William Foster





Rank: - Corporal

Number: - 20/93

Regiment: - West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own) 16th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 5th December 1917 aged 21

Cemetery: - Roclincourt Military Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais 1.F.10

"AT REST WITH GOD MOTHER"

Batley News, 15 Dec 1917 (photo)

Family Details

William was born in Birstall in 1896 the only child of William and Sarah Foster (nee Watson). He was a grandson of William Foster (oil merchant, Birstall) and the late William Watson mineral water manufacturer of Batley Carr.

In 1901 the family was living at 30, Blackburn Road, Birstall but moved to 25, Victoria Street, Batley Carr less than a decade later.

He was brought up in Batley Carr from early childhood and attended Warwick Road Day School and the old Sunday school.

In 1911 William (snr.) was working as a carrier in the mineral water trade and 14-year-old William was a bottler possibly at his grandfather's works.

William was later apprenticed to Mr. Dixon, hairdresser of Cross Bank and he continued the business when Mr Dixon was called up at the outbreak of the war. He was a member of Batley Carr Working Men's Club.

Service Details

William enlisted at Bradford in 1915 and was sent to France in May 1916.The 16th Battalion (1st Bradford) came under the orders of 93rd Brigade, 31st Division.

In 1916 they fought at the Battles of Albert and Ancre. In 1917 they took part on operations on the Ancre and fought in the Battles of the Third Battle of Scarpe and the Capture of Oppy Wood.

A Chaplain sent the sad news of his death: -

"The Germans put a heavy bombardment on our trenches and your son and another man who was on duty with him took shelter in a dugout for a time. When everything seemed to be quiet again, they went up the steps, but had no sooner got into the trench than a shell landed quite close to them and death was instantaneous in both cases. Your son was a delightful boy, and one I had learned to love for his manly disposition, and we shall all feel his loss very greatly. His body was brought back last night and he was reverently laid to rest this morning (December 6th) in a British Cemetery. "

The report was confirmed by a letter from Bandsman Harry Robinson, Oldroyd's Yard, Batley Carr who says there were three soldiers together, two of whom was killed and the other wounded. *"I have lost a true and faithful friend. "*

At the time of his death the family lived at 25, Victoria Street, Batley Carr.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal

William is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Temperance Hall, Smithies Moor Lane, Birstall, Independent Order of Rechabites - Hope of Birstall Lodge and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group