# Fred Crowther





**Rank: -** Gunner

**Number: -** 14229425

**Regiment: -** Royal Artillery 115 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment

**Died: -** Accidentally Killed in road incident 30/05/1945 Age: 32 years.

**Cemetery: -** Hilversum Northern Cemetery, Noord-Holland, Netherlands Plot 1E. Row 6 Grave 101.

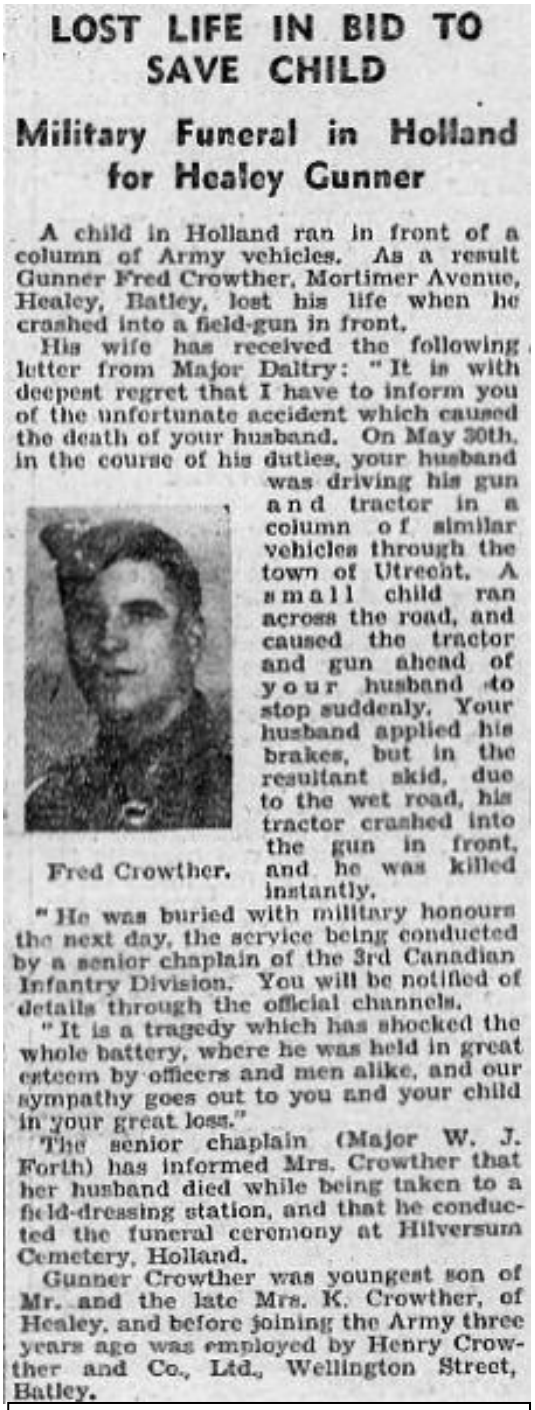
Fred was born in Healey, Batley on 3 March 1913 the youngest son of Kenealey and Lilly Crowther nee Duncombe who had married in 1903. Eva was born in 1904 but sadly died aged 7 months in September, Thomas 1905, Stanley was born in 1908 and Mary 1916. Lily died in 1940 and Kenealey in 1948.

In 1939 the family lived at 66 Mortimer Avenue, Healey, Batley and Fred was working as a foreman rag grinder.

In 1940 Fred married Amy Bruce who also came from Healey and they lived at Mortimer Avenue, Healey. Allen was born in 1941. Before joining the Army in 1942 Fred worked for Henry Crowther and Co. Ltd. Wellington Street, Batley.

Fred was in Holland when he lost his wife. His wife received a letter from Major Daltry: -

*"It is with deepest regret that I have to inform you of the unfortunate accident which caused the death of your husband. On May 30th in the course of his duties, your husband was driving his gun and tractor in a column of similar vehicles through the town of Utrecht. A small child ran across the road and caused the tractor and gun ahead of your husband to stop suddenly. Your husband applied his brakes but in the resultant skid due to the wet road, his tractor crashed into the gun in front and he was killed instantly. He was buried with military honours the next day, the service being conducted by a senior chaplain of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. You will be notified of details through the official channels. It is a tragedy which has shocked the whole battery, where he was held in great esteem by officers and men alike, and our sympathy goes out to you and your child in your great loss."*



LOST LIFE IN BID TO SAVE CHILD

Military Funeral in Holland for Healey Gunner

A child in Holland ran in front of a column of Army vehicles. As a result Gunner Fred Crowther, Mortimer Avenue, Healey, Batley, lost his life when he crashed into a field-gun in front.

His wife has received the following letter from Major Daltry: "It is with deepest regret that I have to inform you of the unfortunate accident which caused the death of your husband. On May 30th, in the course of his duties, your husband was driving his gun and tractor in a column of similar vehicles through the town of Utrecht. A small child ran across the road, and caused the tractor and gun ahead of your husband to stop suddenly. Your husband applied his brakes, but in the resultant skid, due to the wet road, his tractor crashed into the gun in front, and he was killed instantly.

Fred Crowther.

"He was buried with military honours the next day, the service being conducted by a senior chaplain of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. You will be notified of details through the official channels.

"It is a tragedy which has shocked the whole battery, where he was held in great esteem by officers and men alike, and our sympathy goes out to you and your child in your great loss."

The senior chaplain (Major W. J. Forth) has informed Mrs. Crowther that her husband died while being taken to a field-dressing station, and that he conducted the funeral ceremony at Hilversum Cemetery, Holland.

Gunner Crowther was youngest son of Mr. and the late Mrs. K. Crowther, of Healey, and before joining the Army three years ago was employed by Henry Crowther and Co., Ltd., Wellington Street, Batley.

Batley News, 23 Jun 1945 (photo)

The senior chaplain, Major W.J. Forth, informed his wife, that her husband died while being taken to a field dressing station and that he took the funeral ceremony at Hilversum Cemetery, Holland.

Fred is remembered with Honour at Heckmondwike Grammar School and Batley War Memorial. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group