Lewis (Louis) Rebbla Garside





Rank: - Corporal

Number: - 2303

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1st/4th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 8th July 1916 aged 37

Cemetery: - Serre Road Cemetery No 2, Somme, France XXX1V.C.12.

"FEAR NOT I HAVE CALLED THEE BY THY NAME THOU ART MINE"

Batley News, 5 Aug 1916. Batley Reporter, 28 Jul 1916

Family Details:

Louis Rebbla Garside was born at Cross Bank, Batley on 7th May 1879 the son of Joseph and Teresa Elizabeth (nee Rebbla). He was baptised on 10th September 1885 on the same day as his brothers Harry (November 1881) and Charles (August 1885-1888). Joseph's occupation was a tuner. They already had an older sister Mary Edith (1873). Joseph came from Holmfirth and married Dewsbury born Theresa at Batley Parish Church on 19th February 1872. He had previously married Martha Ann Mellor at Dewsbury in 1867 but she had died in November 1869. Isaac L was born 1874 but sadly died in April 1877 two weeks before 8-month-old John W. when the family were living at Cross Bank, Batley.

In 1881 the family were living at Pit Road (North Road) next door to Betsy Rebbla and were still there a decade later with the additions of Clara (1884) Ernest (1887) and Martha Annie (1890). In 1901 the family were living at 19, Pit Lane, Carlinghow with further additions of Beatrice 1893 and Mary Rose Ann in 1896. Joseph died in 1909 and in 1911 Teresa Elizabeth was living at 133, North Bank Road with her three youngest daughters who were all weavers.

Louis married Sarah Martha Petty at St. Saviour's Ravensthorpe on 24th December 1910. In 1911 the couple were living at John Street, Ravensthorpe with Richard and Frances Greenwood who 10 years earlier were described as her adoptive parents. Joseph was born in 1913.

Louis was employed at Messrs. Henry Burrows, woollen rag merchants, Dewsbury.

Sarah Martha later married Thomas Ellis in 1920 and went to live at 1, Foundry Street, Ravensthorpe.

Service Details:

Louis joined the Forces around 1896 and served in the Boer War. He was a Reservist at the outbreak of war and was called up in August 1914. He joined the 1st/4th K.O.Y.L.I. and disembarked for service in France on 13th April 1915. They were part of the 3rd West Riding Brigade.

After arriving in France and resting they marched from Merville to Doulieu where they were given a very enthusiastic welcome. Captain Taylor (1/5th) who was billeted in a cottage wrote home: -

"The landlady is our slave because she recognised our badge. Our 2nd Battalion drove the Huns from this village last autumn, after they made the men of the village dig their own graves at the end of the road here before they shot them into them, and eight of our brave fellows are buried in a field over the way with a little wooden cross with a bugle and KOYLI smudged on in tar. The Germans shot 11 civilians because they said one of their officers had been shot by a civilian. As a matter of fact, he was shot by a French soldier, we were told by the parish priest here who witnessed the whole thing."

On the 1st July the 1/4th KOYLI were around Thiepval and at 6 p.m. they left Aveluy Wood with the intention of crossing the Ancre by Black Horse Ridge south of Authuille. They had reached North Bluff when they were told orders had been cancelled. They were told to take the line east of Thiepval Wood around midnight but once again the orders were cancelled and they returned to Aveluy Wood.

Shortly after dawn on the 3rd July the 1/4th 's position was bombarded for two hours with lachrymatory, HE and shrapnel shells. At around 1.30 p.m. on the 4th July , while a thunder storm raged, the Germans made the first of a series of bombing attacks against the forward positions of the 1/5th KOYLI which resulted in the 1/4th moving forward to counter attack. This small operation was costly to the 1/5th who had 36 men killed and the 1/4th, 3 men killed.

On 7th July the Germans delivered a text book bombardment. At 2 a.m. their guns turned on the 1/4th in the "A" line and 50 minutes later shells began landing in the communications and support lines as they attempted to stop more reinforcements reaching the front line. Fierce fighting took place until 6.30a.m. with lots of casualties from bombers and snipers who shot the English as they fired and threw bombs out of the trenches. The casualties were 20 killed, 180 wounded. The Germans had used the new light "egg" bomb which could easily be thrown 50 yards. At 9 pm the KOYLI battalions were relieved and moved back to Martinsart Woods where their rest period was interrupted by the firing of siege howitzers which were in operation nearby.

Louis may not have been with the majority of the battalion because the report of his death states that he was shot through the head with an explosive bullet while working with a bombing party and death was instantaneous.

He is remembered with Honour at St John's Church, Carlinghow, Cross Bank Chapel, Ravensthorpe Parish Church Dewsbury, Batley War Memorial, Dewsbury War Memorial and Serre Road Cemetery, France.

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group