Bertram James Darton





Rank: - Private

Number: - 325021

Regiment: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) (Formerly 204649 York & Lancaster Regiment) 1/7th Battalion

Gassed 26 Apr 1918 near Ypres: - Died 27 Apr 1918 at Boulogne of gas poisoning.

Cemetery: - Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France IX. A. 54.

"TO MEMORY EVER DEAR"

Batley News, 4 May 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Bertram James was born in St. Ippollitis near Hitchen Herts. In c. April 1895 the youngest son of Charles and Martha Darton nee Catterill who had married in 1877.

Charles was born in 1878 followed by Lizzie 1879, Edward John 1881-1897, Minnie Rose 1883, George 1885, Grace 1888, Alfred 1892 and Benjamin.

The family moved to live in the Dewsbury area shortly after the birth of Bertram because Edward John died in the area in 1897. In 1901 the family was living at 16, Moorlands Avenue, Dewsbury and Charles gave his occupation as a greengrocer on the census. Before 1911 they had moved to live at 25, Waverley Terrace, Thornhill Road, Dewsbury and Bertram was employed as a butcher like his brother Alfred.

He had attended Carlton Road School and been employed by Mr. Lockwood, contractor, Batley but then moved to work for British Dyes Ltd, , Huddersfield before entering the army.

On the 23rd May 1914 he married Rebecca Stott at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton giving his occupation as a teamer and his father was a fruiterer. The couple went to live at 8, Highgate Street, Hanging Heaton.

Mary was born later that year followed by Cyril in 1915 who sadly died in 1915 and Wilfred in 1917 who died in March 1919 aged 2 years.

Service Details

Bertram enlisted on the 23rd March 1917 and was posted to France on the 20th March 1917.

The 1/7th Battalion was a Territorial force raised in Milnsbridge in 1914. They went to France on 14th May 1915 and from the following day they became part of 147th Brigade in 49th West Riding Brigade, West Riding Division.

In 1917 they took part in Operations on the Flanders Coast (Hush) The Battle of Poelcapelle (9th October)

In 1918 they fought at the Battle of Estaires (9th -11th April), The Battle of Messines (10-11 April)

The Battle of Bailleul in which the Division defended Neuve Eglise (13-15 April) The First Battle of Kemmel Ridge (17-19 April)

The Second Battle of Kemmel Ridge (25-26 April) which were all phases of the Battle of the Lys which was started by the Germans with the objective of capturing key railway and supply roads and cutting off British Second Army at Ypres.

Gas was used in these battles and Bertram was seriously gassed on the 26th April and taken to a hospital at Boulogne. A telegram arrived to say visiting was permitted and his wife and mother set off immediately. A message was received after they had left to say he had died on the Saturday evening and they were too late to see him but they were able to attend his funeral on the following Tuesday.

At this time his parents lived at Fall Lane, West Town, Dewsbury.

Bertram was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

He is remembered with Honour at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton, Hanging Heaton War Memorial and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group