Ben Garfield





Rank: - Lance Corporal

Number: - 1890751

Regiment: - Royal Engineers 278 Field Coy.

Died: - Killed 23/09/1940 Age: 21 years

Cemetery: - Hanging Heaton (St. Paul) Churchyard, Batley.

Ben was born in 1919 the son of William and Martha Ann Garfield nee Bulmer who had married in. 1907. William was born in 1908-1908, Alice 1909. Mary Elizabeth 1911, Jack 1914 and Joe 1916. The family lived at 2, Trenton Road, Croftlands, Hanging Heaton, Batley in 1939.

Ben attended Hanging Heaton Church School and was then employed by Mr. E. Kilburn and Sons, joiners, Hanging Heaton. He attended Ebenezer Methodist

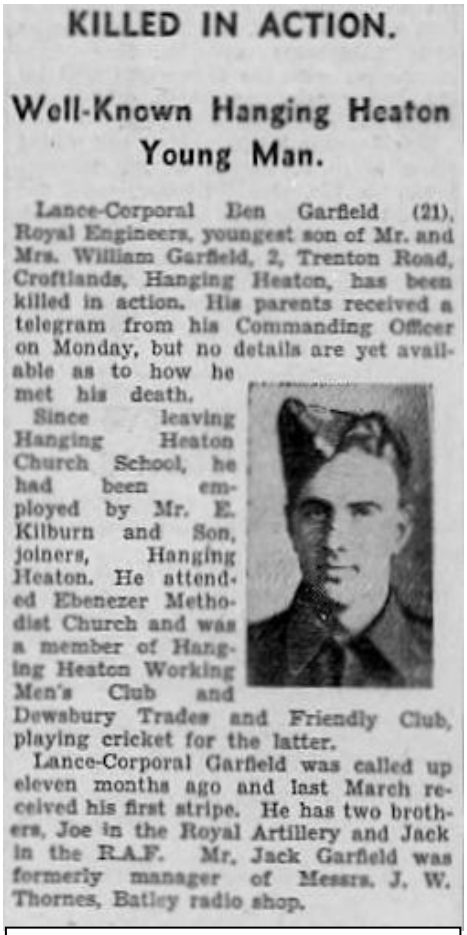
Church and was a member of Hanging Heaton Working Men's Club and Dewsbury Trades and Friendly Club, playing cricket for the latter.

Ben was called up in October 1939 and in March 1940 received his first stripes.

His parents received a telegram from his Commanding Officer to say he had been killed in action. His death was registered at Maldon, England.

From the 1-29 September 1940 the south of England what was to become known as the Battle of Britain took place in the skies above towns in the south of England.

The sirens started about 5 o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday 18 September 1940 sending all the civil defence and home guard members working in Malden to their posts. This was the first air raid on Malden.



KILLED IN ACTION.

Well-Known Hanging Heaton Young Man.

Lance-Corporal Ben Garfield (21), Royal Engineers, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. William Garfield, 2, Trenton Road, Croftlands, Hanging Heaton, has been killed in action. His parents received a telegram from his Commanding Officer on Monday, but no details are yet available as to how he met his death.

Since leaving Hanging Heaton Church School, he had been employed by Mr. E. Kilburn and Son, joiners, Hanging Heaton. He attended Ebenezer Methodist Church and was a member of Hanging Heaton Working Men's Club and Dewsbury Trades and Friendly Club, playing cricket for the latter.

Lance-Corporal Garfield was called up eleven months ago and last March received his first stripe. He has two brothers, Joe in the Royal Artillery and Jack in the R.A.F. Mr. Jack Garfield was formerly manager of Messrs. J. W. Thornes, Batley radio shop.

Batley News, 28 Sep 1940 (photo)

The German aircraft approached Malden from the South West and West in two groups through low broken cloud. They were not recognised as the enemy at first. The first bombs were dropped at 5.20pm (H.E. and incendiary) in sticks of five or six, East of the main railway line in the vicinity of South Lane, with one force flying across Malden following the main line dropping bombs continuously to the borough boundary. The second group followed roughly the line of the Kingston bypass.

The bombs varied in size from 110 to 250lbs. Bombs dropped at Malden roundabout caused casualties to the Home Guard members on their way to their posts, some of which were fatal (one killed, four injured and one at Bradbury Wilkinsons). Because of censorship during the war details of the circumstances of his death were not published in the papers.

He was brought home and buried at St. Paul's Churchyard, Hanging Heaton.

Geoffrey is remembered with Honour at Hanging Heaton War Memorial (St Paul's) and Batley War Memorial. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group