Fred Charlesworth





Rank: - Acting Bombardier

Number: - 107890

Regiment: - Royal Garrison Artillery 308th Siege Battery

Killed in Action: - 30th October 1917 aged 32

Cemetery: - Menin Road South Military, West –Vlaanderen , Belgium.111.H.20

Batley News, 10 Nov 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Fred was born in c. 1886 in Brockholes the eldest son of George Henry and Emmeline Charlesworth (nee Lancaster married 1885).

Fred was the eldest child and was followed by Norman (1888), Lily (1889), Louis (1891-1917), Minnie (1896), Jack (1898-1900) and Harry (1900). The family had moved from Huddersfield to live at Batley before the birth of Lilly and in 1901 was living at 2, Walker's Mount, Batley. He attended Warwick Road School. The 1911 census shows that Fred was working as a draper's assistant whilst his father was working as a carder at a woollen mill.

On 24th May 1913 he married Ruth Ellen Darnbrook at Upper Independent Chapel, Taylor Street, Batley. George was born in the latter part of 1913. The family lived at 171, Chestnut Terrace, Taylor Street, Batley and Fred worked for seventeen years at the Central Branch of Batley Co-operative Society in the drapery department. He was a member of the Tradesmen's Cricket Club.

Service Details

Fred enlisted at Batley on the 16th July 1916 and disembarked in France in April 1917.

His wife who was the daughter of Hubert Darnbrook, wool, waste and rag merchant of Heckmondwike received a letter from her husband's pal

"It is with deepest regret I wish to tell you your husband, Fred was killed yesterday morning (October 30th). A shell burst within a few yards of him and a piece caught him. His death was practically instantaneous. He and I were good chums and I can assure you all the battery will mourn the loss of a good comrade and I a faithful friend. In fact, words cannot express my sympathy deeply enough. One redeeming feature is that he suffered no pain. When the opportunity occurs and peace is declared I trust I will be able to give you fuller details of the place where it happened. In the meantime, if there is anything, I can do it will be a pleasure."

The Battery Major also wrote: -

"It is with deepest regret I have to tell you your husband Bombardier Charlesworth has been killed in action. It will be some slight consolation for you to know that he suffered no pain, but was killed instantly. Your husband was one of the most popular men in the Battery, and his death is a sad loss to us. Under the most trying conditions Bombardier Charlesworth could always smile, and under shell fire had always a word for the men under his command. Please write to me if I can help you at all in your great sorrow."

Two months previously he had a narrow escape when part of a shell damaged his steel helmet but failed to penetrate though a corporal standing nearby was wounded.

His brother Louis was killed on 17th August 1916.

Fred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity, Batley Carr, Warwick Road School, Batley Co-operative Society Roll of Honour and Batley and Dewsbury War Memorials.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group