# Alfred Tom Dodsworth.





**Rank:** - Private

**Number: -** 25323

**Regiment/Battalion**: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 2nd Battalion

**Killed in Action by a sniper**: - 14th April 1917 aged 28

**Remembered with Honour**: - Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. Pier and Face 11Cand 12A

Batley News, 28 Apr 1917 (photo)

**Family Details.**

Alfred was born in 1889 in Selby, the son of Selby born couple John and Mary Ann Dodsworth (nee Golton). The couple had married in 1869 and by 1881 they were living at Barlby with children Ernest (1873), Albert E (1875) both born Hull, Joseph (1878), John William (1880) both born in Barlby.

In 1891 the family had moved and were living at 35, Purlwell Lane, Batley with Rose Agnes (1883), Lillian (1885), Sarah Matilda (1887) and Alfred all born Selby.

A decade later the family was living at 10, Track Road with the addition of Clifford (1891) born Batley. John was employed as a gardener.

On 11th March 1911 Alfred married Alice Fleetwood at St. Thomas's Church, Batley and the couple went to live at 11, Crescent Street, Batley. He was working as a woollen beamer. Before enlisting he worked as a beamer at Wrigley and Palmer, Valley Mills.

He attended St. Andrew's Church, Purlwell and was a former choirboy.

**Service Details**

Alfred enrolled in August 1914 at Dewsbury and embarked for France in April 1915. The 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry was part of 32nd Division.

He was severely wounded in the head in the Somme offensive of July 1916 but was nursed back to health. He returned to his unit in January 1917.

On the 9th April the battalion marched to the Chateau at Auroir taking the Halnon-Savy-Vaux-Germaine-Forest-Auroir road.

On the 10th the battalion was addressed by the Divisional Commander who praised and thanked the battalion for the good work it had carried out during the previous few days.

In the evening of the 13th April the battalion, with the 16th Battalion Highland Light Infantry on the left set out to capture Fayet and the vicinity.

At 9 pm the battalion paraded at Auroir and marched to the assembly position halting between Savy and Halnon for an hour for a hot meal. Between 12.30 am and 4.15 am the battalion was formed up into assaulting formations.

"A" Company was on the left "B" Company on the right.

"D" Company behind A "C" Company behind B

There were two objectives set for the battalion: -

FIRST Junction of hostile trench and junction of Fayet-Fresnoy-Le Petit road in M34D-Orchard M35 D.1.3 (the grid reference used at the time)

SECOND the terraced road running through M36 D.Anen Min in M36 an inclusive, the high ground to the north to two twin copses in M28.

At zero hour the companies set off A Company met with little opposition and arrived at the sunken road Fayet-Fresnoy-Le-Petit at 5.10am followed by D Company. They discovered several dugouts occupied by the enemy who were either killed or captured. As the company advanced Captain G.H. Staveley was killed.

B Company at 4.30 am advanced to the village of Fayet followed by C Company and found many dugouts occupied which they cleared with bombs.

In the afternoon there was a good deal of rifle and machine gun fire from the enemy but the battalion held the line?

The fighting continued until 9.30 pm when the companies dug in with the 11th Border Regiment on the left flank and the 17th Highland Light Infantry on the right, all the operations were successful and the battalion's objectives gained.

36 other ranks were killed, 69 wounded and 14 missing.

His 21-year-old nephew, who lived at Wakefield, and was in the same battalion wrote home: -

*"It is not a very pleasant task to write this letter. We have just come out of action, and I am very sorry to inform you that poor Alf has been killed by a sniper. He felt no pain whatever and is buried in a quiet spot. It happened on April 14th, but don't lose heart his death has been avenged. I don't feel the same without him as we were constantly together. His chums in the platoon and myself all wish to sympathise with you in your great loss".*

The writer had been wounded three times.

Clifford Dodsworth who had enrolled with him was at the time serving in France with the Duke of Wellington's.

Alfred Tom was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at St. Andrew's, Purlwell, Batley War Memorial and Thiepval Memorial, Somme.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group