Robert Ramsden Barber





Rank: - Private

Service Number: - 5/223453

Battalion: - Kings' Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 8th Training Reserve

53rd Young soldiers Garrison KOYLI

Date of death: - 29th October 1918 at Clipstone Training Camp aged 18

Cemetery: - Batley Cemetery, Yorkshire. H 739

Batley News, 9 Nov 1918. Batley Reporter, 8 Nov 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Robert Ramsden Barber was born on 26th September 1900 in Heckmondwike, the son of Joseph, born Liversedge and Amy (nee Townend) who in 1901 were living at 81 Cemetery Road, Heckmondwike with his older sister Jessie (1887). Joseph worked in a machine shop.

In 1911 the family were living at 4, Norton Terrace, Burslem, Staffordshire, where Joseph was an Electric Engineman at a colliery. Jessie was a printer's assistant in lithography whilst Robert and Winnifred (1904), were scholars. Jack (1907) and Ruth (aged 8 months) were at home with mum.

Robert and his family returned to Yorkshire and lived at 8, Upton Street, Cross Bank, Batley and he attended Batley Grammar School. He also attended Batley Parish Church where he was in the Sunday School and a member of the Church Institute. He left Batley Grammar School at the age of 17 to become a cinema operator at the Victoria Hall but was meanwhile studying for the Church and was almost ready for college when he joined the military.

Service Details.

He joined up in early October 1918 at Pontefract in the 8th Training Reserve Battalion, 53rd Young Soldiers Garrison of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was sent to Clipstone Training Camp.

This camp could hold upwards of 30,000 men and first opened in May 1915. The once peaceful countryside around became alive with the digging of trenches, practising on rifle ranges and stirring up the dust on country lanes when they went on training marches.

The camp was served by a railway station with regular services to Mansfield and a church for 900 worshippers was built in 1916.

Robert died of sceptic pneumonia only a fortnight after joining up.

In 1918 there was an epidemic of influenza which swept the world and many soldiers died of this rather than injuries received in battle.

He was buried at Batley Cemetery on Saturday October 1918 with full military honours and the Rev. F. E. Lowe M.A. (Vicar of Batley) conducted the service. The coffin was covered with the Union Jack and a party of 26 officers and men from Pontefract were present including a firing party and bugler.

On the family grave in Batley Cemetery: -

In Loving Memory of a dear Mother and Father ---- also

Robert Ramsden Barber who died in Active Service October 29th 1918 aged 18years.

He is commemorated on Batley War Memorial, Batley Parish Church and Batley Grammar School and the family grave in Batley Cemetery.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group