Albert Gibson





Rank: - Private

Number: - 202771 (formerly 6170 K.O.Y.L.I.)

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

Died of wounds and gas Poisoning: - 24th July 1917 aged 22 years

Cemetery: - Coxyde Military Cemetery, West Vlaanderen, Belgium 1.K.27

"THY WILL BE DONE"

Batley News, 11 Aug 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Albert was born on 10th September 1895 in Batley Carr the son of Mark and Martha Ann Gibson (nee Calvert). He was baptised at Taylor Street Chapel on 10th November 1895 when they were living at Albert Street. His brother, George Edward, was born in 1900 and baptised at Holy Trinity, Batley Carr on 4th July 1900 giving the address as 16, Chapel Street, Batley Carr. The couple who had married in 1893 had lost another child in infancy.

Mark, who was a cloth fuller, died in June 1902, aged 30 and Martha and the two boys went to live with her mother and siblings at 16, Queen Street, Batley.

After leaving school he was employed by Messrs. Horsfield (spinners) at Savile Town and was associated with Broomhill United Methodist Chapel being for a considerable time the organ blower. Before Albert's death his mother had gone to live at 5, Victoria Street, Batley Carr.

Service Details

Albert enlisted in September 1916 and went to the Front in January 1917.

The 1/4th King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in 1917 was involved with Operations on the Flanders Coast (Hush) and Battle of Poelcapelle

On1/4th and 1/5th KOYLI moved from the Neuve Chapelle region to the Nieuport sector and the journey had included transportation in barges along the Fournes Canal to Zuydcoote where they relieved the 2/6th and 2/10th Manchester in coastal defence. They trained on the sands at Zuydcoote before marching to Coxyde where they spent a night before moving to the front line at Lombardsyde.

They moved into the left and right sections on the night of the 18th July and the Germans were intent on giving them a warm welcome. Firing from Westende and Middelkirke German 77mm, 100mm, and 150 mm guns heavily bombarded the whole of the Nieuport area and intermittent shelling continued throughout the whole of the next day.

From early in the morning until 4 pm of the 21st July high in the sky above Nieuport German aircraft were busy spotting for their artillery but gradually the shelling began to cease. At 11pm the bombardment began again, during this renewed shelling the enemy included gas shells for two 15-minute periods either side of midnight and again after 2 pm. The whole of the Nieuport area was drenched with a new gas that caused severe problems.

During this period the 1/4th had seven other ranks killed and nine wounded nine officers gassed and 413 other ranks missing believed gassed and three other ranks definitely gassed. The diarist for the 1/4th not knowing the enemy was using a new mustard gas and delivering it in glass nosed shells, said it smelt slightly of garlic and mustard.

On the night of the 22nd July "B" Company was raided but the raiders were driven off. The enemy showed no signs of abating and the next day another heavy bombardment struck the support and reserve positions. The 1/4th had one man killed, three Officers gassed and 73 wounded.

The 1/4th were relieved on the 24th and that night bivouacked in a field on the outskirts of Nieuport.

Albert was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Broomhill United Methodist Church, Coxyde Cemetery and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group