



## **James William Rollinson (James W. Rawlinson) 1896 - 1916**

James William Rollinson was born in Dewsbury on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1896. His father was Hirst Rollinson, a woollen mill foreman born in Dewsbury in 1869 and died in 1941. His mother was Mary Alice (née Newsome) born in Earlsheaton in 1871 and died in 1950. They were married in 1895.

They had one other child; Edna Amy, born 25<sup>th</sup> December 1898.

On the 1901 Census they lived at Cardwell Terrace, Thornhill Lees, in 1911 they had moved to 17, Havelock Street, Blackpool and later at 1, Reads Road, Blackpool.

James was a single man who was educated at Dewsbury Parish Day School and attended the Parish Church and Sunday school. He became a Telegraph Messenger after leaving school, but after his family moved to Blackpool he is recorded on the 1911 Census as an Office Boy at a Grocery, although his obituary in the Dewsbury Reporter on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1916 stated that he was a Telegraph Messenger in Blackpool just before he joined the Royal Navy.

He enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1912 serving as Able Seaman J/17159 and was killed in action during the Battle of Jutland on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1916 whilst serving on H.M.S. "Defence". He has no known grave and so he is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon. James was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

H.M.S. "Defence" was sunk during the Battle of Jutland which began on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1916. Escorting the main body of the Grand Fleet, the ship was fired upon by one German battlecruiser and four dreadnoughts as she attempted to engage a disabled German light cruiser. She was struck by two salvos from the German ships that detonated her rear magazine. The fire from that explosion spread to the ship's secondary magazines, which exploded in turn. There were no survivors.

The Plymouth Naval Memorial commemorates 7,251 sailors of the First World War. More than a quarter of the men commemorated at Plymouth were lost at The Battle of Jutland. This includes most of the crews of the battlecruiser H.M.S. "Indefatigable" and the armoured cruiser H.M.S. "Defence".

James is also commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library. His name is recorded as *James W. Rawlinson* in both instances.

His name is also commemorated on the Blackpool War Memorial with the correct spelling.

In Memory of

Able Seaman

## James William Rollinson

J/17159, H.M.S. "Defence.", Royal Navy who died on 31 May 1916 Age 20

Son of Hirst and Mary Alice Rollinson, of 1, Reads Rd., Blackpool

Remembered with Honour  
Plymouth Naval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

**ROLLINSON J. W.**