "*He never lost consciousness, and talked to me all the time....I can assure you I think he will pull through all right, as the doctor said he had strength on his side*". The second letter was from a nurse at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Casualty Clearing Station, she wrote; "*I expect you will have now heard the very sad news of the death of your son.....he came down to this hospital in the early morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> and died about 3 p.m. of the same day. He was very severely wounded in the abdomen, and the medical officer from the first gave little hope of his recovery....He became unconscious in the early afternoon, and grew gradually weaker and weaker until he just slept quietly away.*" He was buried in Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas-de-Calais, France. John was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Aubigny-en-Artois is a village approximately 15 Kilometers north-west of Arras on the road to St. Pol. The Communal Cemetery Extension now contains 2,771 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

John 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.

In Memory of  
Serjeant  
**John William Robinson**

82691, 185th Tunnelling Coy., Royal Engineers who died on 14 July 1916 Age 35

Son of John and Jessie Robinson, of 20, Leatham St., Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour  
**Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

