



## Herbert Harris

### 1897-1918

Herbert was born in Rothwell near Kettering, Northamptonshire in 1897. His father was Joseph Harris, a Shoe Riveter born in 1861 and died in 1914. His mother was Emma (nee Cox) born in 1861 and died in 1927. They were married in Rothwell in 1885.

Their other children were; Emily, born in 1882, Martha, born in 1886 and Alfred, born in 1890 and served in World War 1.

On the 1891 Census the family lived at Castle Street, Rothwell, in 1901 and 1911 at 4, Gladstone Street, Rothwell and around 1912 they came to live at 280, Mountain View, Lees Hall Road, Thornhill Lees.

Herbert was a single man who worked at Ingham's Coke Ovens in Thornhill Lees, as did his father and brother.

He enlisted in Dewsbury along with his brother on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1915 serving as Gunner 61975 in the 86<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery giving his date of birth as 4<sup>th</sup> November 1895. He was sent to the Western Front on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1916 and came home on leave at the end of January 1918. He was accidentally killed in France on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1918 when a field gun accidentally misfired and he jumped into the gun well prematurely to try and find the cause of the fault, the gun then went off and he suffered severe head and facial injuries and was found to be dead on arrival at a Dressing Station. He was buried in Anzin-St. Aubin British Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France. Herbert was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His mother received a letter on 21<sup>st</sup> August from a Major H. Boxwell giving details of his death, adding; *"his loss is very keenly felt by the officers and men in my battery, as your son was one of our best men and the officers, NCO's and men join me in sending you our sincerest sympathy in your great sorrow."*

The village of Anzin-St. Aubin is on the north-western outskirts of Arras. The cemetery was begun by the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division early in April 1917, and carried on by artillery units and field ambulances until October 1917. It was then used by the 30<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Stations. The 51<sup>st</sup> Division came back to it in April 1918 and it was closed the following September. The cemetery contains 358 First World War burials, 145 of which belonged, or were attached, to Artillery units.

Herbert 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 Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees and on the Thornhill Lees Wesleyan Methodist Church Memorial Plaque relocated to Longcauseway Church, Dewsbury.

In Memory of  
Gunner

**H Harris**

61975, 86th Siege Bty., Royal Garrison Artillery who died on 16 August 1918

Remembered with Honour  
Anzin-St. Aubin British Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.