Allen Ainley





Rank: -Private

Number: -81885

Regiment: - Durham Light Infantry (formerly 38737 West Riding Regiment) 11th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 17/08/1918 Age: 19 years

Cemetery: - Sucrerie Cemetery, Ablain-St.Nazaire, France V.E.4

"IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY DEAR SON ALLEN SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS"

Batley News, 31 Aug 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Allen was born on 19th May 1899 the son of Frank and Sarah Ainley nee Greenwood who had married at Batley Parish Church on 16th November 1895. Frank was a cobbler and Sarah a weaver and the family including Samuel born 1896 was living at 13, Brown Place off Brown Street , Batley when the 1901 census was taken.

Within the next decade the family had grown and moved to a three roomed home at 10, Hume Street, Batley, Emily being born in 1902 , Raymond 1905 and Eva 1908. Alice was born in 1910 but sadly died aged 7 months in February 1911.

Allen attended Purlwell Council School and was connected with Wellington Street Primitive Methodist Chapel. He was an enthusiastic junior footballer being a member of Batley Albion Club, and also took part in regimental sports after joining the army. After leaving school he worked as a spinner for Messrs. Simon Cooper Ltd.

Service Details

Allen enlisted into the Durham Light Infantry on 17th June 1917 when he was 18 years and one month old, giving his height as 5ft. 4 inches and living at 30, Whitaker Street, Batley. He was called up for service the following day. Allen was transferred to the West Riding Regiment in August 1917 and to the Durham Light Infantry on the 3rd August and posted on the 4th.

Sadly he was with his unit only a short time when he was killed by a shell.

A Lieutenant wrote to his parents: -

"*He was killed last night as he sat in his dug- out by a shell which burst outside, a splinter of which entered his dug-out and killed him. His whole platoon sympathises very deeply. Allen was one of the most cheery and enthusiastic boys in my platoon. He set a wonderful example to the rest of his platoon, as his undaunted cheerfulness and enthusiasm at all times made him an asset."*

A former Leeds clergyman, now a chaplain to deceased's unit wrote to say the funeral took place with full military honours in the presence of between 70 and 80 comrades.

His cousin, David Ainley, had been killed two weeks previously.

Allen was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group