Arthur Brook(e)





Rank: -Private

Number: -201618 (formerly 3888)

Regiment: - West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own) "A" Coy. 1/5th Battalion 4th Platoon

Missing, presumed Killed in action: - 25th April 1918 aged 23

Memorial: -La Laiterie Cemetery 1.D.21

Batley Reporter, 3 Jan 1919, 1 Aug 1919 (classifieds)

Family Details

Arthur was born in Batley in 1892 the son of William and Ruth (nee Fox) and was baptised at St. Mark's Dewsbury on the 3rd September 1896 when the family was living at 6, Warwick Road and his father's occupation was given as a drayman.

He was the youngest child and his elder siblings were Annie (1880), David (1882), Edith (1884-1885), Joseph Henry (1886-1887), Samuel (1890).

Sadly, William died in September 1905 aged 46. The family continued to live in Batley Carr and in 1911 Ruth and Annie, who were weavers, Samuel, a tailor's presser and Arthur, a tailor's journeyman was living at 26, Victoria Street, Batley Carr.

On the 25th October 1917 Arthur, who was already a soldier, married Elizabeth Bailey of 24, Thorncliffe Road, Batley at Holy Trinity, Batley Carr.

Service Details

His service details have not survived but we do know he was a soldier before his marriage in 1917.

He was attached to the 49th Division which fought in 1916 fought at the Battles of Albert, Bazentin Ridge, Pozieres Ridge and Flers-Courcelette which were all parts of the Battle of the Somme. In 1917 they fought at the Battle of Poelcapelle and in 1918 the Battles of Estaires (9-11 April), Messines (10-11 April), Bailleul in which they defended Neuve Eglise (13-15 April), and First Battle of Kemmel Ridge.



Kemmel Ridge April 1918

During World War 1, it was the location of one of the war's most ferocious battles. Because of its strategic importance, it was fiercely fought in the Fourth Battle of Ypres. On 25 April 1918, German imperial forces, hoping to force a breakthrough to the North Sea, started attacking the French troops on the Kemmelberg with gas grenades. At 6 a.m. the German Alpenkorps seized and captured the Kemmelberg, causing allied troops to withdraw from all the hills in the region. Thousands of French soldiers were slaughtered. Several streets and army barracks in Germany were named after this event (Kemmel-Privatweg in Magdeburg, Kemmelkaserne in Murnau). Friedrich Bertram Sixt von Armin and Prince Franz of Bavaria were commanders, but Karl Hofer was celebrated as hero of Kemmelberg - the *Held vom Kemmelberge*. It was recaptured during the Battle of the Peaks of Flanders in late September 1918, as a precursor to the Armistice of 11 November 1918.

His wife put an advertisement in the Batley and Dewsbury Reporters requesting any information about her husband in January 1919, after he had not been heard of since 24th April 1918. She also put in memoriam in the paper in August 1919 when it was assumed, he had been killed in action.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr, Warwick Road School and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group