Harold Garner





Photo thanks to Ank Huijs-SmoleMaars

Rank: - Private

Number: - 4748390

Regiment: - York and Lancaster Regiment, The Hallamshire Bn.

Died: - Died of Wounds, Holland 22nd November 1944 Age: 26 years

Cemetery: - Venray War Cemetery, Limburg, Netherlands V111.C.3.

Batley News, 2 Dec 1944 (photo)

Harold was born in Batley in 1918 the son of Lister and Hilda Garner nee Atkins who had married at St. Pauls Church, Hanging Heaton on 2 April 1915. Arthur was born in late 1915,

Harold was educated at Park Road Council School and was afterwards employed by Fothergill and Schofield, Joiners and Builders, Warwick Road, Batley. He was an all-round sportsman with cricket as his main interest. He joined Batley cricket team when he was 15 years old and continued until h went into the Forces. He played football with the army. He was a member of St. Luke's Church, Soothill.



Lance-Corporal Harold Garner Dies of Wounds

Official intimation was received on Wednesday by Mrs. Daisy Garner, 46, Lady Ann Road, Soothill, that her husband, Lance-Corporal Harold Garner (26), York and Lancaster Regiment, died of wounds in Holland on November 22nd.

Mrs. Garner received on Wednesday from her husband a letter written on November 20th.

Harold Garner.

He was son of Mr. and Mrs. Lister Garner, 70, Soothill Lane, Batley, and had been in North-west Europe war theatre since D-Day. He joined up in the Militia in June, 1939, and had served in Norway and Iceland. While in Iceland he was confirmed by the Bishop of Aberdeen.

He was an all-round sportsman, with cricket as his chief interest. He joined Batley cricket team when 15 years old, and continued until he went into the Forces. He played football with the Army.

Educated at Park Road Council School, he was afterwards employed by Fothergill and Schofield, joiners and builders, Warwick Road, Batley. He was a member of St. Luke's Church. Besides his wife, he leaves a daughter aged seven.

In 1937 he married Daisy Biddle, Beryl being born late that year and the family lived at 46, Lady Ann Road, Soothill, Batley. In June 1939 he joined up in the Militia and served with the Hallamshires. While in Iceland he was confirmed by the Bishop of Aberdeen. The Hallamshires first saw action as part of the ill-fated Norwegian campaign in 1940. The battalion arrived with the 146th Infantry Brigade. They were ashore for twelve days seeing limited action and losing their only casualties on the journey home when one of their transports was sunk.

The battalion spent the next two years "defending" Iceland before returning to Scotland for garrison duties and to prepare for the invasion of North West Europe.

The Hallamshires landed in France on D+3, 9 June 1944, three days after the initial invasion on D-Day, and moved into the front line four days later. Twelve days after landing they were involved in the attack on Fontenay-le-Pesnel (Operation Martlet) against the 26th Panzer Grenadier Regiment. The attack was successful but at the expense of 123 members of the battalion killed or wounded. To this day, former members of the battalion at that time still celebrate the victory as the Fontenay Club.

The battalion was involved in the capture of the docks at Le Havre before the Germans could destroy the vital installations. Here they captured 1,005 prisoners, three Dornier flying boats and a submarine. In September, the Hallamshires crossed the Antwerp-Turnhout canal and for his part in a subsequent action, Corporal John William Harper was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his heroism. During the winter months, the battalion

served in the Nijmegen salient and participated in the liberation of Arnhem in April 1945, their final action of the war. Eleven months had seen the battalion suffer 158 officers and other ranks killed and 689 wounded or missing.

His wife, Daisy, married Ronald Chappell in 1947.

Harold was awarded the 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group