



Thomas Cox 1886 – 1915

Thomas was born in Dewsbury on 20th August 1886. His father was Michael Cox, a Mule Spinner in a woollen mill born in Dewsbury in 1866 and died in 1906. His mother was Mary (nee Durkin) born in Dewsbury around 1864 and died in 1926. They were married at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church, Dewsbury on 31st May 1886.

Their other children were; Mary Ellen, born in 1888, Francis (Frank), born in 1891, James, born in 1893, Joseph, born in 1896, Michael, born in 1899 and was killed in action on 24th September 1918 and Catherine, born in 1904. All the brothers served in World War 1.

In 1891 the family were living at 136, High Street, Westtown, in 1901 at 142, High Street and in 1911 at 86, High Street.

Thomas worked as a Coal Miner at Soothill Wood Colliery. He was married to Annie Shannon (born in 1887 and died in 1925) at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church on 16th April 1906. They lived at 36, Ingham Road, Westtown and later at 4, St. John the Baptist Street, Westtown and had five children: Mary, born in 1906, John, born in 1908, Thomas, born in 1910, James, born in 1912 and died in 1915 and Agnes, born in 1914. Annie was remarried in 1921 to John McClay (born in 1886 and died in 1954) a widower with three young children; they had a daughter, Veronica, born in 1921 and died in 1922.

He attested in Dewsbury on 20th August 1914 serving as Private 12122 in the 6th Battalion Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to France and Flanders on 21st May 1915. He was wounded in the head by a shell burst in Belgian Flanders and died in the 10th Casualty Clearing Station at Abeele on 30th July 1915. He was buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Thomas was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

The local paper reported that he had enlisted with a local man from Batley, Private T. Cafferty, who sent a letter to Thomas' wife about his death. He wrote: *"We were just having a rest, and we had not been sat down a minute when a shell burst and he was hit on the head. He never spoke again. I was next to him, and we were talking when it happened. You can be sure that he did not suffer at all"*.

On learning about his brother's death, his brother Frank enlisted.

During the First World War, the village of Lijssenthoek was situated on the main communication line between the Allied military bases in the rear and the Ypres battlefields. Close to the Front, but out of the extreme range of most German field artillery, it became a natural place to establish casualty clearing stations. The cemetery was first used by the French 15th Hopital D'Evacuation and in June 1915, it began to be used by casualty clearing stations of the Commonwealth forces. From April to August 1918, the casualty clearing stations fell back before the German advance and field ambulances (including a French ambulance) took their places. The cemetery contains 9,901 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 24 being unidentified.

Thomas is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and on the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church.

In Memory of
Private
T Cox

12122, 6th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry who died on 30 July 1915

Remembered with Honour
Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

