

## Private Jacob Rivers VC



6016 Pte Rivers J. was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions in WW1 at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on 12th March 1915. A native of Derby, he served as a Private with the 1st Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment) and was awarded the V.C. for;

“... most conspicuous bravery at Neuve-Chapelle on 12th of March 1915, when he, on his own initiative, crept to within a few yards of a very large number of the enemy who were massed on the flank of an advanced company of his battalion and hurled bombs on them. His action caused the enemy to retire and so relieved the situation. Pte Rivers performed a second act of great bravery on the same day, similar to the first mentioned again causing the enemy to retire. He was killed on this occasion”

Jacob Rivers was born in Derby in 1882 and grew up to become a riveter. He was 5ft 11 inches tall with brown hair and eyes and he weighed 152 lbs. He had a tattoo, on his upper arm, of a cross bearing the words 'I Love MB'. Prior to joining the Sherwood Foresters, he had completed an engagement in the Royal Scots Fusiliers. The name of Jacob's father was shown on his military records as George Rivers and his mother was shown as Adeline Rivers living at House 4, Court 12, Bridge Gate, Derby. He had three brothers, Isaac, Joseph and George, as well as four sisters, Lucy, Lizzie, Emma and Adelaide. This detailed information about living, first blood relatives was supplied to the Infantry Records Office, No 6 District, Lichfield by his mother after His Majesty the King requested it, so it could be included on the plaque and scroll in commemoration of her son's actions.

His medical history shows that in the January prior to his death he had spent time in a military hospital suffering from frostbite to both feet and was discharged from hospital back to duty on 29th January 1915 which was 7 weeks before his death.

His remains were lost and never recovered. Jacob's Victoria Cross was presented to his mother by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 29th November 1916. So proud were the people of Derbyshire at the award of the Victoria Cross to Jacob that on 23rd March 1923 they made his mother a Freeman, an honour she shared with Earl Haig and the Duke of Devonshire. His name is on the Le Touret Memorial, Neuve-Chapelle, France and he shares a dedication on his mother's headstone in Nottingham Road Cemetery. It reads, 'in memory of Adeline Rivers who died March 1st 1937.' The rest of her stone is dedicated to her son.

Nottingham Road Cemetery burial register states:  
Adeline Rivers, widow, age 88, died at City Hospital, 1 March 1937.  
Buried 4 March 1937, grave plot 7018.

