William Ewart





Rank: - Private

Number: - 3/1529

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry "A" Coy 9th Battalion

Died of wounds: - 5th June 1916 aged 20

Cemetery: - La Neuville Communal, Corbie A.54

"REST IN PEACE"

Batley News, 17 Jun 1916 (photo)

Family Details

William was born in Settle in 1896, the son of William and Janet, (nee Maxwell). William at the time was a police constable who came from Scotland.

William was their fourth surviving son born to the couple. Robert was born in 1891 followed by Thomas Maxwell (1893) and James in 1894.

In 1901 the family were living at New Road, Settle with additional siblings of John Graham (1897), George Edward (1898) and Alexander (1900).

Before 1911 William (snr.) had become a police sergeant working for the West Riding Constabulary and moved to live at 69, Warwick Road, Batley Carr. James was working as a cloth finisher in a woollen mill. There were the additional children Balfour Hislop (1903) and Edgar born in 1904.The census shows that there had been one child who had died in infancy.

The family moved to live at 8, Mount Street, Batley and before enlisting William worked in the finishing department of Joseph Wilson & Sons, Warwick Mills.

Service Details

William enlisted a few weeks after the outbreak of war and went to the Front on the 13th October 1915.

The 9th Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry were attached to the 21st Division.

William would have joined the Division just after they had fought at the Battle of Loos.

At the beginning of June 1916, the battalion was in the trenches near Meaulte.

At 10 pm on the 4th June an enemy bombardment was started by the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry of a portion of the enemy trenches with a view to a raid being made by a party of 7 officers and about 100 men of the 1st Lincolns. The party was to leave their trenches at 11 pm but owing to the terrific barrage which the enemy put on the front line where the raiding parties were in position it was quite impossible for them to get out of the trenches. The KOYLI's suffered a few casualties but considering the heaviness of the bombardment it was quite low but the trenches were badly damaged.

William was injured in the back most likely in this bombardment and was taken to hospital.

A nurse wrote to his family: -

"Your *son Private Ewart was admitted to the hospital yesterday suffering from wounds in the back. He was very ill and gradually got worse and I regret to say passed away at 4.15 yesterday afternoon (5th June). He did not leave any message."*

In April 1916, No.21Casualty Clearing Station came to La Neauville and remained there throughout the Battles of the Somme, until March 1917.

William was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at St. Andrew's Church Purlwell, Holy Trinity, Batley Carr, Batley War Memorial and the La Neuville Communal Cemetery at Corbie, France.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group